Urban Space and its Practices in Shaping the Imagination of Dante in his *Commedia*

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to test how interpreting Dante’s *Commedia* through the lens of architecture — both the lived experience of urban environments and understandings of architecture in intellectual, cultural, and religious life — might provide new insights. I do this by exploring the intersection of the visual and the literary — in particular, the ways in which ideas are expressed and transmitted in the material culture of architecture and the built environment and how this intersection is explored through writing. I ask the question: how did architecture and urban expansion in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Florence influence the poetry of Dante’s *Commedia*? This thesis argues that architecture, rather than being a discrete topic of concern for Dante, should be seen as a way for him to convey his broader interests, relating to identity, spiritual growth, community, and corruption, within the poem. It shows how Dante drew on the lived experience of architectural models in order to convey their symbolic meaning and to guide the reader in using and experiencing the spaces of his afterlife as one would the spaces on Earth. This allows the architecture of the afterlife to become a part of the penitential process, not only for the inhabitants of the afterlife and Dante-*personaggio*, but for the reader of the *Commedia* as well. I treat architecture and the built environment as it would have been interpreted by Dante’s contemporaries as not only a lived experience but an active agent in forming identity and shaping understandings of the world. This approach offers new insights into widely discussed episodes of the poem, showing how architecture and urban space inform the text alongside other aspects of material culture, as well as the intellectual, cultural, political, and religious currents which have traditionally shaped Dante studies.

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Abbreviations

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ED — *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. by U. Bosco, *et. al.*, 5 vols + Appendix (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1970–78) <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/elenco-opere/Enciclopedia_Dantesca> [accessed 31 January 2022]

Inf. — *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Volume 1: Inferno*, Alighieri, Dante, trans. by Robert M. Durling with notes by Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)

Par. — *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Volume 3: Paradiso*, Alighieri, Dante, trans. by Robert M. Durling with notes by Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

Purg. — *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Volume 2: Purgatorio*, Alighieri, Dante, trans. by Robert M. Durling with notes by Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

PL — *Patrologia Latina* (Chadwyck-Healey Inc., 1996), *http://pld.chadwyck.co.uk/* [accessed 30 March 2020]

Rationale — Durand, William, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (Naples: Josephum Dura Bibliopolam, 1859) <https://archive.org/details/RationaleDivinorumOfficiorumDurandoEBeletho> [accessed 10 July 2020]. All English translations are from: Guillaume Durand, *The Rationale Divinorum Officiorum of William Durand of Mende: (A New Translation of the Prologue and Book One),* Records of Western Civilization (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007)*.*

Chapter 1 **Introduction**

The primary aim of this thesis is to test how interpreting Dante's *Commedia* through the lens of architecture — both the lived experience of urban environments and understandings of architecture in intellectual, cultural and religious life — can provide new insights. I do this by exploring the intersection of the visual and the literary; in particular, how ideas are expressed and transmitted in the material culture of architecture and the built environment and are explored through writing.[1] I ask the question: how can architecture, especially in the context of urban expansion in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Florence, play a role in reading and understanding the poetry of the *Commedia*? During this time, many new buildings, both civic and religious, were built, along with the clearing of piazze, the expansion of city walls, and the straightening of streets. As this thesis will suggest, these projects helped reshape religious, civic, and political experience, as they were integrated into practice, culture, and thought.

This thesis argues that architecture, rather than being a discrete topic of concern for Dante, should be seen as a way for Dante to convey his broader interests, such as ideas of identity, spiritual growth, community, and corruption, within the *Commedia*. This approach offers new insights into widely discussed episodes in the poem, showing how architecture and urban space inform the text alongside other aspects of material culture, as well as the intellectual, cultural, political, and religious currents which have traditionally shaped Dante studies. Each chapter will consider an architectural form or practice to understand these broader concerns and guide the reader through the different issues that urban space can help us understand within the *Commedia*.

This thesis asks two sets of research questions. Firstly, how did the inhabitants of Florence in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries experience architecture and the built environment both in terms of the changing

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[1] I define architecture and the built environment as the buildings themselves, the elements within the buildings, the cityscape, urban planning, and layout.

cityscape, and in terms of practices and rituals of civic and religious life? Secondly, how can spatial theory and movement theory, as well as late medieval conceptualisations of architecture and the built environment (from cosmology to mnemonics), inform our understanding of the *Commedia* in terms of community, selfhood and our relationship with creation? Can interpreting Dante's liturgical and religious references in relation to the spaces with which they are associated open up new readings of the text?

