CHAPTER 6

The Terrace of Sloth, and the Sin of Scholars

Dante explicitly associates himself with the sin of pride (*Purg.* XIII, 133–38), and scholars have emphasised, in particular, the temptation to pride in the composition of the *Commedia* itself.[1] By contrast, Dante makes no such explicit association between himself and the sin of sloth. Sloth might seem a strange sin to ascribe to the poet whose *magnum opus*, he informs us, had made him for many years lean (*Par.* XXV, 3).The terrace of sloth, nonetheless, is privileged by Dante: structurally, it is at the literal centre of *Purgatorio* and thus of the poem as a whole; narratively, it is midway (*nel mezzo del cammin*) both through Purgatory (the fourth of seven terraces) and through the afterlife (the fourth day on the pilgrim's seven-day journey); thematically, it includes the discourses on ordered and disordered love as the Christian principles of moral good and evil respectively. Moreover, the very first group of souls whom Dante encounters on his journey through Hell (the 'wretched souls' of *Inferno* III, 35) are partly characterised by sloth, as are the 'sad souls' (*tristi*) who emit the 'accidioso fumo' of *Inferno* VIII.[2] Sloth dominates the moral colour of Ante-Purgatory (*Purgatorio* I–VIII), a region invented by Dante and occupied specifically by those who delayed, albeit in different ways, their conversions to the path of Christian holiness and penitence.[3] Likewise, sloth is associated with the very first group of blessed souls whom Dante-character encounters in Paradise, the 'slowest sphere' of the Moon (*Par.* III, 30).

[1] See, for example, Teodolinda Barolini, 'Arachne, Argus, and St. John: Transgressive Art in Dante and Ovid', *Mediaevalia* (1987), 14, 207–26: 'One cannot cite Dante's scribal role, his avowed following behind a *dittator*, as a sign of his poetic humility; *he* realizes, even if we do not . . . that his is a self-assigned scribal role, destining his humility to plunge towards pride and his pride to convert to humility in dizzying succession' (p. 220).

[2] *Inf.* III, 34–36: 'Questo misero modo / tegnon l'anime triste di coloro / che visser sanza 'nfamia e sanza lodo'. The Biblical subtext is Revelation 3:15: 'Scio opera tua: quia neque frigidus es, neque calidus', a text directly associated by Peraldus, as we shall see, with the vice of tepidity (sloth).

[3] See, for example, Gabrielle Muresco, 'L'accidia e l'orgia d'amore (*Purg.* VIII)', in *L'orgia d'amore: saggi di semantica dantesca* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2008), pp. 125–85.

In each of the three canticles, therefore, the first group of souls is characterised – at least in part – by the vice of sloth. Moreover, after his Christian conversion, sloth was the dominant sin – we learn in Purgatory – of the poet Statius, one of the important autobiographical 'cyphers' for Dante in the *Commedia*. Most significantly, there is good reason to believe, as I shall argue, that sloth is Dante-character's first sin in the dark wood of *Inferno* I, and a key to his dramatic confession to Beatrice in the Earthly Paradise.

Critics have nonetheless paid very little attention to sloth in Dante's moral vision and, with few exceptions, have ruled out the possibility that Dante might have considered himself as guilty of this sin.[4] Why this comparative lack of critical attention? A first reason is that Dante's terrace of sloth (*Purg.* XVII, 79–139 – XIX, 1–69) has rarely been considered as a narrative unit. This is, in part, a familiar consequence of the 'lectura Dantis' canto-by-canto interpretative tradition (the terrace spans three cantos).[5] But, it is also because this central section of Dante's poem is typically read in terms of the 'four doctrinal cantos' (*Purgatorio* XV, XVI, XVII, and XVIII) – a grouping that detaches the 'doctrine' from the 'narrative' of the terrace of sloth, and reinforces a prevalent interpretation

[4] In his account of the seven capital vices in Dante's own moral life, for example, John C. Barnes argues that Dante acknowledges himself as guilty of four sins – pride, envy, lust, and anger – and comes to a normative conclusion about sloth: 'I infer that Dante does not accuse himself of sloth' (John C. Barnes, 'Deadly Sins in Dante's Autobiography', in Barnes and O'Connell [eds.], *Dante*, pp. 319–41 [p. 324]). The most noticeable exception to this consensus about sloth is Pamela Williams. See Pamela Williams, 'Acedia as Dante's Sin in the *Commedia*', in Williams, *Through Human Love to God*, pp. 19–34. But see also the more recent Marco Dorigatti, 'The Acid Test of Faith: Dante and the Capital Sin of *Accidia* (Sloth)', in Barnes and O'Connell (eds.), *Dante*, pp. 151–78. Dorigetti rightly credits Williams with demonstrating that 'the idea of acedia in Dante's spiritual journey is far more pervasive than was previously imagined, having the capacity to show his whole work in an entirely new light' (p. 175). He also provides a suggestive interpretation of sloth in relation to a deficiency in Christian faith: 'Neither Statius nor Dante came to embrace the Christian faith easily or in a straight path' (p. 173). Although his treatment of Dante is brief, Siegfried Wenzel argues that Dante expands the concept of acedia to include 'in the neglect of spiritual duties, care for the temporal order. In harmony with the religious–political ideal set forth throughout the *Commedia*, Dante's *acedia* includes *lento amore* of the Eagle as well as of the Cross.' See Siegfried Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), pp. 128–35. Jennifer Rushworth considers Dante's treatment of 'acedia' in relation to the twentieth-century theories of Barthes and Kristeva. See Jennifer Rushworth, 'Mourning and Acedia in Dante', in Rushworth, *Discourses of Mourning*, pp. 18–53.

[5] In eloquently highlighting the limits of the 'lectura Dantis' canto-by-canto reading that 'comporta di solito certo disagio di discontinuità', Chiavacci Leonardi emphasizes that 'nel caso dei così detti canti meditativi nel centro del *Purgatorio* essa si fa più acuta e imbarazzante'. See Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, 'Canto XVII', in *Lectura Dantis Turicensis: Purgatorio*, ed. by Georges Güntert and Michelangelo Picone (Florence: Cesati, 2001), pp. 152–75 (p. 152). However, scholars such as Chiavacci Leonardi recognise this limit insofar as it inhibits the narrative unit of the 'four doctrinal cantos' rather than the narrative unit of the terrace.

of its final section, the dream of the Siren (*Purgatorio* XIX, 1–69), as an afterthought or a mere transition episode.[6] This perspective is especially problematic because, of the seven terraces of Purgatory, Dante devotes the least number of lines (278) to the terrace of sloth, with less than a quarter of these (68) being devoted to the encounter with the slothful souls who rush past in a flash (*Purg.* XVIII, 76–139).[7] Only one slothful soul, the Abbot of San Zeno, is identified, and his speech lasts just fourteen lines (*Purg.* XVIII, 112–26). Detach the 'doctrinal passages' and the dream of the Siren from the terrace of sloth, and very little is left. A second reason for the lack of scholarly discussion of sloth, then, is that critics summarily pass over Dante's extremely terse description of the slothful souls precisely due to its brevity.

This chapter is, therefore, a reappraisal of Dante's treatment of sloth. I start by demonstrating how Dante's poetic representation of sloth is profoundly influenced by Peraldus's treatise 'De acedia'.[8] Using Peraldus as a gloss, I first reinterpret the encounter with the slothful souls (XVIII, 88–138), whose 'acute fervour' for God impels them to run swiftly around the terrace and past Dante-character and Virgil. Second, I show that the

[6] The first doctrinal exposition (explaining the difference between temporal and spiritual goods) serves as an epilogue to the terrace of envy (*Purg.* XV, 1–81); the second (on free will, the necessity of law, and the 'two suns' of Empire and Church) is at the centre of the terrace of wrath (*Purg.* XVI, 64–145); and the third and longest (concerning the moral structure of Purgatory, the nature of love, and free will and moral responsibility) occupies the first half of the terrace of sloth (*Purg.* XVII, 79–139; *Purg.* XVIII, 1–75). See also Hollander, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 1–3, and Bosco, gloss to *Purg.* XVII, nota. Hollander refers to Bosco's note about the balance of doctrinal instruction and narrative in *Purgatorio* XVII–XVIII. This could be expanded across 'the four doctrinal cantos' in relation to the moral scheme in the following way: envy: XV, 1–81 (doctrine); wrath: 82–145 (narrative); XVI, 1–63 (narrative); 64–145 (doctrine); XVII, 1–69 (narrative); and sloth: 70–139 (doctrine); XVIII, 1–75 (doctrine); 76–145 (narrative). Singleton notes the chiasmus in canto line length, which further situates *Purgatorio* XVII as the central doctrinal canto: 151 lines (*Purg.* XIV and XX); 141 lines (XV and XIX); 145 lines (XVI and XVIII); 139 lines (XVII). See Charles Singleton, 'The Poet's Number at the Centre', *Modern Language Notes* 80 (1965), 1–10; and, more recently, Tristan Kay, 'Seductive Lies, Unpalatable Truths, Alter Egos', in Corbett and Webb (eds.), *Vertical Readings in Dante's 'Comedy'*, II, pp. 127–49 (pp. 131–34).

[7] See Hollander, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 99–138: 'With the exception of the concluding interaction with the angel in the following canto, separated by Dante's sleep and dream from the action on the fourth terrace, all the usual "events" of any terrace are here condensed – in the compressed style appropriate to the description of the newly zealous – into these forty verses. All terraces include the following features in the same order: (1) description of the physical aspect of the terrace, (2) exemplars of the countering virtue, (3) description of the penitents, (4) recitation of their sins by particular penitents, (5) exemplars of the vice, (6) appearance to Dante of the angel representing the opposing virtue.'

[8] By contrast, critics in the past have tended to gloss Dante's treatment of sloth with passages from Aquinas. See, most recently, Dorigatti, 'Dante and the Capital Sin of "Accidia"'. A major flaw in Dorigatti's reading, in my view, is that he interprets Dante's treatment of sloth (and, despite Wenzel's intervention, Virgil's discourse on the moral rationale of Purgatory) through Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, with no reference at all to Peraldus.

slothful souls' physical movement and liturgical cries (XVIII, 88–138) interrupt the other (but typically overlooked) narrative drama of the terrace: namely, Dante-character's intellectual movement from ignorance to knowledge, a quest for wisdom in tension with his severe physical and mental exhaustion (XVII, 73–XVIII, 87; and XVIII, 139–XIX, 69).[9] Third, I argue that the dream of the Siren (XVIII, 139–XIX, 69) represents symbolically and poetically the doctrinal content of Virgil's three lectures in the first part of the terrace (XVII, 73–XVIII, 87). Finally, I consider the recurring presence of sloth in Dante's moral vision as a whole, in particular with regard to Dante-character's first sin and the alleged sloth of the 'Christian' Statius.

Reading Peraldus on Sloth

In addressing Dante's reliance on Peraldus, Wenzel points out 'that Dante's son Pietro, in commenting upon *Purgatorio* XVII, quoted Peraldus's rationale, though without acknowledging the author'.[10] Wenzel proceeds to present the apposite passages from Peraldus's treatise and Pietro's commentary side-by-side, adequately substantiating his claim that 'the verbal similarities between the two texts are so great as to cancel any doubt that Pietro's was derived from Peraldus'.[11] Somewhat surprisingly, in turning to Dante's poetic depiction of sloth in his magisterial study *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature*, Wenzel does not explore further correlations with Peraldus in any detail.[12] Moreover, Wenzel does not make the connection between Dante's rationale occurring in the terrace of sloth and Peraldus's rationale occurring in a passage immediately following on from his own treatment of sloth.[13] Most significantly, Wenzel relies exclusively on the first of three versions of Pietro d'Aligheri's commentary for his influential account.[14]

[9] Jennifer Rushworth argues compellingly that the physical movement and cries of the penitent slothful embody the two traditional remedies, physical and verbal, for acedia: namely, manual work and prayer or Scriptural invocation: 'The souls on this terrace are thus engaged not only in running but also in a liturgical discipline that counteracts their lack of clear speech or attention in church during their lifetimes' (p. 39). See Rushworth, *Discourses of Mourning*, pp. 35–42.

[10] Wenzel, 'Dante's Rationale', p. 532. [11] Ibid., p. 532.

[12] Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth*, pp. 128–35.

[13] Wenzel notes only that it is placed at the beginning of Peraldus's treatment of pride, and fails to point out that Peraldus's treatise on pride comes after his treatise on sloth (Wenzel, 'Dante's Rationale', p. 531).

[14] *Petri Allegherii super Dantis ipsius genitori Comoediam Commentarium,* ed. by Vincenzo Nannuci (Florence: G. Piatti, 1845). This is also available online as Pietro Alighieri [1], 1340–1342, at the Dartmouth Dante Project.

The first version (dated to 1340–42) and the second version (dated to 1344–55) of Pietro's commentary are almost identical in their treatment of sloth.[15] But Pietro's third version (dated to 1359–64) is much longer than the previous two in general and strikingly different in its treatment of sloth.[16] In the first two versions, Pietro provides an extremely brief introduction to the terrace of sloth.[17] In versions 1 and 2, he then proceeds to explicate Virgil's doctrinal lecture through Peraldus's rationale – albeit, in Wenzel's words, reducing 'the redundant and clumsy phrasing of Peraldus's scholastic Latin to a more classical elegance'.[18] By contrast, in his third version, Pietro opens his commentary on the terrace of sloth by directly quoting a series of passages from Peraldus's treatise on the vice.[19] Notably, Pietro [3] names ten of the seventeen vices of sloth in exactly the same order as Peraldus: *'tepiditas, mollities, somnolentia, otiositas, dilatio, tarditas, negligentia,* [*imperfectio sive imperseverantia, remissio, dissolutio, incuria*], *ignavia,* [*indevotio*], *tristitia, taedium vitae,* [*desperatio*]'.[20] Like Peraldus, Pietro [3] also highlights that the first species of sloth is 'tepidity', noting that all the other vices of sloth flow from tepidity, as from a root, ('tepiditas prima species radix dicitur accidiae, et ex ea nascuntur omnia praemissa vitia').[21]

[15] *Petri Allegherii super Dantis ipsius genitoris Comoediam Commentarium,* partially ed. by Silvana Pagana. The text is transcribed into electronic form by Giovanna Puletti at the Societa Dantesca Italiana, and available online as Pietro Alighieri [2], at the Dartmouth Dante Project.

[16] Pietro Alighieri, *Comentum super poema Comedie Dantis: A Critical Edition of the Third and Final Draft of Pietro Alighieri's 'Commentary on Dante's "Divine Comedy"*', ed. by Massimiliano Chiamenti (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002). For a brief introduction to the three commentaries, see 'Introduction', pp. 1–4. See also 'V. Pietro Alighieri's Library', pp. 69–76. Strangely, Chiamenti makes no reference to Peraldus with regard to either Pietro's library or the cited passages in the terrace of sloth (p. 384). Pietro's third commentary is available online as Pietro Alighieri [3], 1359–1364, at the Dartmouth Dante Project.

[17] Pietro Alighieri [1], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 85–87: 'Ad secundam partem auctor, debendo venire ad tractandum de vitio accidiae, praemittit de amore et eius natura; et merito, cum accidia sit eius privatio; et procedit sic' [In the second part [of the terrace] the author, needing to treat the vice of sloth, speaks first of love and the nature of love, and rightly so, for sloth is its lack, and proceeds in this way].

[18] Wenzel, 'Dante's Rationale', p. 532.

[19] To begin with, Pietro quotes from the first chapter of the second part of Peraldus's treatise on the vice: the second part concerns the different kinds of sin ('de diversis generibus peccatorum') belonging to sloth, and its first chapter addresses the sin of tepidity and the evils which it causes in man (Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2 ch. 1, pp. 174b–75b; and Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139).

[20] The square brackets denote those sub-species of slothful vices listed by Peraldus but not by Pietro [3]. Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2 ch. 1, pp. 174b–75a; and Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139. It is worth noting the markedly different ordering of Aquinas, who follows Gregory (see *STh.*, IIaIIae, q. 35, a. 4).

[21] Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139. See also Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2 ch. 1, p. 175a: 'Et videtur esse tepiditas prima radix in peccato acediae, et ex hac videntur nasci cetera vitia enumerata. Facit autem tepiditas multa mala in homine.'

Even stronger proof that Pietro [3] is following Peraldus more closely, however, appears in the next part of his commentary. Having defined tepidity as insufficient love of the good ('tepiditas est parvus amor boni'), Peraldus emphasises that tepidity provokes the 'vomit' of God, as he has already demonstrated ('primo Deo vomitum provocat, ut prius ostensum est').[22] In his commentary, Pietro [3] defines tepidity as 'amor parvus boni magni' and then supplies, with only very slight changes, the earlier section of Peraldus's treatise referred to (the beginning of part II, chapter 3):

> 'Utinam frigidus esses aut calidus: sed quia tepidus es et nec frigidus nec calidus, incipiam te evomere ex ore meo.' Calidus est, qui fervens est ad bonum. Frigidus est, qui simpliciter desistit a bono. Tepidus vero est, qui medio modo se habet. Et dixit *Glossa interlinearis* quod maior spes est de frigidis, quam de tepidis. Cuius rei haec est causa, quod tepidi quandam fiduciam et securitatem accipiunt de hoc, quod aliquid boni agunt, et ideo se non corrigunt. (Peraldus, *De vitiis*)[23]

> 'Utinam frigidus esses aut calidus, sed quia tepidus es et non frigidus nec calidus incipiam te evomere ex ore meo'; est enim calidus qui fervens est ad bonum, frigidus est qui simpliciter desistit a bono, tepidus vero qui medio modo se habet, et dicit ibi inter linearia quod maior spes est de frigidis quam de tepidis, eo quia tepidi quendam fiduciam accipiunt de hoc quod aliquid boni agunt, et ideo se non corrigunt. (Pietro d'Alighieri, gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139)[24]

> ['If only you were cold or hot, but because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit you out of my mouth.' Hot is he who is fervent towards the good. Cold is he who simply stands apart from the good. Lukewarm is he who holds the middle way. And therefore the *Glossa interlinearis* said that there is a greater hope for the cold than for the lukewarm. The cause of which is that the lukewarm derive some trust and security from the fact that they do some good, and therefore they do not correct themselves].

These 'verbal similarities' between Peraldus and Pietro [3] with regard to sloth, like those identified by Wenzel between Peraldus and Pietro [1] with

[22] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2 ch. 1, p. 175a. See also t. v, pa. 1, ch. 3, pp. 168a–b: 'De hac tepiditate dicit Hieronymus: "Tepiditas sola est, quae solet Deo vomitum provocare."'

[23] Ibid., t. v, pa. 1, ch. 3, pp. 168a. The Biblical passage cited is Revelation 3:15–16: 'Scio opera tua, quia neque frigidus es neque calidus. Utinam frigidus esses aut calidus! Sic quia tepidus es et nec calidus nec frigidus, incipiam te evomere ex ore meo.'

[24] Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139.

regard to the rationale, are 'so great as to cancel any doubt that Pietro's was derived from Peraldus'.[25]

If this suggests that Dante himself was following Peraldus's text closely, his own poetic treatment – as we shall see – would seem to confirm it. Remarkably, thirteen of the seventeen vices of sloth delineated by Peraldus may be identified – whether as directly named, substantial allusions or verbal echoes – in Dante's terrace of sloth, alongside the opposing vice of indiscreet fervour: *tepiditas* (*Purg.* XVIII, 108); *mollities* (XVIII, 136–37); *somnolentia* (XVII, 87–88); *otiositas* (XVIII, 101–2); *dilatio* (XVII, 90); *tarditas* (XVII, 87); *negligentia* (XVIII, 107); *imperfectio sive imperseverantia* (XVIII,137); *remissio, dissolutio* (XVI, 73 and XVIII, 124–25); *incuria* (XVIII, 85–86); *ignavia, indevotio, tristitia* (XVIII, 123); *taedium vitae* (XVIII, 121); and *desperatio* (XVIII, 120).[26] The cumulative impression is that Peraldus's preaching material provides the key resource for Dante's poetic treatment. A comparative examination of Peraldus's treatise and Dante's terrace of sloth suggests, then, possible interpretative solutions to passages, lines, and individual words in these cantos which have puzzled scholars in the critical tradition. Just as significantly, it opens up the depth and breadth of the contemporary understandings of acedia that informed Dante's thinking, enabling us to understand sloth as a scholar's and a poet's sin.

Purging Sloth

Arriving at the terrace of sloth as night falls, Virgil informs Dante-character that here the souls, in penance, make up for lost time, plying and plying again the badly slowed oar ('il mal tardato remo'; XVII, 87). Slothful in life, the souls had been like oarsmen who had known where they were heading (their goal) but had lacked due energy and care. More technically, Virgil defines the quiddity of sloth as 'l'amor del bene, scemo / del suo dover' [the love of the good falling short of its proper duty] (85–86). In a second definition, he makes more explicit that this good is God, while

[25] Wenzel, 'Dante's Rationale', p. 532. Even in relation to Peraldus's rationale itself, Pietro's third commentary displays a closer intellectual engagement with the original than his first two. See Ibid., pp. 532–33, and compare with Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139: 'ita ait Augustinus, quem auctor ad licteram hic sequitur: *Sicut virtus est amor ordinatus, ita vitium est amor inordinatus. Amor dupliciter potest esse inordinatus*.' In his conclusion, for example, Pietro [3] re-emphasises Dante's purpose in situating the moral rationale on the terrace of sloth: 'Et sic, concludendo, vitium accidiae facit peccare ut lentos et tepidos ad sequendum et acquirendum verum bonum, scilicet Deum, quod bonum omnis appetunt, sed confuse, ut dicit hic auctor.'

[26] I discuss these sub-vices and the salient passages of *Purgatorio* XVII–XIX in detail later in this chapter.

emphasising again the metaphor of speed – their love, in being deficient, is *slow*: 'lento amore a lui veder vi tira / o a lui acquistar' [slow love draws you to see him [God] or to acquire him] (130–31). Sometime later, when the group of penitent souls rush past Virgil and Dante-character, it comes as no surprise, then, that they cry out:

> 'Ratto, ratto, che 'l tempo non si perda
> per poco amor,' gridavan li altri appresso,
> 'che studio di ben far grazia rinverda!'
> (*Purg.* XVIII, 103–5)

['Quickly, quickly, that time not be lost through lack of love,' cried the others following, 'let eagerness to do well make grace grow green'].

Thus, like Peraldus, Dante describes and defines the genus acedia by its primary species – namely, tepidity or lukewarmedness, the insufficient love of a great good (*amor parvus boni magni*).[27] Following Peraldus, Dante also treats tepidity as the root of the other vices of sloth, as is evident from Virgil's address to the penitent slothful:

> O gente in cui fervore aguto adesso
> ricompie forse negligenza e indugio
> da voi per tepidezza in ben far messo.
> (*Purg.* XVIII, 106–8)

[O people in whom ardent fervour now perhaps makes up for negligence and delay that you, because tepid, brought your good works].

Virgil understands the slothful souls' negligence ('negligenza'; 107) and delay ('indugio'; 107) to have arisen from their tepidity ('tepidezza'; 108), while the souls themselves acknowledge that their previous time-wasting ('il tempo non si perda'; 103) occurred because of a lack of love ('per poco amor'; 104).

The souls expiate their sloth by first urging each other to value and conserve time (103). From a Christian perspective, as Peraldus emphasises, time is a precious gift from God that must be used well to provide for the eternal life that awaits: a person 'sows eternity from time, that it may be harvested in the future'.[28] Christians, then, are debtors to God for their

[27] Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139: 'et ex hoc auctor in hoc principio, in persona Virgilii diffiniendo, vocat accidiam amorem scemum, idest diminutum in suo debere amare, subaudi Deum, ut summum bonum, unde diffinitur: *Tepiditas est amor parvus boni magni.*' Wenzel notes how a Latin rendering of Dante's definition 'amare bonum minus quam est debitum' would echo more directly Peraldus's 'parvus amor magni boni' (Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth*, p. 129); Wenzel also references Peraldus's sermons (p. 242, n. 8) in which sloth is defined as a small care for great goods ('acedia, quae magna bona modicum curat').