1.1 The Expansion of Florence

The city of Florence experienced a massive building boom between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[2] The city Dante knew was very different from the one we see today; many of the major Renaissance landmarks were not yet designed or planned, such as the Palazzo Pitti and Brunelleschi's dome, and many of the late medieval monuments were still under construction including Santa Maria Novella, the new cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, and Santa Croce. While walking the streets, Dante would have found a construction site in every direction, with half-completed buildings and the sounds of a city constantly changing.

Having an understanding of the relationship between building sites and how the new city was laid out is integral to understanding how the people of

---

[2] The original layout of Florence (59 BC) was based on standard Roman camps, with a quadrilateral layout, including an orthogonal street pattern oriented to the cardinal points. At its centre, a large open space was used as the marketplace, with the most prestigious public buildings surrounding it. A wall encircled the city's perimeter, with a gate on each of its four sides. For a description of the Roman plan see Marina Areli, 'Architecture and Urban Space', in *Dante in Context*, ed. by Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile, Literature in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 427–47 (p. 428). She argues that two factors allowed for the expansion of Florence and Verona: ancient Roman architecture promoted a city's prestige and expansion was used to combat political fragmentation. In the *Convivio*, Dante draws on this tradition by describing Florence as the 'bellissima e famosissima figlia di Roma' [most beautiful and famous of the daughters of Rome] (1.3.4); another example is Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica* (Florence: Magheri, 1823) who describes the city through comparisons to Rome (III. II); William R. Day focuses on the economic advantages for expansion such as trade, agriculture, and urban manufacturing in 'The Early Development of the Florentine Economy, c. 1100-1275' (unpublished doctoral thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2000), p. 606 <http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/2634/1/U615583.pdf> [accessed 4 October 2018]; the florin, first struck in 1252, played a large role in the expansion as well, since it was traded across Europe and became the preferred currency of international trade soon after its inception. See George W. Dameron, *Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), pp. 3–5.

Florence interacted with these new or adapted spaces (Figure 1 and Figure 2).[3] Starting at what was considered the heart and centre of the city, we find Santa Reparata,[4] the city's cathedral (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Giovanni Villani (*c*.1276/1280–1348), in his *Nuova cronica* (1300–1348), describes it as 'di molta grossa forma e piccola a comperazione di si fatta cittade' [of a very crude appearance and small in comparison to the city].[5] As Villani explains, Santa Reparata was no longer large enough to accommodate the growing population of Florence,[6] so in 1294 the commune decided to replace it with the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore (completed in 1436) (Figure 5).[7] Although a new building was underway, Santa Reparata was not completely demolished and was continually used well after Dante's exile. While attending services here Dante and his contemporaries had to enter, not from the original west wall doors into the nave, but instead from the south wall doors or new cathedral doors. He would have witnessed a service with two bays of the nave removed, incongruous flooring,[8] the sounds of construction, as well as dust, leaks, and draughts.[9]

The area surrounding the cathedral, the Piazza di San Giovanni, was also a construction site at this time. It was densely packed with tombs and other buildings such as family dwellings, the cathedral canonry, the hospital of San

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[3] For a description of the maps see F. J. Carmody, 'Florence: Project for a Map, 1250-1296', *Speculum*, 19.1 (1944), 39–49 <https://doi.org/10.2307/2856853> [accessed 17 December 2018].

[4] The first building on this site was begun in the mid-fifth to sixth century. The structure that Dante attended was an eleventh-century building with modifications in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. It was a Romanesque style church with a three-aisled nave, an elevated presbytery and two side chapels which formed the transepts.

[5] Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VIII. IX.

[6] One of the main catalysts for the transformation of Florence was the need to accommodate a new wave of migration from the countryside into the city. In 1300, the population of Florence was 100,000, double that of Siena and Pisa and three times that of Lucca. See Day, p. 942.

[7] Dante and his contemporaries would not have experienced much of what we see in the cathedral today. The exterior walls were quickly assembled after construction began to shield the interior from the elements; however, by 1342 only the sidewalls of the first few bays of the nave were complete.

[8] When the cemetery surrounding the cathedral was dug up, the dirt was taken inside Santa Reparata and used to raise part of the floor to the same height as the new cathedral floor: Franklin K. B. Toker, 'Florence Cathedral: The Design Stage', *The Art Bulletin*, 60.2 (1978), 214–31 (pp. 218, 221) <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043079.1978.10787547> [accessed 23 January 2019].