[28] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1 ch. 3, p. 172a: 'Et conservatio temporis in hoc attenditur ut in Dei servitio expendatur, et sic ex tempore quodammodo seminat aeternitas, in futuro colligatur.'

time on Earth and will be called to account for how they have used it.[29] Dante's visualised eschatology itself preaches two of Peraldus's reasons for conserving time: that there is a place (Hell) in which one hour for doing penitence would be loved more than all the world's gold, and that in just one hour (on Earth) a man may merit the remission of his eternal punishment, of all his sins, and – with God's grace – eternal glory.[30] Dante's parallel representation of Guido and Buonconte da Montefeltro (*Inferno* XXVII and *Purgatorio* V) is, of course, just the most obvious instance of him driving this message home.

As the souls purging sloth make clear, their 'conservation of time' (103) has a purpose: they are eager to do well ('studio di ben far'; 105), so as to make up for their previous 'indugio' [delay] (106). This highlights the importance of the offshoot vice of 'negligence' (107): its opposing virtue is not 'activity' per se, but rather diligence or 'doing well'. As Peraldus notes, the negligent man does not care how well his work is done (whether good or bad), but just wants to get it out of the way.[31] The diligent person, by contrast, strives for excellence in the work that he has begun.[32] Thus, the slothful souls' 'studio di ben far' (105; 108) translates Peraldus's definition of 'diligence' ('studeat ut opus inchoatum bene fiat') and corrects, as Virgil rightly notes, their previous negligence ('negligenza'; 107).[33]

Where diligence is the corresponding virtue to the subordinate slothful vice of negligence, the corresponding virtue to tepidity is zeal. At the vanguard of the crowd of penitent slothful, two 'weeping' souls cry out two examples of zeal:

> 'Maria corse con fretta a la montagna!'
> e 'Cesare, per soggiogare Illerda,
> punse Marsilia e poi corse in Ispagna!'
> (*Purg.* XVIII, 100–2)

[29] Ibid.: 'Et debemus intelligere brevitatem istam respectu vitae aeternae, cui debemus providere tempore isto.'

[30] Ibid., p. 172b: 'Secundo ostenditur ex hoc, quod aliquis locus est in quo plus amaretur una hora temporis ad agendum poenitentiam, quam tanta massa auri quantus est totus mundus. Locus ille infernus est. Tertio ostenditur ex hoc quod in una hora temporis potest homo promerere dimissionem poenae aeternae et peccatorum suorum remissionem, Dei gratiam, et aeternam gloriam.'

[31] Ibid., t. v, pa. 2 ch. 7, p. 199a: 'Et attenditur negligentia in hoc, quod homo non curat qualiter opus inchoatum faciat, utrum bene vel male: sed hoc solum curat, ut ab onere laboris inchoati se expediat.'

[32] Ibid.: 'Et attenditur diligentia in hoc, quod homo ad hoc studeat, ut opus inchoatum bene fiat.'

[33] Dante's horticultural metaphor ('grazia rinverda'; 105) could also be taken from Peraldus's chapter on the vice of negligence, with the citation of Proverbs ('Diligenter exerce agrum tuum') and the example from nature ('diligentiam habet natura circa fructus arborum'), both emphasising the opposing virtue of diligence (Ibid., t. v, pa. 2 ch. 7, p. 199a).

['Mary ran with haste to the mountain!' and 'Caesar, to subdue Lerida, struck Marseilles and then hastened to Spain'].

Notably, in his treatment of zeal, Peraldus gives examples both of those saintly men and women who loved God, and of those noble pagans who loved the world.[34] In the first category, we find Dante's Biblical example: Mary's haste in going to visit her cousin Elizabeth.[35] Dante's second example, Julius Caesar, corresponds to Peraldus's second category: the extraordinary accomplishments of pagans out of love for the world (*qui amant mundum*) serve to upbraid Christians who, in their sloth, accomplish so little through their love of God despite the promise of eternal bliss.[36] Glossing Matthew 11:12, Peraldus comments that whereas the Christian martyrs assault the kingdom of Heaven with their virtue, the same cannot be said of the lazy and slothful ('acediosi et pigri'); moreover, he warns the Christian that if he is slothful in this life, he will lose a place in heaven.[37] Dante will turn to precisely this passage in the heaven of Justice ('*Regnum celorum* vïolenza pate' [The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence]; *Par*. XX, 94) to warn that many Christians who will cry 'Christ, Christ' at the final judgement will be less close to Him than a man who does not know Christ at all; in this way, the Ethiopian (pagan) will damn

[34] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 1, pp. 166a–b: 'Potest etiam valere ad detestationem acediae exemplum eorum qui amant mundum. Si enim respiciamus quot et quantis laboribus, quotidianis cruciatibus ipsi merentur cruciatum aeternum, satis poterimus confundi quod adeo sumus pigri laborare pro regno aeterno. Unde Augustinus: "O si possemus excitare homines et cum ipsis pariter excitari, ut tales essemus amatores vitae permanentis quales sunt homines amatores vitae fugientis: quis non ut viveret, et potius eligeret vitam mendicandam quam celerem mortem?"'

[35] See Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 1, p. 167a: 'Et de beata Virgine legitur Luc. 1. "Quod abiit in montana cum festinatione."'

[36] Pietro d'Aligheri, moreover, interprets Caesar as not wanting to remain in sloth (Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg*. XVIII, 76–96: 'secundo quod scribit Lucanus in III de Cesare qui, obtenta Roma cedentibus ei Pompeio et senatoribus, noluit ibi manere in otio sed statim in Yspaniam ivit ad civitatem Ylerde, dimisso Bruto in obsidione Marsilie civitatis provincie etiam se rebellantis sibi, quatenus ambas urbes tandem obtinuit'.

[37] Matt. 11:12: 'Regnum caelorum vim patitur et violenti rapiunt illud' [The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent seize it]. Commenting on the ordinary gloss on this passage ('Grandis violentia est in terra nasci et caelum capere et habere per virtutem quod per naturam non possumus'), Peraldus notes that it is hardly likely that a slothful person will make such an assault on Heaven; rather, the slothful man advances so slowly that he will lose his place in heaven, and the goods of grace will be taken from him ('Non est verisimile quod acediosus talem violentiam caelo faciat. Acediosus adeo lente incedit quod in caelo locum suum amittit. Aufert etiam acedia bona gratiae'). Peraldus also cites St Gregory's warning that the just man – in an effort to capture Heaven – will be sure not to waste a day of his life ('Iustus ut caelestia capiat, cavet ne inanis dies eat'), and that no one should slow down in the journey of this life, lest they should lose their place in heaven ('Nemo in huius vitae itinere torpeat, ne in patria locum perdat'). See Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 1, pp. 171a–b.

the Christian (*Par*. XIX, 106–11).[38] The driving force of this encounter in the terrace of sloth, therefore, is the souls' 'fervore' [fervour] (106) – their unrelenting speed to make up for lost time, as reflected in the temporal adverbs 'subitamente' [suddenly] (89), 'tosto' [at once] (97), and 'ratto, ratto' [quickly, quickly] (103), and the triple repetition of the verb 'to run' ('correndo . . . corse . . . corse'; 97, 100, 102).

In the context of Peraldus's treatise, Virgil's qualifying reference to the souls' 'fervore' [fervour] as 'aguto' [ardent or acute] (106) is, however, significant. For Peraldus, the two capital vices of avarice and sloth have opposing vices of excess: prodigality is a reckless giving away of goods, whereas indiscreet fervour is an exaggerated zeal.[39] Dante's equine metaphor – 'falca [. . .] cui buon volere e giusto amor cavalca' [gallop those whose good will and righteous love ride them] (94–96) – is used by Peraldus to describe 'indiscreet fervour'.[40] Highlighting the danger of this indiscreet haste ('ista [indiscreta] festinatio'), especially in novices ('in novitiis'), Peraldus notes that he who vexes his horse too much in the morning does not make a good diet in the day: the soul must have a bridle as well as a spur, and the body is not to be broken but rather to be ruled ('corpus non frangendum sed regendum est').[41] It is then doubly significant, as with the qualifier 'aguto' [ardent] in 'fervore aguto' [ardent fervour], that Dante employs the adjectives 'buon' [good] and 'giusto' [just] to qualify the 'volere' [will] and 'amor' [love] that ride the penitent soul (96). Similarly, Mary runs ('corse') with haste ('con fretta', translating

[38] Dante contrasts the shameful sins of Christian rulers (in nine *terzine* delineated by the acrostic 'LVE' [pestilence]; *Par*. XIX, 115–41) with the virtuous lives of pagans (the examples identified are Ripheus and Trajan). Where the former will be damned for eternity, the latter may be saved because the violence of their burning love ('caldo amore') and lively hope ('viva speranza') may overcome ('vince') the divine will, allowing them to capture Heaven. On the question of pagan salvation in relation to this episode, see Corbett, *Dante and Epicurus*, pp. 126–27.

[39] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 4, ch. 1, pp. 209a–b: 'Sicut in vitio Avaritiae tractavimus de vitio prodigalitatis, eo quod avaritia et prodigalitas vitia sunt opposita: sic cum acedia tractabimus de indiscreto fervore. Acedia enim et indiscretus fervor quodammodo videntur esse vitia opposita.'

[40] See Durling and Martinez, gloss to *Purg*. XVIII, 94–96, p. 305: 'Already implicit in the mention of trampling (line 92), the horse metaphor becomes explicit here. The term *falcata* [being like a scythe], as Parodi observed, is used of the headlong gallop of a horse, when its legs (especially the forelegs) form a scythre-like curve.'

[41] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 4, ch. 2 pp. 210a–b: 'Ille qui equum suum nimis fatigat in mane, non videtur facere in die bonam dietam. Sequitur etiam ex indiscreto fervore, peccatum superbiae et vanae gloriae. Unde quidem corpus non frangendum, sed regendum est'; Ibid., t. v, pa. 4, ch. 3, p. 211b: 'Tertia est, quod cum ipsi habeant equum valde impetuosum, non curant tamen frenum imponere ei, sed solum calcaribus sunt contenti, quum tamen constet frenum non minus necessarium esse equo, quam calcaria. Non minus periculosum est alicui inter hostes esse sine freno, quam sine calcaribus. Bernardus: "Bonae voluntati non semper credendum est, sed frenanda et regenda est, maxime in incipiente."'

the Latin vulgate 'festinatio'), but not – it should be underlined – with indiscreet haste ('festinatio indiscreta').[42]

Peraldus's chapter on indiscreet fervour may even underly a further, peculiar description of the penitent souls' movement:

> . . . Noi siam di voglia a muoverci sì pieni,
> che restar non potem: però perdona,
> se villania nostra giustizia tieni.
> (*Purg.* XVIII, 115–17)
>
> [We are so full of the desire to move that we cannot stop;
> therefore forgive us if our justice seems villainy to you].

Citing the interlinear gloss on Ecclesiastes, 'Noli esse iustus multum' [Be not just to excess], Peraldus notes that there are some 'who do not in any way want to condescend to the demands of the flesh', of whom 'justice is a great injustice' ('iustitia magna iniustitia est').[43] The Abbot of San Zeno is similarly concerned lest the souls' justice ('nostra giustizia'; 117) will seem villainous to Dante and Virgil, because they do not pause in their journey.

The first part of the encounter concerns the whole group of slothful souls (XVIII, 88–117), spans ten *terzine*, and includes the two *exempla* of virtue (97–105). The second part concerns just three penitents: the Abbot of San Zeno and two other souls 'behind all the others' ('di retro a tutti'; 133); it spans seven *terzine*, and includes the two *exempla* of vice (130–38). Whereas the first part concerns the vice of sloth in general, the second part's theme is arguably more specific: the way in which sloth particularly afflicts contemplatives. This narrative structure may itself have been suggested by the order of Peraldus's treatise, in which the chapter on conserving time is immediately followed by a section on how sloth corrupts the most beautiful part of the church ('ipsa inquinat pulchriorem partem Ecclesiae'), which is the contemplatives ('scilicet viros contemplativos').[44]

[42] Although Durling and Martinez are correct to comment that 'the souls' "good will and just love" are imagined as riders driving their horses', in light of my analysis of '*buon* volere', '*giusto* amor', and 'fervore *aguto*', it is not quite right to add, as they do, that they drive their horses 'as fast as they can go' (Durling and Martinez, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 94–96, p. 305). Similarly, in considering the 'hurried procession' of the slothful souls, Wenzel notes their 'almost unseemly fervour' and 'their orgy-like frenzy'; I believe, instead, that Dante is quite deliberately emphasising that they display ardent but *not* indiscreet fervour (Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth*, p. 76).

[43] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 4, ch. 1 p. 209b: 'Et Eccles. 7: "Noli esse iustus multum". Ibi dicit gloss. interlin. quod summa iustitia, summa iniustitia est. Sunt aliqui qui in nullo volunt condescendere carni, quorum iustitia magna iniustitia est.'

[44] Peraldus, 'De octo quae valere possunt ad temporis conservationem', in Ibid., t. v, pa. 1, ch. 4, pp. 172a–173b; Ibid., t. v, pa. 1, ch. 4, pp. 173b: 'De aliis sex quae valere possunt ad detestationem acediae': 'Primum est hoc, quod ipsa inquinat pulchriorem partem Ecclesiae, scilicet viros

Moreover, having treated the seventeen species of sloth in seventeen chapters, Peraldus inserts an extra chapter specifically on the sloth of the cloistered religious ('de acedia claustralium').[45]

Scholars have puzzled about the actual identity of the Abbot of San Zeno, and questioned why Dante did not choose a more infamous cleric to counter-balance Hugh Capet (the founder of the Capetian dynasty) in the terrace of avarice.[46] Dante appears to present the Abbot of San Zeno (*Purg.* XVIII, 118) as the only interlocutor to emphasise just how many religious leaders succumb to the vice of acedia, as *pars pro toto*.[47] This is certainly the interpretation of Dante's son, Pietro [3], whose discussion of sloth in contemplatives is taken *verbatim* from Peraldus.[48] Peraldus has scathing words for religious men and women who day and night consume the king's food (the word of God) but are unrestored by it, and who converse with God but do not open their hearts' eyes to see with whom they are speaking.[49] It is a marvel ('est mirum quod') that those – the

contemplativos.' It is notable that Pietro Alighieri glosses this episode (XVIII, 88–108) with extensive quotations from Peraldus's chapter (Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 97–145).

[45] Peraldus, 'De acedia claustralium et duodecim malis quae ex ea proveniunt', in Ibid., t. v, pa. 2, ch.17, pp. 206a–207b. Notably, Peraldus says nothing of the sloth in secular people ('de acedia saecularium nihil dicemus'; p. 206a).

[46] See, for example, Sapegno, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 118: 'abate il monastero annesso alla chiesa di San Zeno in Verona, ai tempi di Federico Barbarossa, era un Gherardo II, morto nel 1187; di cui non sappiamo nulla, e nulla seppero i commentatori antichi del poema'.

[47] On acedia as a peculiarly monastic vice, see also Dorigatti, 'The Acid Test of Faith', p. 152: 'it [acedia] was primarily a monastic vice, and hence, given that the monk was also an intellectual in his day, a *peccatus intellectualis*, something that in retrospect may be regarded as its most distinctive feature. While manual labourers appear to have been virtually immune to it, thinkers, on the other hand, especially those working in solitary confinement, were most at risk. It will be left to Dante to take this relationship between sloth and intellectual work a step further, to be dramatized in one of the *Commedia*'s most emblematic episodes, revealing the intellectual at its centre to be a writer and a poet, just like Dante himself.' See also Ibid., p. 173: 'In the *Commedia*, sloth ceases to be the exclusive domain of the clergy and invades the lay sphere, where the intellectual takes the place formerly occupied by the monk.'

[48] Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 97–145: 'Et, ut ostendat auctor quomodo religiosi viri et claustrales hoc vitio accidiae multum occupantur, qui deberent non solum currere, sed volare, cum quasi aves sint spirituales, dicit Bernardus quod "Ad modum testudinum incedunt lentissime", de quibus Ysaia ait: "Qui sunt isti qui ut nubes volant sed velut mortui immobiles stant, ex quo habent frequenter orare exemplo David, ut in via Domini vivificentur", fingit se reperire quendam spiritum hic dicentem sibi quomodo fuit abbas in monasterio sancti Zenonis de Verona.' For comparison, see Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 4, pp. 173b: 'Viri enim contemplativi, quorum esset non solum currere sed volare (aves enim spirituales sunt) ad modum testudinum lentissime incedunt. Unde iam non potest dici de illis illud verbum Esaie 40: "Qui sunt isti qui ut nubes volant, sed velut mortui immobiles stant?" Unde necesse habent frequenter orare, exemplo David, ut in via Domini vivificentur, et ut pennae columbae eis dentur, ut volare possint et requiescant.'

[49] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch.17, pp. 206a–b: 'Primum est, quod licet die et nocte in ore habeant cibum regium, qui de ore Dei procedit, scilicet verbum Dei: tamen ex pigritia terendi eum famelici remanent, nec reficiuntur de cibo illo . . . Secundum est, quod cum ipsi sint de nocte et de die in

contemplatives – are the most slothful who least ought to be so ('illi sunt magis acediosi qui minus esse debuerunt').[50]

Peraldus highlights an even stranger feature ('satis admirandum est') of the contemplatives: when they should be most fervent ('quod ferventiores esse deberent') and full of zeal – that is, when closest to death, judgement, and eternal damnation or salvation – they become colder ('frigidiores') and more slothful.[51] In illustrating this puzzling back-sliding of religious (Peraldus is speaking only of 'the religious' in the sense of those in a religious order; i.e., as opposed to the laity) even when near to reaching their goal, Peraldus uses the example of the Israelites ('sicut accidit filiis Israel') who erred for thirty-eight years in the desert and, when they believed themselves closest to the promised land, moved farther from it.[52] This is precisely Dante's Biblical example of sloth, cried aloud by the last two slothful penitents:[53]

> Di retro a tutti dicean: 'Prima fue
> morta la gente a cui il mar s'aperse,
> Che vedesse Iordan le rede sue!'
> (*Purg.* XVIII, 133–35).

[Behind all the others they were saying: 'First of all the people died for whom the sea drew back, before Jordan saw their heirs'].

The two descriptive clauses of Dante's second example of sloth – those followers of Aeneas who, weary of his mission to found Rome, are left behind in Sicily – reflect three further aspects of Peraldus's treatment:

colloquio cum Deo, permittunt tamen multos dies transire, quod non aperiunt oculos cordis, ut videant quis loquatur cum eis, vel quid loquatur. Sicut dicit Gregorius: "Cum oramus, ipsi cum Deo loquimur; cum vero legimus, loquitur nobiscum Deus."'

[50] Ibid., t. v, pa. 1, ch. 4, pp. 173b.

[51] Ibid., t. v, pa. 2, ch.17, p. 207a: 'Sextum est, quod quanto diutius soli iustitiae approximaverunt, tanto frigidiores existunt. Et satis admirandum est, unde hoc accidit. Quanto enim proximiores fiunt, tanto videntur quod ferventiores esse deberent.'

[52] Ibid., t. v, pa. 2, ch.17, p. 207a: 'Sed timendum est, ne nubes alicuius peccati interposita hoc impediat, vel ne per aliquem errorem fiat, ut cum progredi debeant, ingrediantur: et cum deberent appropinquare terrae promissionis, ab ea elongentur. Sicut accidit filiis Israël, qui triginta octo annis in deserto erraverunt. Qui cum crederent appropinquare terrae promissionis, ab ea elongabantur.'

[53] These two souls lag behind ('Di retro a tutti'; *Purg.* XVIII, 133), and Dante must look back to see them ('Volgiti qua'; 131). Virgil describes them, moreover, as biting sloth: 'vedine due / venir dando a l'accidïa di morso' (131–32). The implication from Peraldus's treatise is that these two souls were back-sliding contemplatives who, having had on Earth the greatest reason for zeal, now feel in Purgatory more painfully the guilt (the bite) of their sloth.

E: 'Quella che l'affanno non sofferse
fino a la fine col figlio d'Anchise
sé stessa a vita sanza gloria offerse!'
(*Purg.* XVIII, 136–38)

[And 'Those women who did not endure hardship to the end
with the son of Anchises, chose life without glory!']

The impatience of hardship ('che l'affanno non sofferse'; 136) is the quiddity of the sub-vice of *mollitia* [weakness]: 'mollis est ille qui cedit duris, idest, tribulationibus secumbit'.[54] This leads, in turn, to the further vice of *inconsummatio* or *imperseverantia* [imperseverance]: the failure to complete a task to the end ('fino a la fine'; XVIII, 137).[55] Notably, Peraldus associates 'mollitia' with an effeminate weakness, an insinuation Dante picks up by explicitly blaming the Trojan women ('quella'; 136).[56] The second descriptive clause, 'sé stessa a vita sanza gloria offerse!' [they chose a life without glory]' (138),[57] reflects Peraldus's admonition that sloth takes the goods of glory away, because these are promised only to the strenuous and the vigilant ('Bona gloriae aufert, quia illa promittuntur solis strenuis et vigilantibus').[58]

We have seen how Dante's description of the slothful souls closely follows the theoretical exposition of Peraldus's treatise. We are now in a position to summarise some key features: Dante defines sloth as tepidity (an insufficient love for God), and sees this lukewarmedness as the root of a whole series of other offshoot vices; his treatment highlights the importance of conserving time, of diligence, and of zeal (albeit not to the excess of indiscreet fervour). Dante perceives sloth as a particularly strong temptation in the contemplative life, and he sees the back-sliding of sloth as endangering one's salvation (the journey to the promised land) and any hope of the good of glory. With these points in mind, let us turn to Dante-character's zealous intellectual movement from ignorance to

[54] Peraldus, 'De mollitie', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch.2, p. 175b.

[55] See, for example, Peraldus, 'De vitio inconsummationis', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch.8, pp. 200b–1a: 'Hoc vitio laborant illi, qui raro ad perfectionem ducunt aliquod opus quod inchoant … Parum etiam prodest per mare laborasse, si tunc navis perierit quando portui proxima fuerit, per leucam unam. Ideo dicitur Proverb. 18: "Qui mollis est et dissolutus in opere suo, frater est sua opera dissipantis."'

[56] See, for example, Peraldus, 'De mollitie', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch.2, p. 175b: '"Tenera autem mulier et delicata, quae super terram ingredi non volebat, nec pedis vestigium figere, propter mollitiem et teneritudinem nimiam."'

[57] Benvenuto, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 136–38: 'Ideo bene dicit: offerse se stessa a vita, idest, ad vivendum in otio, senza gloria, quia non venit cum aliis ad fundandum romanum imperium gloriosum.'

[58] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 3, p. 171a: 'Quomodo acedia auferat homini bona gloriae, gratiae, et naturae.'

knowledge on the terrace (*Purg.* XVII, 73–XVIII, 87), which the slothful souls' sudden appearance (XVIII, 88–138) briefly interrupts.

Pursuing Wisdom

Where Virgil does not have a body and, therefore, is not subject to physical tiredness, Dante-character's soul is still embodied (he travels *alive* through the land of the dead!). Consequently, when he reaches the terrace of sloth at nightfall (*Purg.* XVII, 70–72), he is so tired that he literally cannot move his feet:

> 'O virtù mia, perché sì ti dilegue?'
> fra me stesso dicea, ché mi sentiva
> la possa de le gambe posta in triegue.
> (*Purg.* XVII, 73–75)

> ['O my strength, why do you dissolve so?' I was saying to myself,
> for I felt a truce imposed on all the power of my legs].

Dante's peculiar use of the Latinism *deliquescere* ('ti dilegue'; 73) evokes how tiredness, although not in itself a sin, can lead to sloth.[59] The etymological sense of the verb – to liquify – suggests the weakness (*mollitia*) of sloth: 'the weak man', Peraldus notes, 'is like a snowman who, in the fire of tribulation, liquifies and is turned into nothing'.[60] Moreover, the meaning – Dante's strength dissolves – evokes the vice of 'dissolutio':

> Hoc vitio laborat ille qui inveniens difficultatem in sui regimine se dimittis omnino absque gubernatione, iuxta illud Proverbiorum 23: 'Erit sicut dormiens in medio mari, et quasi sapiens gubernator amisso clavo.'
>
> [He struggles with this vice who, finding difficulty in governing himself, loses all steering altogether, as it says in Proverbs: 'He will be like someone sleeping in the middle of the sea, and like a wise pilot without a rudder'].