[9] Toker, 'Florence Cathedral', pp. 217, 221. The church remained operational until around 1375, although it was slowly but continuously altered and demolished to accommodate the needs of the new cathedral.

Giovanni Evangelista (*c*. eleventh century), and the church of San Michele Visdomini (*c*. eleventh century). As the records indicate, the space between Santa Reparata and the Baptistery of San Giovanni, a stone's throw away to the west, was often used during services but was too small to accommodate the congregation:

> […] cum platea ecclesie Sancti Iohannis et Sancte Reparate predicte sit arta et parve capacitatis gentium ita quod gentes, tempore quo predicationes in ea fiunt tam per dominum episcopum quam per alios prelatos seu religiosos et quando festivitatum solempnitates ibidem aguntur, commode in ea ad audiendum verbum Dei collocari et morari non possunt.[10]
>
> The piazza of the Church of St John the Baptist and Santa Reparata is narrow and can hold few people, such that when sermons are being given there by the bishop or other prelates or friars, and when festival ceremonies are held there, people cannot easily be accommodated or stay there to hear the word of God.

The decision was made to remove many of the tombs,[11] family dwellings, and the hospital to create more space.

The Baptistery of San Giovanni, one of the longest established buildings in the city and central to Florentine identity, also underwent renovations at this time. When entering this space, viewers would have been mesmerised by the newly transformed interior walls and vaults, which were covered in multi-coloured marble and glass mosaics.[12] Its floor, still well-preserved, displays complex images of geometric designs, animals, birds, and foliage in inlaid marble, all completed in the first decade of the thirteenth century. The mosaic

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[10] *Firenze al tempo di Dante: documenti sull'urbanistica fiorentina*, ed. by Guido Pampaloni, Ministero dell'interno pubblicazioni degli archivi di stato fonti e sussidi, IV (Rome: Ministero dell'interno, 1973), pp. 57–58; translation from Trevor Dean, *The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 31.

[11] Some of these were placed inside the crypt of Santa Reparata, while others were transferred to Santa Maria Novella. These will be discussed in chapter 4.

[12] Davidsohn gives the date of 1293, while Areli dates the mosaics around 1300 and Bourdou says they were completed between 1240 and 1310: Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, 8 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1956), VII, pp. 510–20; Areli, p. 440; Louise Bourdua, 'Illumination, Painting, and Sculpture', in *Dante in Context*, pp. 401–26 (pp. 401–02).

programme decorating the dome and walls was completed between 1240 and 1310.[13] Its font, similar in appearance to the one still extant in Pisa's Baptistery which is octagonal with detailed carvings, played a significant role in shaping the identity of the people of Florence. The city's Christian babies were all baptised here, becoming members of the Christian community, including Dante in 1266 (Figure 6).[14] Dante emphasises the Baptistery's significance in shaping one's identity through the voice of his ancestor Cacciaguida, who emphasises his tie to his city of birth and ancestry through the act of baptism (*Par.*, XV, 130–135). Dante, even after his exile, would always see himself as a Florentine, demonstrated by his signature: ''florentinus et exul inmeritus' [a Florentine and undeserving exile].[15] The city you were born and raised in shaped your understanding of the world and your place within it.[16] The communal identity ascribed at the time of baptism was reinforced by the different functions the Baptistery played in the annual life of the city. It was used to house military standards, war trophies, and state gifts; in addition, state councils were held here.[17] For example, in 1299 Prior Dino Compagni attempted to unify the Black and White Guelphs in this space. Marina Areli argues that he chose the Baptistery to remind them of their common citizenship and of the successes they had had in the past.[18] Therefore, the Baptistery was held to represent the social, civic, and religious unity of the city. In addition, this is one of the only churches Dante mentions by name in the poem (*Inf.*, XIX, 13–18; *Par.*, XV, 130–135, XXV, 7–9).

Leaving the piazza and its main sites, walking north on the Via Larga (now the Via Camillo Cavour) one experienced another aspect of the changing city with its paved, straight, and wide streets leading to one of fifteen gates, the Porta di San Gallo in sul Mugnone, marking the northern entrance to the city.

---

[13] Bourdua, pp. 401–02.

[14] Areli, p. 444.

[15] Dante Alighieri, 'Epistole', in *Opere Minori*, ed. by Arsenio Frugoni and Giorgio Brugnoli, 2 vols (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1979) V.I; VI.I; VII.I.