This is precisely the situation of Dante and Virgil here, who are compared to a beached ship ('ed eravamo affissi / pur come nave ch'a la piaggia arriva';

[59] Although tiredness impedes study, it is not in itself a sin. If someone is tired in study, Peraldus notes, it is good for him to rest and, after a short interval, to return to the material ('Tertio impedit diligentiam studii, fatigatio. Unde bonum est, ut quando aliquis videt se fatigatum circa materiam aliquam studendo, quod ipse quiescat, et post quietem ad eandem materiam redeat'; Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2 ch. 7, p. 200b).

[60] Peraldus, 'De mollitie', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch.2, pp. 175b: 'homo etiam mollis est velut homo niveus, quid ad ignem tribulationis quasi liquefit et ad nihilum redigitur'.

77–78). Moreover, Virgil's language alludes to the two specifically temporal sub-vices of sloth: *tarditas* [slowness] (87) and *dilatio* [delay] (90).

Despite knowing full well that Dante is absolutely exhausted, Virgil decides to digress, and to deliver an extremely long scholastic lecture – so long, in fact, that it spans two cantos (*Purg.* XVII, 88–XVIII, 75). The psychological drama, then, is that Dante-character is caught between tiredness and the desire to make good use of his time through growth in wisdom. Dante, in other words, is struggling against sloth because, as Peraldus (citing Matthew 26) comments, 'to stay awake with the Lord' ('cum Domino vigilare') means to beware of the drowsiness of sloth following His example.[61] Virgil's doctrinal speeches are not, therefore, parenthetical to the terrace of sloth. As Peraldus highlights, wisdom ('sapientia') is to a man's laziness ('pigritia') as a goad ('stimulus') is to a horse's slowness ('tarditas'), urging him to do good ('verba sapientum . . . excitant hominen ad bonum').[62] Even more significantly, Peraldus argues that in the order of the church, the light of wisdom ('lumen sapientiae') is to be preferred to the cross of penitence ('crux penitentiae').[63] This confirms how Dante-character's doctrinal lesson should itself be understood as correcting sloth, and it helps explain the apparent lack of an external punishment inflicted on the slothful penitents in this terrace. It is their own wills which lead them to move physically, just as it is Dante-character's desire for knowledge (embodied in his questions to Virgil) which leads him to move forward intellectually.

It is a remarkable testament to his virtuous zeal that, even when forced to wait, Dante-character is eager for time not to be wasted: 'Se i piè si stanno, non stea tuo sermone' [Although our feet stand still, let not your

[61] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 3, p. 208b: 'Cum Domino vigilare, est exemplo eius a somno acediae cavere.'

[62] Peraldus, 'De verbis sacrae Scripturae quae laborem suadent et otium vel pigritiam dissuadent', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 2, p. 167a. Peraldus also compares wisdom to fixed spikes ('clavi in altum defixi') that hold a person back from falling into evil ('retinent hominem ne se praecipitet in malis'): 'Stimulus valet contra tarditatem iumentorum: sic verba sapientum contra pigritiam hominum. Et notandum, quod homo laborat quasi contrariis vitiis. Est enim lentus ad bonum, et praeceps ad malum. Sed verba sapientum sunt velut stimuli quando excitant hominem ad bonum. Et sunt velut clavi in altum defixi, dum retinent hominem ne se praecipitet in malis.' Moreover, wisdom should be preferred over physical strength, and the prudent to the strong man, not least because the devil attacks us more with cunning ('astutia') and wisdom ('sapientia') than with strength ('viribus'): 'Tertio requirit hoc ipse hostis contra quem pugnam habemus. Diabolus enim contra hominem pugnat potius astutia et sapientia quam viribus; ideo et nos sapientia contra eum pugnare debemus, non viribus; vires enim non sufficerent resistere sapientiae: quia melior est sapientia quam vires: et vir prudens, quam fortis' (Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 1, p. 209b).

[63] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 4, ch. 3, p. 211a: 'Ordinatum est in ecclesia quod lumen sapientiae cruci poenitentiae praeferendum est.'

speech do so] (XVII, 84). Moreover, it is his 'thirst' for wisdom (XVIII, 4) that keeps him alert and awake. Dante emphasises that only after he has taken in Virgil's responses to his questions does he again become sleepy:

> Per ch'io, che la ragione aperta a piana
> sovra le mie quistioni avea ricolta,
> stava com' om che sonnolento vana.
> (*Purg.* XVIII, 85–88)
>
> [Wherefore I, who had harvested an open and clear discussion of my questions, sat as one does whose mind wanders sleepily].

In this way, Dante shows that he has not fallen into the slothful vice of carelessness ('de vitio incuriae') which Peraldus specifically associates with the acquisition and conservation of knowledge.[64] Rather, exhibiting the opposing virtue of 'industria', Dante has harvested 'some good fruit' (alcun buon frutto) from Virgil's lecture.[65]

Notably, Dante's somnolence – a term repeated twice in two lines ('stava com' om che sonnolento vana / Ma questa sonnolenza; 87–88) – occurs after this strenuous intellectual activity, and after a vigil prolonged by Virgil's lectures and by the arrival of the slothful penitents.[66] Dante's sleep is clearly motivated by bodily necessity; this is Peraldus's only valid justification for sleep, which otherwise would be considered a waste of time ('somnus absque necessitate est temporis amissio').[67] The Christian anxiety about the moral dissolution consequent upon sleep, even when following strenuous work, is evident from Peraldus's warnings about the

[64] According to Peraldus, it is essential that a man who wants to proceed in study both deposits in his memory what he has learnt and writes it down (so that his written version will be a 'second memory'): 'Unde ei, qui in studio vellet proficere, summe necessarium esset ut illud, quod addisceret, pro posse suo memoriae infigeret: deinde quia memoria labilis est, scriberet illud et quasi de pergameno aliam sibi memoriam faceret' (Ibid., t. v, pa. 2, ch. 11, p. 202a).

[65] The metaphor of Virgil's speech as 'fruit' may also have its origin in Peraldus's treatise. In opposition to 'otio' (laziness), Peraldus lists the eight fruits of the mouth ('de octo fructibus oris'): Peraldus notes that Jesus Christ, the tree of life, especially desired the seventh, the erudition of one's brother ('eruditio fraterna') – precisely the activity of Virgil in this passage. See Peraldus, 'De octo fructibus oris', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch. 4, p. 179a–81a: 'Septimus fructus est, fraterna eruditio. Fructum istum specialiter ferre volui ipsum lignum vitae, scilicet ipse Filius Dei. Marci 1: "Eamus in civitates et vicos proximos, ut ibi predicem: ad hoc enim veni"'(p. 179b).

[66] The first thing necessary for a person to sleep virtuously, Peraldus states, is that he works when he is awake ('primo necessarium est ei ut vigilando laboret). Peraldus cites Ecclesiastes to the effect that the sleep of a workman is sweet ('Dulcis est somnus operanti'). Peraldus, 'De tribus necessarris homini ut debito modo dormiat', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch. 3, p. 177b.

[67] Peraldus, 'De tribus quae deberent homines cohibere a nemietate somni', in Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2, ch. 3, pp. 177a–b (p. 177a).

many evils that may arise during slumber. Peraldus's first three examples all concern a man being murdered or delivered to death by a woman in his sleep (Jael killed Sisara; Dalila delivered Samson to his enemies; Judith murdered Holofernes). In Dante-character's own dream, he is affronted by the Siren, the 'ancient witch' (antica strega), and saved from her clutches only by Virgil's awakening of him (*Purg*. XIX, 34–36). Given Dante's extreme tiredness up to this point, the dream of the Siren (1–15) is clearly not an afterthought at all; rather, it is the narrative climax of Dante-character's 'intellectual drama'.

Virgil's Doctrine and the Dream of the Siren

This reappraisal of the terrace of sloth brings out two narrative dramas: the acute fervour of the penitent slothful and, framing this, Dante-character's intellectual zeal for knowledge. With a ternary structure in mind, we can see that the dream of the Siren (in *Purgatorio* XIX) is the second major stage of Dante's intellectual drama. In so doing, we discover that Virgil's three doctrinal lectures in the first part (XVII, 73–XVIII, 87) – on the moral structure of Purgatory, on the nature of love, and on free will and moral responsibility – are represented symbolically by the dream of the Siren in the second part (XVIII, 130–45 and XIX, 1–69).

Virgil's first lecture (*Purg*. XVII, 91–139) expounds on love and its disorder as the very foundation of the moral structure of Purgatory. Virgil states that the soul's love can be disordered in two main ways: the love of an evil ('per male obietto') or the unmeasured love of a good ('o per troppo o per poco di vigore'). Virgil then categorises pride, envy, and anger as three ways by which we come to love the evil of our neighbour; sloth as the deficient love of God; and avarice, gluttony, and lust as three forms of excessive love for lesser goods. The first triad of vices concerns internal spiritual blindness, which sets man off on the wrong course and leads him to hatred of his neighbour. This internal blindness is corrected on the three corresponding terraces: proud eyes are bent low, envious eyes stitched up, and wrathful eyes plunged into impenetrable darkness ('buio d'inferno'). The second triad of vices concerns disordered attraction of external, sensible things: the avaricious seek to possess all they see; the gluttons are possessed by the taste of foods and drinks; and the lustful constantly seek the touch of sexual pleasure. The Siren arguably embodies this transition from the two triads of vices, from the 'internal' to the 'external', from the 'spiritual' to the 'carnal': she does not just distract man from his true course or entice him to slow his oar (the specific vice

of sloth), but also seduces him to follow unworthy worldly cares and distractions.[68] In classical illustrations of the Siren, her closed arms may depict avarice; her fish's tail gluttony; and her virginal face lust.[69] Virgil emphasises that the 'antica strega' (the Siren) is the only thing wept for on the three final terraces of the mountain.

Virgil's first lecture leads Dante-character to question him about the nature of love: 'that you expound love for me, to which you refer every good action and its contrary' ('Però ti prego, dolce padre caro, / che mi dimostri amore, a cui reduci / ogne buono operare, e 'l suo contraro'; XVIII, 14–15). Virgil's second scholastic discourse (XVIII, 19–39), appealing directly to Dante's intellect (16–18), is both a constructive explication of 'rational love' ('d'animo') and how it may err, and a refutation of the opposing thesis that 'every love in itself [is] a praiseworthy thing' ('ciascun amore in sé laudabil cosa'; 35–36), 'the error of the blind who claim to lead' ('l'error de' ciechi che si fanno duci'; 18).[70] As a qualification of the courtly love rhetoric of Francesca da Rimini (*Inf.* V), Virgil's discourse situates Dante's views on love as a mean between those of the two Guidos ('l'uno e l'altro Guido') referenced on the terrace of pride (*Purg.* XI, 97–99).[71] For Guido Cavalcanti, love is a passion which ultimately impedes man from the perfect good of philosophical contemplation; in contrast, Guinizelli indiscriminately exalts love as the source of perfection. Dante, however, both defends love as leading man to the highest good (contra Calvalcanti) and shows how particular loves may lead

[68] See, for example, Pietro Alighieri [1], gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 4–9: 'Auctor in persona cuiuslibet se purgantis a vitiis, purgatis quatuor principalibus vitiis spiritualibus et diabolicis, scilicet superbia, invidia, ira et accidia, procedit ad tria alia carnalia vitia, scilicet avaritiam, gulam, et luxuriam. Quae quidem tria vitia, quia magis ab attractione quadam ficta et fallaci mundana, quam a malitia, ut superiora quatuor vitia praenotata, procedunt, ideo hic auctor in principio istorum trium vitiorum, quae inter se fraternizzant, et eorum tractatu, fingit hanc Sirenam se invenire somnio; hoc est, quod contemplatus fuit quid movebat nos ad dicta tria vitia, quod erat dicta attractio, quae decipit nos aut circa avaritiam, aut circa gulam, aut circa luxuriam.'

[69] See Codice cassinese, gloss to *Purg.* XIX, nota: 'quo respectu puto antiquum usum pingendi dictas syrenas habuisse hic. scilicet. eas pingere cum vultu virgineo in quo attractio praedicta luxuriae denotatur. Item cum manibus strictis in quo attractio avaritiae figuratur. Item cum caudis piscium in quo attractio gulae denotatur.' See also Pietro Alighieri [1], gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 19–24: 'Unde et usus modernus pingit eas hodie in unico corpore repraesentantes ista tria vitia. Nam per vultum humanum attractio luxuriae figuratur, per strictionem manuum, avaritiae, per caudas piscium, gulae. Et sic etiam nunc iste auctor fingit has tres Sirenas, idest attractiones, in unico corpore istius feminae balbutientis; in quo balbutiatu denotat affectionem gulae, in obliquitate oculorum, luxuriae, in impedimento manuum et pedum, avaritia.'

[70] See Mathew 15:14: 'Caeci sunt, et duces caecorum.'

[71] Virgil's exposition recasts passages from the *Convivio* (see especially *Conv.* I, xi, 4–5 and IV, vi, 13–16).

to evil as well as to good (contra Guinizelli). Dante-character presents himself as being corrected, then, of this counter-thesis.[72]

Virgil first explains the basic psychology of love to Dante. The underlying premise is that, created by God, the human soul is naturally disposed to love (XVIII, 19). The mind's first movement passes through two stages: first the mind is stimulated ('awakened into act') by the pleasure given by the perception of a desirable object (21), and then it naturally inclines towards this object (20). In more scholastic terminology (22–24), the power of perception ('vostra apprensiva') presents the image ('intenzione') of an external object to the mind; if the object is pleasure-giving, the mind naturally inclines towards it ('sì che l'animo ad essa volger face'). Where the first movement is a natural inclination (a 'turning'), Virgil here reserves the term 'love' to specify a second 'spiritual movement' ('moto spiritale'), the bending ('piegar') of the mind towards this object: 'if, having turned [first movement], the mind bends towards it [second movement], that bending is love' ('e se rivolto inver' di lei si piega / quell piegare è amor'; 25–26). As the captured mind enters into desire ('l'animo preso entra in disire'; 31), it cannot rest until it possesses the desired object. In this way, Virgil refutes the thesis that 'every love is itself a praiseworthy thing'. Although the natural disposition to love (the wax) is always good, the mind may choose to bend towards a pleasure-giving object (a seal), which, for an individual, may be an apparent but not an actual good.[73]

Dante's dream of the Siren, in its first phase (*Purg.* XIX, 1–24), enacts the way in which the mind may bend in love towards this kind of delectable but ultimately false object. Indeed, the string of five adjectival phrases describing the Siren embodies the five kinds of false earthly happiness delineated by Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*:

> Mi venne in sogno una femmina balba,
> ne li occhi guercia e sovra i piè distorta,
> con le man monche, e di colore scialba.
> (*Purg.* XIX, 7–9)
>
> [There came to me in a dream a female stuttering,
> cross-eyed, and crooked on her feet, with stunted
> hands, and pallid in colour].

[72] For this summary, see also Guiseppe Giacalone, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 16–18.

[73] Benvenuto glosses this process with the example of a man seeing a picture of a beautiful woman. First, the form of the beautiful woman ('through the windows of the eyes') enters into his mind, giving pleasure; then, the mind may choose to bend in love towards this woman (even if absent or never seen in person before). Benvenuto, gloss to *Purg.* XVIII, 19–21.

On this interpretation, 'balba' (stuttering) indicates the vanity of fame or human glory (*gloria*) which exists on the stuttering tongues of men; 'ne li occhi guercia' [cross-eyed] denotes the imperfection of honours (*dignitates*) which stand before men's eyes; 'sovra i piè distorta' [crooked on her feet] indicates that men walk unsafely and unstably on riches (*divitiae*); 'le man monche' [the stunted hands] represent the imperfection of the works committed through temporal authority over lands (*regna*); and 'di colore scialba' [pallid colour] represents the vanity of sensual pleasures (*voluptates*) which rest only in appearance (as colour is only an accidental property of a substance).[74] That Dante is the object of the main clause ('mi venne') reflects that the Siren, as yet an unnamed subject 'una femmina' [female], is presented to him, initially, as she is.

In the next terzina, by contrast, the subject–object relationship is inverted:

> Io la mirava; e come 'l sol conforta
> le fredde membra che la notte aggrava,
> così lo sguardo mio le facea scorta
> la lingua, e poscia tutta la drizzava
> in poco d'ora, e lo smarrito volto,
> com' amor vuol, così le colorava.
> (*Purg.* XIX, 10–15)

> [I was gazing at her; and, as the sun strengthens
> cold limbs that the night weighs down, so my gaze loosed
> her tongue, and then in a short while it straightened her
> entirely and gave colour to her wan face, just as love desires].

As Dante, the subject, actively gazes on her, the Siren is transformed: his gaze, like the sun warming cold limbs, gives colour to her face, loosens her tongue, and straightens her distorted features. Through Dante's gaze and seconded by the movement of love ('com' amor vuol'), the 'femina balba'

[74] For this reading, see, for example, Francesco da Buti, gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 1–15. According to this interpretation, Dante's Siren portrays the false view of human happiness which Boethius associates with Epicurus. See Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, III, ii, 47–52, in *The Theological Tractates*, ed. and trans. by H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 234–35: 'Habes igitur ante oculos propositam fere formam felicitatis humanae – opes, honores, potentiam, gloriam, voluptates. Quae quidem sola considerans Epicurus consequenter sibi summum bonum voluptatem esse constituit, quod cetera omnia iucunditatem animo videantur afferre' [So now you have as it were set before your eyes the delineaments of human happiness: wealth, honour, power, glory, pleasure. Epicurus looked only at these things, and consequently decided that for him the highest good was pleasure, since all the others seemed to bring delight to the mind]. See also Olivia Holmes, 'Wisdom and Folly; Lady Philosophy and the Sirens', in Holmes, *Dante's Two Beloveds*, pp. 35–67; and G. Mezzadroli, 'Dante, Boezio e le sirene', *Lingua e Stile*, 25: 1 (1990), 25–56.

(a stuttering, ugly, pallid, female) is transformed into the 'dolce serena' (the sweet, blushing, rosy Siren). This sequence may reflect how the five kinds of false earthly happiness represented by the 'femina' come to appear delectable because of man's false estimation: men believe, mistakenly, that fleeting glory (*gloria*) will not stutter, but bring lasting renown (*celebritas*); honours, not imperfect, will bring reverence (*reverentia*); wealth (*divitiae*) will bring not danger, but rather the security of sufficiency (*sufficientia*); lands (*regna*) will bring not the frustration of governance in inefficiency, compromise, and corruption, but rather true authority and power (*potentia*); and pleasures (*voluptates*) will produce not vanity and emptiness, but joy (*laetitia*).[75] The Siren so captivates men that any drawn to her rarely leave ('e qual meco s'ausa / rado sen parte'; 23–24); at an allegorical level, whoever falls in love with imperfect worldly goods becomes enchanted by, or habituated to, them. The transformation of the 'femina balba' into the 'dolce serena', thereby renders poetically Virgil's second doctrinal discourse on the nature of love, and how a person may love an ultimately false good (*Purg.* XVIII, 19–39).

Virgil's third discourse (XVIII, 46–74) is rendered poetically, then, in the second stage of the Siren episode (XIX, 25–33). This doctrinal lecture responds to Dante's question that, if love comes from outside the soul ('s'amore è di fuori a noi offerto'; XVIII, 43), and the soul follows only this attraction ('e l'anima non va con altro piede'; 44), how is the soul to blame for following good or evil? ('se dritta o torta va non è suo merto'; 45). Virgil clarifies that our first appetites are determined (just as a bee is made to make honey) and, therefore, this first desire deserves neither praise nor blame ('e questa prima voglia / merto di lode o di biasmo non cape'; 59–60) – a doctrine reiterating the central discourse on love in *Purgatorio* XVII ('Lo naturale è sempre sanza errore'; 94). Nevertheless, Virgil again emphasises that, aside from these natural desires, man has reason which counsels, giving or withholding assent to the desire ('la virtù che consiglia / e de l'assenso de' tener la soglia'; 62–63). Finally, man has free will ('la nobile virtù . . . lo libero arbitrio'; 73–74) which enables him to act upon what reason counsels. Even, therefore, if all desires arose through necessity ('di necessitate / surga ogne amor'; 70–71), man – with reason

[75] Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, III, ii, 72–77, in *Theological Tractates*, pp. 236–37: 'Atqui haec sunt quae adipisci homines volunt eaque de causa divitias, dignitates, regna, gloriam voluptatesque desiderant, quod per haec sibi sufficientiam, reverentiam, potentiam, celebritatem, laetitiam credunt esse venturam' [These surely are the things men want to gain, for that reason they desire riches, high office, the rule of men, glory, and pleasure, because they believe that through them they will achieve sufficiency, respect, power, celebrity, and joy].

and free will – has the power and, therefore, the responsibility of moral action. This conclusion also echoes, of course, Marco Lombardo's discourse in *Purgatorio* XVI ('in voi è la cagione'; 83).

Now consider the second phase of the Siren episode. Immediately after Dante is seduced by the Siren's speech, a lady prompts Virgil to rip the Siren's clothes and expose her belly ('il ventre'):

> Ancor non era sua bocca richiusa
> quand' una donna apparve santa e presta
> lunghesso me per far colei confusa.
> 'O Virgilio, Virgilio, chi è questa?'
> fieramente dicea; ed el venìa
> con li occhi fitti pur in quella onesta.
> L'altra prendea, e dinanzi l'apria,
> fendendo i drappi, e mostravami 'l ventre;
> quel mi svegliò col puzzo che n'uscia.
> (*Purg.* XIX, 25–33)

[Her mouth had not yet closed when there appeared a lady, holy and quick, alongside me, to confound her.
'O Virgil, Virgil, who is this?' she was saying fiercely;
and he was approaching with his eyes fixed only on that virtuous one.
The other he seized, and opened in front, tearing her clothes, and showed me her belly, which awakened me with the stench which issued from it].

In light of the parallels with the doctrinal discourse in *Purgatorio* XVIII (which Virgil emphasises is according to reason; 'quanto ragion qui vede / dir ti poss' io'; 46–47) *and* the Boethian echoes in the Siren episode thus far, it does seem natural to identify 'la donna . . . santa e presta' (XIX, 26) as Lady Philosophy.[76] In Dantean allegory, the lady's eyes represent the demonstrations of her science. Here, Lady Philosophy's doctrine (and, perhaps, specifically the text of Boethius's *Consolation*) demonstrates to reason the baseness and trickery of the five false earthly goals represented by the Siren. The lady asks Virgil *who* the Siren is ('chi è questa?'; 28); that

[76] This interpretation is clearly expounded by Francesco da Buti (gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 16–33): 'Questa donna *santa e presta*, ch'apparve allato a Dante e chiama Virgilio, è la Filosofia, che co la dottrina sua all'omo viene subita e muove Virgilio; cioè la ragione, chiamandolo a considerare la viltà e lo inganno de la felicità mondana.' Some early commentators interpret this lady more generally as 'reason' (see, for example, Benvenuto, gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 25–33) but, as Buti implies, this duplicates the function of Virgil in the dream allegory. Others identify her more narrowly as 'temperance' (see, for example, Pietro [3], gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 1–45) but, again, this does not seem to reflect the lady's actions in the dream. Various other proposals have emerged as well, especially in the twentieth century, including allegories of 'virtue', 'truth', 'charity', and 'prudence', as well as Mary, Lucy, and Beatrice. I agree with Sapegno (gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 16) that, amongst the modern interpretations, the identification with Lady Philosophy remains the most plausible.

is, she compels Dante-character to consider intellectually the Siren's essence (her quiddity) and not how she may appear through accidental properties which are subject to change (as the pallid 'femmina balba', through Dante's desire, becomes the blushing 'dolce serena'). Exposed for what she truly is, the Siren vanishes as Dante is awoken from his dream by her foul stench ('col puzzo che n'uscia'; 33).[77]

The dream of the Siren continues to weigh on Dante's mind until Virgil's final rebuke in which he names her not as the 'femmina balba' (as she first appears to Dante in his dream) or the 'dolce serena' (as she presents herself), but rather as the 'antica strega': 'antica' (ancient) because she existed from the beginning of the world, and 'strega' (witch) because she still succeeds in enticing people to follow her temptations. The exasperation of Dante's early commentators, let alone Virgil, on this point is evident: even though wise authorities from antiquity have warned against the false kinds of earthly happiness, people continue to be seduced by the Siren's song.[78] Therefore, when Virgil says 'vedesti come l'uom da lei si slega' [you have seen how one frees oneself from her] (XIX, 60), this may refer *both* to the poetical episode of the Siren in the first half of *Purgatorio* XIX *and* to Virgil's doctrinal passages in *Purgatorio* XVIII.