[16] Catherine Keen, *Dante and the City* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), p. 204. She argues that Cacciaguida does not reveal his name until the very end of his speech because he is so tied to his city and therefore, 'his personal identity is essentially connected to his community of origin'.

[17] Areli, pp. 440–41.

[18] Areli, pp. 440–41.

This gate had an imposing tower on top of it, one of 73 new towers built to defend the city on the new 8-km long circuit of walls (begun in 1284 and completed by 1333).

Walking southwest, one found the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella (est. 1279), now within the third circuit of walls. On approaching it, Dante would have found tombs on the exterior of the church (known as *avelli*) and, entering the south door, he would have found a 100-metre-long nave, filled with funerary chapels on its sides and tomb slabs below his feet.[19] He would have walked the many cloisters, viewing their painted walls and columns, to attend services and potentially the theological school.[20] The church was in operation but still under construction when, in 1301, Charles of Valois swore to protect the city here, leading to Dante's exile.

To the southeast, the newly built grain market, Orsanmichele (est.1284), drew Florentines to see the miraculous Madonna on its southwest corner and light devotional candles, as well as to engage in trade. Just slightly to the northwest of Orsanmichele was the Alighieri family's parish church, San Martino del Vescovo (founded in 986), located near their home.[21] Southwest of this was the Badia, whose bells Dante famously recalls (*Par.*, XV, 97–99). Continuing south and moving slightly eastward, one approached the construction site of the large Piazza della Signoria with its Palazzo of the same name (now known as the Palazzo Vecchio), constructed between 1299 and 1362, built on the ruins of previous palaces. The people of medieval Florence witnessed civic processions and ceremonies here, such as the swearing-in of the priors and the welcoming

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[19] The main church's current decorative programme dates from after Dante's lifetime (c. 1348) and the Capella Strozzi's walls are likely inspired by the *Commedia*.

[20] Dante comments on attending the 'scuole delli religiosi…' in Dante Alighieri, *Convivio*, trans. by Andrew Frisardi, A Dual-language Critical Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) II.12.7. For the debate about what Dante's 'attendance' at the theological schools may have actually meant see George W. Dameron, *Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante*, pp. 273–74; Lorenzo Dell'Oso, 'Per la formazione intellettuale di Dante: I cataloghi librari, le tracce testuali, il "Trattatello" di Boccaccio', *Le Tre Corone. Rivista internazionale di atudi su Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio*, IV (2017), 129–61; Anna Pegoretti, '"Nelle scuole delli religiosi": Materiali per Santa Croce nell'età di Dante', *L'Alighieri*, 50 (2017), 5–55.

[21] It is traditionally thought that this is where Dante married Gemma Donati, though the Badia and Santa Margherita dei Cerci are also contenders. Unfortunately, its current structure dates from the fifteenth century, so little can be known about what Dante encountered within the earlier building.

of foreign ambassadors. It was also a place where conflict ensued as when, in 1301, Corso Donati led his armed Black Guelph supporters into the piazza and attacked the Palazzo della Signoria.

Walking west to the outer limit of the city, one found the Franciscan church of Santa Croce.[22] In 1300 its transepts were completed but the roof was not finished until 1384. This magnificent church, with its 115-metre-long nave, was still under construction and was missing its western façade, however, even in this state this building was a stunning and dominating presence in the eastern end of the city.[23] Similar to Santa Maria Novella, this church had a theological school within its cloisters that Dante may have attended and the church itself was filled with funerary monuments to the wealthy. In fact, the construction of the long nave was funded by these tombs, indicating that space was so valuable to patrons that they were willing to purchase tombs in a building site that they would never see finished to maintain their social status and prestige in their current life and their particular position in the hierarchy of the afterlife.[24]

All this adds up to an extraordinarily rich built environment. Dante would have seen the beginnings of this growth rather than its full flourishing. By the 1330s, the city's built environment accommodated 97 monastic communities (as well as 30 in the rural territory surrounding it), and at least 39 confraternities.[25] The transformation of the city also included building well-maintained canals, stone bridges and houses, and colonnaded porticos for privileged locations. Hospitals,[26] schools, mills, squares, gates, fountains, civic and government buildings, loggias, palaces, and markets were among the many altered or new structures. An overview of the structures that were already complete and functioning in 1300 is provided in Table 1 (Figure 7), while some of the structures that were under construction during Dante's lifetime are found in Table 2 (Figure 8).

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[22] The first building phase dates from 1225, the second from 1252–1294, and the third from 1294–1385.

[23] The church, as it stands today, was not completed until 1470 and its current façade was completed in the nineteenth century. Dante's cenotaph was built here in 1865.

[24] See chapter 4

[25] These could vary drastically in size from just a few to 80–100 monks and nuns.

[26] In the year 1300 there were approximately 30 hospitals in Florence, see George W. Dameron, 'Church and Orthodoxy', in *Dante in Context*, pp. 83–105 (pp. 94, 100–101).

Table 1

Completed Major Civic and Religious Structures in Florence in 1300

Name	Date	Notes on function
Basilica di San Lorenzo	est. 393 (currently a fifteenth-century structure)	This was the principal church in the city before 1000.
Sant'Ambrogio	est. 393 (currently a seventeenth-century structure)	Supposedly where St Ambrose stayed on his visit to Florence in 393. A miracle story of blood turning to wine was reported here, making it a pilgrimage church.
San Niccolò Oltrarno	first documented in 1184	Parish church in 1374.
Santa Felicità	*c.* fourth to fifth century (currently an eighteenth-century structure)	Originally serviced the Syrian Greek merchant population.
Church of San Martino a Mensola	est. 816 (current structure built in 1415)	Parish church.
San Martino del Vescovo	est. 986	The family parish of the Aligheri's.[27]
San Salvatore di Settimo	est. 1004	In 1236 the Cistercian Order became responsible for this church.[28]
Santa Lucia dè Magnoli	est. 1078	The Benedictine monastery of San Miniato al Monte oversaw this church until 1246. In 1250 the Humiliati order resided here.
Torre della Castagna	*c.* eleventh century	The headquarters of the priorate from 1282.
San Miniato al Monte	*c.* early eleventh century	Basilica with the relics of St Miniato. The adjoining monastery was first Benedictine and then Cluniac.
Hospital of San Giovanni Evangelista	*c.* eleventh century	The hospital was demolished in 1296 to make room for the cathedral.[29]

[27] Areli, p. 441.
[28] For the history of ownership see George W. Dameron, 'Church and Orthodoxy', p. 98.
[29] George W. Dameron, Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante, p. 20.

San Michele Visdomini	*c.* eleventh century or older	This was a family-owned church from the eleventh century.[30]
Hospital of San Francesco	*c.*1211–1222	Now known as the Hospital of San Paolo. At the time of its foundation, it was under the care of Franciscan lay brothers.
Basilica di Santa Trinita	est. 1250 (current façade dates to 1593)	The construction of the church that Dante saw was built from 1258–1280.
Sant'Egidio	*c.* thirteenth century (currently a structure built in 1418)	Friary run by the Frati Saccati (Friars of the Sack).
Santa Margherita de'Cerchi	first recorded in 1032	Claimed to be the church where Dante first saw Beatrice and where he married Gemma Donati. A tomb to Beatrice was erected here but it is empty. The other options for where he married Gemma and saw Beatrice are the Badia and San Martino del Vescovo.[31]
Santa Maria Sopra Porta	first recorded in 1038	In 1300 it was adopted as the Guelphs' headquarters but was demolished by a fire in 1304.
Baptistery of San Giovanni	consecrated in 1059	Every Christian baby was baptised here, including Dante in 1266.[32]
Santi Apostoli	*c.* 1059–1075	Parish church.
San Pier Maggiore	*c.*1067 (now a fourteenth-century structure)	Benedictine convent.
San Piero Scheraggio	consecrated in 1068	The second largest church during Dante's lifetime,[33] and Dante spoke here in 1295 as a member of the Consiglio delle Capitudini.
Santo Stefano al Ponte	*c.* eleventh to twelfth century	Augustinian convent from 1585.

[30] Louis Alexander Waldman, 'Florence Cathedral in the Early Trecento: The Provisional High Altar and Choir of the Canonica', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 40.3 (1996), 267–86 (p. 275); it was demolished in the fourteenth century in order to make room for the cathedral oratory according to Toker, 'Florence Cathedral', p. 215.

[31] Areli, p. 441.

[32] Areli, p. 440.

[33] Walter Horn, 'Romanesque Churches in Florence', *The Art Bulletin*, 25.2 (1943), 112–35 (p. 124). The largest church being Santa Reparata.