Looking back retrospectively, it is clear that the Siren was present implicitly throughout the terrace of sloth. The nautical image comparing Dante and Virgil to a beached ship on their arrival at the terrace is reinforced through the two examples of sloth: those Trojan women who burnt Aeneas's ships and chose to remain on Sicily's shores, and the Israelites who crossed the Red Sea but, complaining, hearkened back to life in Egypt (a life of sin).[79] The actual appearance of the Siren in Dante's

[77] Virgil's three calls may be interpreted in different ways. Francesco da Buti interprets them as the three admonishments of reason to sensuality: the first calls with the voice of memory, demanding man to remember his principle and goal (God); the second calls with the voice of the intellect, telling him to understand what a man is (i.e., by his definition, or quiddity, as a rational animal); and the third calls with the voice of direct will, demanding that man love and desire the first and true perfect good (God). See Francesco da Buti, gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 34–51.

[78] See, for example, Francesco da Buti, gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 16–33: 'e niente di meno li omini mondani pur la seguitano, e da lei non si sanno partire'; and Benvenuto, gloss to *Purg.* XIX, 58–63: 'idest, inveteratam meretricem, quae ab initio mundi seduxit hominem'.

[79] See Craig Boyd and Kevin Timpe, *Sloth: Some Historical Reflections on Laziness, Effort, and Resistance to the Demands of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 5: 'One Scriptural portrait of sloth is the Israelite nation facing the Promised Land. As slothful, they can't bring themselves fully to accept what their identity as God's own people entails, and so they hang back from the rest and fulfilment promised "in the land your God has given you." The land is already theirs according to God's promise, but must yet be seized by further work and battle. When they see the challenges ahead, they too quickly revert back to the comfortably familiar discomforts of their desert

dream, therefore, simply makes explicit her powerful presence in, or even influence over, the terrace of sloth as a whole.

Sloth As Dante's First Sin in *Inferno* I

If we consider that Virgil's three doctrinal lectures in the terrace of sloth embody, for Dante, the very structure of the Christian moral life in terms of ordered and disordered love, this may suggest – beyond the terrace itself – a heightened autobiographical and poetical significance for the vice of sloth. Could sloth, in fact, be the very first sin of Dante-character on his moral journey?[80] This is not to suggest another symbolic interpretation of the leopard, the lion, and the she-wolf. Rather, even before he encounters the three beasts, Dante-character had attempted (and failed) to leave the wooded valley behind him and to ascend the high mountain of virtue.[81] What sin caused, then, this failure?

> Ma poi ch'i' fui al piè d'un colle giunto
> . . . guardai in alto . . .
> Poi ch'èi posato un poco il corpo lasso,
> ripresi via per la piaggia diserta
> sì che 'l piè fermo era 'l più basso.
> (*Inf.* I, 13–30)
>
> [But when I had reached the foot of a hill . . .
> I looked on high . . .
> After I had a little rested my weary body, I took my way again
> along the deserted slope, so that my halted foot was always the lower].

On the terrace of sloth, Virgil upbraids Dante, informing him that the soul walks not only by love, but also 'with the other foot' ('con altro piede') of the intellect (*Purg.* XVIII, 44).[82] The stationary foot ('l piè fermo';

wandering, preferring them to a chance at real rest, a chance that comes with a challenge to live fully into their identity as God's chosen people.'

[80] See Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth*, p. 134.

[81] Dante supplements the metaphor of moral pilgrimage, in which the wood of sin traversed is described as dark (oscura), savage (selvagia), harsh (aspra), and fierce (forte), with the metaphor of life as a sea-journey. He describes himself as one who, having just arrived on land, looks back on the perilous waters ('l'acqua perigliosa'; *Inf.* I, 24) of sin. See Benvenuto, gloss to *Inf.* I, 28–30: 'Et adverte quod autor tangit morem et actum itinerantis viatoris, qui percursa longa et aspera valle, ascensurus montem altissimum, quiescit paululum ad pedes montis, et post quietem iterum incipit itinerare. Ita autor noster, tamquam viator cum diu errasset per sylvam viciorum, volens ascendere montem altissimum virtutis, parum quievit, deinde coepit ascendere.'

[82] Cassell emphasises that for centuries 'critics and commentators failed to consider the line [30] in the context of the traditional metaphoric use of the word foot . . . in philosophy and patristics'. See

Inf. 1, 30), then, is the *pes affectus*. At the beginning of his ascent up the mountain, Dante-character's love is deficient, holding him back from pursuing the upwards path of holiness directed by his intellect (the *pes intellectus*).[83] Dante exhibits, in other words, the vice of tepidity, the 'love of the good' that falls 'short of its proper duty'.

More precisely, we may identify Dante's first sin as the sub-species 'ignavia', the slothful vice of the person who chooses to remain in great misery rather than to undertake the work necessary to escape it.[84] Peraldus's description of the 'ignavi' captures, in my view, Dante's exact moral predicament at this early stage in his journey:

> Postquam ipse posuit unum pedem, scilicet intellectus vel boni propositi, in via munditiae, alium tamen pedem, scilicet affectus vel operis, differt movere per duos annos vel amplius, remanens in immunditia ex pigritia removendi pedem illum. Multi enim sunt qui postquam iudicaverunt bonum esse inchoare novam vitam, et proposuerunt vel voverunt se ingressuros religionem, tamen differunt multis annis implere illud.[85]
>
> [After he has placed one foot, that is of his intellect or good intention, in the path of holiness, his other foot, of his affection or action, he delays moving off for two years or even more, remaining in vice from the sloth of moving that foot. There are indeed many who, having decided that it would be good to start a new life, and proposed or vowed to enter religion, nonetheless delay for many years from actually doing so].

It is only after this failure, therefore, that Dante-character is assailed by the other vices (the 'three beasts'), turning back to the 'dark wood' or 'perilous sea' of sin. As Peraldus notes, the 'ignavi' choose their own death (the 'sea of Hell') through the waters of riches and other snares, rather than

Cassell, *Inferno* 1, pp. 34–44 (pp. 34–35). However, although Cassell provides a useful summary of the scholarly crux (see also p. 150, n. 51), he does not make the connection with its use (and interpretation) in the terrace of sloth, nor does he examine the context in Peraldus. In consequence, he misidentifies Dante's sin here as pride: 'In the metaphors of the Church, the "foot of pride" has come to the wayfarer and he falls' (p. 40).

[83] Wenzel follows John Freccero, who in turn follows the early commentators on this passage. See Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth*, p. 134: 'what hinders Dante from ascending even before the appearance of the beasts is his spiritual lameness', the 'discord between *pes intellectus* and *pes affectus*'. Wenzel concludes that, in this way, Dante expresses the 'psychological reality that man's soul, when captured by sin and incapable of rising before it gains true insight into sin, passes from *acedia* to avarice and the other sins of the flesh'.

[84] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 2 ch. 12, p. 202b: 'Hoc vitio laborat ille, qui potius eligit in miseria magna permanere, quam aliquantulum laboris sustinere.'

[85] Ibid., t. v, pa. 2 ch. 12, p. 203a. Peraldus emphasises not just the metaphor of the *pedes intellectus* and *pedes affectus*, therefore, but the vision of the religious life as a 'new life' (vita nova).

journeying to the door of life through 'the dry earth of poverty' – imagery directly picked up by Dante in his poetic treatment.[86]

What remedy, then, is there for those in Dante-character's predicament? Peraldus's second and third remedies against sloth are the consideration of future pain (*consideratio poenae futurae*) and of eternal reward (*consideratio aeternae praemii*). He tells an anecdote from the *Life of the Desert Fathers* in which the abbot counsels both these remedies to a monk struggling with sloth:

> Secundum et tertium similiter habemus in *vitis Patrum*: ubi dicitur quod quidam frater interrogavit Abbatem Achillem, dicens: 'Cur sedens in cella mea patior acediam?' Cui senex: 'Quia nondum vidisti requiem quam speramus, neque tormenta quae timemus. Si enim ea inspiceres diligenter, etsi vermibus plena esset cella tua usque ad collum, etiam in ipsis permaneres sine acedia iacens.'[87]
>
> [We have both the second and third remedies in the *Lives of the Fathers*, in which it is said that a certain brother questioned the abbot Achilles, saying: 'Why do I give in to sloth in my cell?' To whom the wise man responded: 'Because you have not yet seen the peace that we hope for or the torments that we fear. If you were to contemplate them diligently, even if your cell was full of worms up to your throat, you would remain in them laying prostrate in your cell without, nonetheless, sloth'].

In response to Dante's cry for help, Virgil first upbraids him for not climbing the mountain, as he should:

> Ma tu perché ritorni a tanta noia?
> perché non sali il dilettoso monte
> ch' è principio e cagion di tutta gioia?
> (*Inf.* I, 76–78)

[But why do you turn back to such grief and harm? Why don't you climb the delightful hill, the cause and origin of all joy?]

Virgil then presents precisely the abbot's remedy: he shows Dante the desperate cries ('le disperate strida') of the damned, those content in the fire of Purgatory, and the blessed people ('le beate genti') in heaven (*Inf.* I, 115–20).

The retellings of the opening scene through the eyes of Virgil, Beatrice, and Lucia in *Inferno* II reinforce this interpretation. Appealing

[86] Ibid., t. v, pa. 2 ch. 12, p. 203a: 'potius eligit per aquam divitiarum et deliciarum ire ad mortem suam quam aliquantulum laborando per terram siccam paupertatis, ad portum pervenire vitae. Divitiae deliciaeque aquae sunt tendentes ad mare inferni.'

[87] Ibid., t. v, pa. 3, p. 208a.

to Beatrice, Lucia says that Dante loved her so much that he left the vulgar herd ('t'amò tanto / c'uscì te de la volgare schiera'; *Inf.* II, 104–5), which Guido da Pisa glosses as the wise man abandoning the study of secular sciences and turning, instead, to sacred theology that leads to beatitude:

> Desiring to gain beatitude, the wise man abandons the study of secular sciences and turns, instead, to the study of sacred theology. Therefore it says: 'who has left the vulgar herd for you', that is for your love he has set aside the liberal arts and philosophy and other sciences, which are called 'vulgar' because they obtain the fame and the glory of the people ['vulgi']. Indeed, only philosophers, doctors, and judges are honoured by the people, and, because they have the people's fame, they obtain the glory of the world, that is, money. The science of sacred theology neither seeks the world's glory nor tries to empty the pockets of one's neighbours. The wise man only seeks that in which is everything that can satisfy the human appetite; everything else, indeed, leads rather to famine than to satiety.[88]

Dante's spiritual model, of course, is St Augustine, whose desire for God ultimately surpassed all other desires, whether in his early sensual life, or in his study of 'worldly' rhetoric and philosophy.[89] In a vivid description of the procrastination, delaying, and back-sliding characteristic of sloth, Virgil suggests it was 'viltade' [pusillanimity] (45) or 'tema' [fear] (49) that turned Dante – marred by 'other thoughts' (37–42) – from his 'honourable undertaking', leading him to see a 'beast' where there was only a shadow (40). This is why, returning to the 'lost road' of holiness

[88] Guido da Pisa, gloss to *Inf.* II, 105: 'Amore adipiscendae beatitudinis homo sapiens de scientiis secularibus exit et studio sacrae theologiae intendit. Unde dicit: qui exiit propter te de vulgari acie, idest propter amorem tuum scientias liberales omisit, et philosophiam et alias scientias universas, quae ideo vulgares dicuntur, quia vulgi famam et gloriam consequuntur. Non enim reputantur in vulgo nisi qui vel philosophi vel medici fuerint, aut iudices. Et ideo tales, quia vulgi famam habent, mundi gloriam, idest pecuniam, apprehendunt. Scientia vero sacrae theologiae nec mundi gloriam quaerit, nec marsupia proximorum vacuare intendit. Solum enim quaerit illum in quo sunt omnia quae possunt satiare hominis appetitum; cetera vero, praeter ipsam famem, potius quam satietatem inducunt.'