San Marco	*c*. twelfth century	A Silvestrine monastery in 1290.
Diocesan School of Santa Reparata	in operation from 1285–1301	Diocesan School.
San Jacopo di Ripoli	est. 1299	Convent for Dominican nuns.

Table 2

Major Structures of Florence Under Construction During Dante's Lifetime

Name	**Date**	**Notes on function**
Santa Reparata	*c*. mid-fifth to sixth century	The cathedral until the late thirteenth century[34] when Santa Maria del Fiore, replaced it; however, it remained in use, albeit partially demolished, during Santa Maria del Fiore's long construction period.
Santa Maria Maggiore	*c*. eighth century (rebuilt in thirteenth century)	Collegiate church and a priory.
Badia	*c*. tenth century	A Benedictine monastery that underwent renovations beginning in 1288.
Santa Spirito	*c*. 1250	The land was granted in 1250, it had renovations of seven altars and family chapels which were completed in 1317 and its piazza was enlarged, beginning in 1296.[35]
Santissima Annunziata dei Servi di Maria	est. 1250	Servite monastery.
Palazzo del Capitano (now known as the Bargello)	*c*. 1255–1305	The government's first headquarters.[36]
Santa Maria del Carmine	*c*. 1268	Carmelite convent.
Santa Maria Novella	*c*. 1279	The foundation stone was laid in 1279 and it was still a major construction site in 1300.[37]
Orsanmichele	est. 1284	The main grain market in the city.
Basilica di Santa Croce	1294 (to replace older church)	The primary Franciscan church in Florence. It underwent multiple construction phases; the third phase took place from 1294–1385 and added an additional seven chapels as well as an enlarged nave which housed many funerary monuments.

[34] For the dating of the first church and subsequent building phases, see Franklin K. B. Toker, 'Excavations Below the Cathedral of Florence, 1965-1974', *Gesta*, 14.2 (1975), 17–36 (p. 17) <https://doi.org/10.2307/766737> [accessed 14 December 2018].

[35] For the dating of the renovations see George W. Dameron, 'Church and Orthodoxy', p. 96; For the *piazza*'s enlargement see Keith D. Lilley, *Urban Life In the Middle Ages: 1000-1450* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 171.

[36] Areli, p. 427.

[37] George W. Dameron, 'Church and Orthodoxy', p. 84.

Santa Maria del Fiore	*c.* 1296–1436	This structure was mainly covered by scaffolding during Dante's time in Florence. It replaced Santa Reparata as the cathedral.
Piazza San Giovanni	expanded from 1296	The main square which housed the Baptistery and Cathedral. It was often used for processions.
Palazzo della Signoria	est. 1299	The residence of the city's priors.
Piazza della Signoria	1299–1362	The main square housing the Palazzo della Signoria.
The Stinche	est. 1299	A prison.
Chiesa di San Salvatore di Ognissanti	completed around 1300 (current structure dates from 1627)	Monastery of the Humiliati order.

Such changes had significant impacts on daily life: for instance, the building of new churches meant that religious life continued in what were effectively construction zones, changing how people moved through and experienced these spaces. These transformations brought to the fore the experience of architecture and the built environment. Of course, the changes to the city's built environment did not take place in a void: medieval architecture was given symbolic meaning, most explicitly in relation to religious space. This ranged from simpler ideas such as restricting access to 'holier' places, to the more complex, such as filling every feature of a church with religious meaning: the altar representing Christ, the columns the saints, and the corner posts the virtues. Visual art helped to communicate these concepts, but the building itself and the ways in which one moved within it were a preoccupation of those responsible for its construction and those who used it. This thesis engages with this historical context to demonstrate how architecture and its associated symbolism enrich medieval literature's engagement with space and embodied experience, across civic, religious, and economic life — thereby casting light on the forms of subjectivity they conjure and imagine.

It was not just the patrons and architects who were involved in the expansion and transformation of the city, but also its inhabitants. Dante himself took an active role as a member of Florence's Council of One Hundred, as in 1296 when he was involved in the petition requesting that the Piazza San Giovanni be enlarged. The records note that Dante addressed the council in

favour of the proposal and that the petition was won.[38] During another term of office, Dante was involved in a recommendation to straighten and improve Via San Procolo.[39] Dante's advocacy and role in these initiatives prove that he was not an idle observer of the changes to the cityscape but was actively thinking about the pragmatics of the decisions to transform the city; it also offers an example of how political and social engagement in Florence coincided with involvement in architectural development. Therefore, architecture was not only a specialist realm for architects. Those who were part of the city's government through participation in various councils were involved in the decision-making as well:[40] Dante exemplified this as a poet, intellectual, and politician who was engaged in town-planning and his own concern is highly suggestive of the integration of architecture into wider practices of thought and culture.

1.2 Methodology

I apply, broadly speaking, what Teodolinda Barolini describes as a historicising methodology to the *Commedia*.[41] This methodology takes as its starting point the idea that art and history are inextricably linked and thus all written and visual accounts supply a 'mutually intelligible network of signs', greatly expanding the range and number of objects available for interpretation.[42] Therefore, I consider the material culture of Dante's Florence with regard to its architecture and built environment, ritual and performance, and intellectual history relating to architecture and cityscapes in the form of liturgical treatises, instructions on

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[38] Areli, pp. 427–28; Gudio Biagi and G. L. Passerini, Codice diplomatico dantesco: i documenti della vita e della famiglia di Dante Alighieri, riprodotti in fac-simile, trascritti e illustrati con note critiche, monumenti d'arte e figure, 3rd fascicle (Rome: Società dantesca italiana, 1895), s.v. "1296 - v di giugno," p. 3.

[39] Areli, p. 444.

[40] Rosario Assunto, 'Architettura', in *ED*. Even the definition of an architect encompassed different professions. For example, Arnolfo di Cambio was a sculptor as well as an architect.

[41] See Teodolinda Barolini, '"Only Historicize": History, Material Culture (Food, Clothes, Books), and the Future of Dante Studies', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 127, 2009, 37–54. She provides examples within Dante's works to areas where further research is needed in gender, sexuality, ethnicity, history, and material culture. For summaries of New Historicism see: Catherine Gallagher, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle, *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016); H. Aram Veeser, 'Introduction', in *The New Historicism*, ed. by H. Aram Veeser (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. ix–xvi; John Brannigan, *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism*, Transitions (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998).

[42] Gallagher, pp. 7–9.

memory training, preaching handbooks and sermons, ordinals, as well as Scripture and its medieval commentaries. For example, I draw on theological sources such as William Durand (1230–1296), Hugh of St Victor (*c.* 1096–1141), Albertus Magnus (*c.* 1200–1280), Honorius Augustodunensis (*c.* 1080–1154), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), and Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) to understand how medieval architecture was given symbolic meaning and shaped the experience of those who encountered it. By comparing the built environment — both in terms of the historical architecture of cities and Dante's representations within the text — with contemporary theologians' use of buildings to convey meaning, I explore the interface between these two areas of cultural production and social experience. My method analyses the textual sources in light of the material culture of late Duecento Florence, focusing on the lived experience of urban space. I use the city of Florence as a primary case study to understand types of architectural space and combine these with written evidence of the cultural and intellectual practices associated with the spaces. Then, with this combination, I situate Dante's allusions to spatial architecture within the material and intellectual contexts to cast light on Dante's journey and experience.

This method focuses on the more recent turn in scholarship to material culture through a historicising approach. [43] This approach argues that Dante had a 'deep connectedness to everyday material life with its material vicissitudes' and that 'literary texts are embedded within the social and economic circumstances in which they are produced and consumed' and therefore understanding this context is integral to understanding the work of art.[44] This thesis will limit its scope to the *Commedia*, in order to explore the relationship between the ideologies embodied in the architecture and built environment of Florence and Dante's shaping of the fictional landscape of *Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso*. Therefore, my methodology does not attempt to find a direct link that argues Dante saw a particular building or ritual (although in some cases he does refer to particular buildings such as San

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[43] Barolini, 'Only Historicize'.

[44] Bennett and Royle, p. 140; Barolini, 'Only Historicize', p. 40; See also Zygmunt G Baranski, *Dante e i segni: saggi per una storia intellettuale di Dante Alighieri* (Naples: Liguori, 2007).