[89] Ibid. 'Et hoc considerans, Augustinus aiebat: Si Deus universa quae habet michi daret, non me satiaret nisi se ipsum dare promitteret. Et idem: Inquietum est cor nostrum donec in te requiescat. Et ideo bene dicit Ieronimus: Vana est omnis scientia in qua non quaeritur Christus' [And contemplating this, Augustine said: 'If God were to give me everything that he has, it would not satisfy me unless he promised me to give me Himself.' And elsewhere, 'my heart is restless until it rests in you'. And therefore St Jerome's words are well said: 'All knowledge is vain in which is not sought Christ']. Pietro Alighieri cites the passage from Augustine in which he refers to his adolescent eyesight as 'silvester' and his loves as 'umbrosis', which creates suggestive parallels with Dante's reflection on his earlier life in sin (Pietro Alighieri [3], gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 40–139).

(the *via munditiae*) at the shore of Purgatory, all other journeying seems to Dante in vain.[90]

It is notable, in this respect, that the first groups of souls in Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise dramatize, in different ways, this laggardness towards the religious life. The 'wretched souls' of *Inferno* III who live 'without praise or blame' allude to the Biblical *topos* (Revelation 3. 15–16) of those who are 'neither cold nor hot', and whom Christ will therefore 'vomit out of my mouth'. Peraldus – as we have seen – directly associates this passage with tepidity: 'tepidity is the only sin that provokes God to vomit'.[91] The unnamed cleric, Pope Celestine V, by abdicating, failed in the most dramatic way to follow his call from God to lead the faithful in the religious life. Dante's original realm of Ante-Purgatory is peopled by those who delayed the religious life of penance; as a punishment for delaying, they must wait for the purifying fire (the *poena corrigens*) of Purgatory. The two souls we encounter in the slowest sphere of the Moon were contemplative sisters (of the order of St Clare) who, upon being forcibly removed from their cloister, failed to insist (even unto martyrdom) on their religious vocation, instead assenting (albeit against their desire) to a worldly life. In Dante's moral vision, the fourth terrace of sloth is halfway between God (in the Empyrean) and Satan (in the depths of Hell): the sin of sloth is arguably the nexus, then, between the call to 'belong to God' and to 'belong to the world' (1 John 4).

The Sloth of Statius, Dante's Autobiographical Cypher

Given these moral and meta-poetic levels, it is striking that Dante delineates 'sloth' as, alongside prodigality, the dominant sin of his autobiographical cypher, the poet-scholar Statius:[92]

> E pria ch'io conducessi i Greci a' fiumi
> di Tebe poetando, ebb' io battesmo;
> ma per paura chiuso cristian fu' mi,

[90] Benvenuto, gloss to *Inf.* I, 28–30: 'in Purgatorio sigillatim lavabit et mundabit se ab omnibus peccatis'.

[91] Peraldus, *De vitiis*, t. v, pa. 1, ch. 3, p. 168a: 'De hac tepiditate dicit Hieronymus. "Tepiditas sola est, quae solet Deo vomitum provocare."' See also t. v, pa. 2, ch. 1, p. 175a.

[92] Dorigatti draws attention to this parallel. However, without the context of Peraldus for Dante's treatment, he does not identify tepidity as the quiddity of the genus of sloth (see Dorigatti, 'The Acid Test of Faith', pp. 169–75); rather, he turns – mistakenly, in my view –, to 'the Thomistic sense which Dante knew all too well' (p. 175).

lungamente mostrando paganesmo;
e questa tepidezza il quarto cerchio
cerchiar mi fé più che 'l quarto centesmo'.
(*Purg.* XXII, 88–93)

[And before I led the Greeks to the rivers of Thebes in my poetry, I was baptized; but out of fear I was a secret Christian,
for a long time feigning paganism; and this tepidity had me circling the fourth circle beyond a fourth century].

Statius did 500 years in Purgatory for prodigality (XXI, 68) and 400 years for sloth (XXII, 92), leaving a little more than 300 years for his stints in Ante-Purgatory and the terraces of pride, envy, and wrath combined (Statius died in 96 AD, and the date of the poem is 1300). Dante presents Statius as passing through *two* conversions. The first is moral: a passage from Virgil's *Aeneid* showed Statius the error of his prodigal ways (XXII, 37–54). The second is *spiritual*: Virgil's prophetic fourth *Eclogue*, resonating with the 'new preachers' of the gospel, converted him from paganism to Christianity.[93] Crucially, prodigality was Statius's dominant sin when he was still a pagan, whereas 'sloth' was his dominant sin after his second conversion to Christianity. Sloth is, therefore, *the* sin of Statius *as a Christian*.

What was the consequence of sloth for the poet-scholar Statius? And why might this be particularly relevant to Dante? Statius's tepidity (he was a 'closed Christian') suggests that an implied Christian sense must be read out of Statius's otherwise 'closed' *Thebaid*. Thus, in a medieval allegorical interpretation, the seven assailants who enter the gates of Thebes may represent the seven deadly sins who enter the seven apertures of humanity, while the compassionate intervention of Theseus in establishing the altar of mercy may foreshadow the saving work of Christ.[94] Dante, in turn,

[93] Dante's reading of Statius's *Thebaid* as, in some way, indicating that Statius had converted to Christianity is a vexed *questio* in the scholarship. For a survey of the passages of the *Thebaid* which critics have delineated as prompting Dante's interpretation, see Scevola Mariotti, 'Il cristianesimo di Stazio in Dante secondo il Poliziano', in *Letteratura e critica: Studi in onore di N. Sapegno*, vol. 2, (Rome: Bulzoni, 1975), pp. 149–61. See also Ettore Paratore, 'Stazio', in *ED,* V, pp. 419–25 (pp. 423–24).

[94] See Giorgio Padoan, 'Teseo "figura Redemptoris" e il cristianesimo di Statio', in *Il pio Enea, l'empio Ulisse: Tradizione classica e intendimento medievale in Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 1977), pp. 125–50; see also Giorgio Padoan, 'Il canto XXI del *Purgatorio*', in *Nuove letture dantesche*, vol. 4 (Florence: Le Monnier, 1970), pp. 327–54 (pp. 349–50). Padoan argues that Dante reads the *Thebaid* in relation to the commentary by pseudo-Fulgentius. Padoan's view is developed by Marco Ariani, who argues that Dante interprets the 'cognitio secretorum' implicit in the poetry of Virgil and Statius. See Marco Ariani, 'La dolce sapienza di Stazio: *Purgatorio* XXI–XXII', in Quadrio (ed.), *Esperimenti Danteschi: Purgatorio 2009*, pp. 197–224 (see especially pp. 214–16). Peter Heslin argues that Dante

must surpass the model of Statius, and make God the explicit goal of his moral life and his poetry: his own Christian faith should not be veiled as in the *Vita Nova* but explicit as in the *Commedia*. But there is also a more pressing warning for Statius's fellow scholar-poet, as is evident from Statius' own self-presentation:

> Stazio la gente ancor di là mi noma;
> cantai di Tebe e poi del grande Achille,
> ma caddi in via con la seconda soma.
> (*Purg.* XXI, 91–93)
>
> [Statius people back there call me still: I sang of Thebes and then of the great Achilles, but I fell along the way while carrying the second burden].

The insinuation, passed over in the scholarship, is that Statius left his second major work the *Achilleid* incomplete due to his *sloth* (and not simply due to his death).[95] The poet Statius, as Dante knew well, liked to play on the meaning (and puns) of proper names: here, the circumlocution 'Statius people back there call me still' is, as with the famous case of Ciacco, a nod to the *nomen significans rei* [the name signifies the thing]: Statius is a delayer, one who stayed (from the Latin *status*).[96] Statius, therefore, failed to complete the journey of his second poem 'fino a la fine' (the slothful vice of *inconsummatio*); he failed to carry the 'burden' of his poem (*imperseverantia*). In consequence, a part of his potential glory is taken away. That Statius is a cypher for Dante is undisputed, so clear are the autobiographical parallels.[97] It is surely no

constructs a Christological reading of Statius, but downplays the relevance of these medieval allegorical readings for Dante's treatment, and dismisses as 'unfounded' claims that Dante must have known the pseudo-Fulgentius. See Peter Heslin, 'Statius in Dante's *Commedia*', in *Brill's Companion to Statius*, ed. by W. J. Dominik, C. E. Newlands, and K. Gervais (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 512–26 (pp. 512–13).

[95] See Pietro Alighieri [1], gloss to *Purg.* XXI, 93: 'Et quod dicit, quod cecidit in via cum secunda salma, idest, defecit in morte antequam compleret librum Achilleidos, quem incoepit nec complevit.' See also Francesco da Buti, gloss to *Purg.* XXI, 76–102: '*caddi co la seconda soma*; cioè co la seconda opera, *in via*; cioè nel viaggio, che nolla potè riducere al suo fine'; and Alessandro Vellutello, gloss to Purg. XXI, 91–93: 'Scrisse adunque Statio la *Thebaide*, poi l'*Achilleide*, ma questa, prevenuto da la morte, non produsse al fine, Onde dice esser *con la seconda soma* caduto *in via*.'

[96] See Durling and Martinez, *Purgatorio*, p. 359.

[97] Even at a structural level, Statius's identification of his sloth on the terrace of avarice parallels Dante-character's identification of his pride on the terrace of envy (*Purg.* XIII, 133–38).

accident that Dante – at the halfway mark of *Purgatorio* and the *Commedia* as a whole – should draw attention to his own battle against the vice of sloth – a battle necessary for him to carry, unlike Statius, his own burden (the 'ponderoso tema'; *Par.* XXIII, 64; *DVE* II, 4) to completion.[98]

As an early illustration of Peraldus's treatise suggests, the virtuous life may be envisaged and framed, first of all, as a lifelong battle against the vices.[99] In the terrace of sloth, Dante represents his own pursuit of wisdom as in continual conflict with the dragging pull of sloth. Moreover, the very beginning of his afterlife journey (and his poetic masterpiece) is driven by a remedy against tepidity (and its offshoots of ignavia and pusillanimity). Dante's extraordinary achievements – as a poet, statesman, philosopher, and theologian – do not undermine the importance of sloth in his life (and in his Christian moral vision as a whole), but rather enforce and provide evidence for it. As a contemplative poet-scholar especially, Dante's life was a heroic battle with the vice of sloth, a battle in which – at least in relation to the *Commedia* – he was victorious, completing his *magnum opus* shortly before his own death in 1321.

[98] Johannis de Serravalle draws out this meta-poetic significance, in commenting on Dante-character's exclamation: 'O virtù mia, perché si ti dilegue?' [O my strength, why do you dissolve so?] (*Purg.* XVII, 73): 'O virtus mea, quare sic fugis a me? idest quare deficis, vel debilitaris? infra meipsum dicebam, quia sentiebam potentiam crurium positam in treugis; hoc est, iam non poteram plus ire; quia in tantum factus est auctor debilis, quod plus ire non poterat ... Est credendum quod aliquando intellectus auctoris erat fessus; quia semper insistere operi et laborare, nimis durum est. Tamen ipse auctor, confortans semetipsum, hortabatur: Labora, excitare te; quia homo ad laborem nascitur, et avis ad volandum' (Johannis de Serravalle, gloss to *Purg.* XVII, 73–75).

[99] See Harlaian MS. 3244, ff. 27v–28, British Library. The illustration to Peraldus's *Summa* depicts a knight preparing to do battle with the seven deadly sins. Above the illustration is the citation from Job 7:1: 'militia est vita hominis super terram' [military service is the life of man on Earth]. For a helpful discussion of this illustration in relation to Peraldus's *Summa*, see Michael Evans, 'An Illustrated Fragment of Peraldus's *Summa* of Vice: Harleian MS 3244', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 45 (1982), 14–68.