Giovanni) but rather, I argue that the common cultural practices of Dante's Florence are in a dynamic relationship with his writing. I am not suggesting here that Florence is the only model for Dante's afterlife — some comparisons would be true of any medieval city, and indeed Dante often refers to other cities.[45]

Distinguishing itself from philology, a historicising approach argues that the production of the art work modifies the material reality; it is not mimetic but instead is an interpretation.[46] Dante's use of architecture is an example of this modification and interpretation where he plays with the earthly models.[47] I suggest ways in which these architectural models and the practices enacted within them were understood within their cultural context and employed by Dante.[48]

1.3 Architecture in the *Commedia*

The poem's framework (with its architectural allusions) depends on a real-life experience of the built environment that is both unique and in dialogue with frameworks familiar to his contemporaries. In all three realms of the afterlife, Dante describes the architectural landscape and spaces he encounters. Dante's landscapes are more often modelled on natural landscapes than on built ones, although they often have echoes of features of the built environment, as I will show. He invites the reader to compare his other-worldly descriptions of

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[45] In addition, Dante's time in other cities during his exile also has relevance to his descriptions of the afterlife and I hope that future research can investigate other Italian cities and their impact on Dante's writing.

[46] Bennett and Royle, p. 139; Veeser, p. 3; Stephen Greenblatt, 'Towards a Poetics of Culture', in *The New Historicism*, ed. by H. Aram Veeser (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 1–14 (pp. 11–13).

[47] Scholarship that is particularly relevant to my research examines how the architectural space influenced and shaped the liturgy, some scholars going so far as to say that the liturgy and space are inextricably linked, such as Bauer, 'The Design of Space in Gothic Architecture' and Roger W. Stump, *The Geography of Religion: Faith, Place, and Space* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), p. 305 argues that sacred spaces comprise both tangible and intangible layers and that sacred spaces become liminal spaces where the earthly can interact with the divine.

[48] For scholarship on Dante's use of liturgy see Matthew Treherne, 'Liturgy, Time, and the Music of Incarnation in the *Commedia*', in *Dante's* Commedia *and the Liturgical Imagination*, Leeds Studies on Dante (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2020), 49–112; Matthew Treherne, 'Liturgical Personhood: Creation, Penitence, and Praise in the *Commedia*', in *Dante's Commedia: Theology as Poetry*, ed. by Vittorio Montemaggi and Matthew Treherne (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017), pp. 131–60; Matthew Treherne, 'Ekphrasis and Eucharist: The Poetics of Seeing God's Art in *Purgatorio* X', *The Italianist*, 26.2 (2006), 177–96 <https://doi.org/10.1179/026143406X151773> [accessed 23 January 2019]; Helena Phillips-Robins, 'Liturgical Song in Dante's Commedia' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Gonville & Caius College, University of Cambridge, 2016).

architecture to their earthly models through metaphors and similes. He often immediately subverts these earthly models, intentionally interrogating the reader's expectations of architectural spaces once he uses them. For example, the City of Dis inverts the opposition of city versus nature: instead of finding a built environment of houses, palaces, squares, and churches, we find an infernal unbuilt landscape with a river of blood, a wood of suicides, and a burning plain of sand.[49] This subversion of the reader's expectations invites the reader to create comparisons and analyse the encountered space, along with the pilgrim. In addition, Dante does not just subvert the meaning of the architectural space, he also mixes these earthly models together and conflates them, such as the Empyrean being described as a rose, a city, and an amphitheatre.

By emphasising the landscape and the spaces he traverses, Dante makes the reader aware of their significance. He creates hierarchies of space where boundaries need to be traversed to gain admittance, such as the gate of Hell, the steps of Purgatory, and the wall of fire that separates Purgatory from the Earthly Paradise. Dante delineates boundaries between the different circles of Hell, not only by categorising the different sins, but also through the landscape where walls, rough terrain, or other barriers separate each circle. The architectural spaces of the poem are invitations to be read as part of its structure. By describing not only the architecture he encounters, but also the way in which he moves within the spaces, the reader is able to envision his journey, mapping out the space of the poem.

This thesis suggests ways in which these architectural models may have been read. It recognises that the poetic and narrative structures of the *Commedia* play a highly significant role in this architectural reading: Dante does not simply draw a map of the places he visits — although these have been created for modern readers — instead, he places the reader on the journey with

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[49] For a detailed analysis of the City of Dis see Claire E. Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City: The Poetry of Citizenship in Dante*, Italian Perspectives, 13 (London: Legenda, 2006), chapter 4 especially; see also Joseph Pequigney and Hubert Dreyfus, 'Landscape and Guide: Dante's Modifying of Meaning in the *Inferno*', in *Dante: The Critical Complex*, ed. by Richard H. Lansing (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), Vol. 3, 51–76 (p. 64).

him. Different components are revealed at different times, inviting the reader to remember previous stages of the journey and make connections between them as well as to perform the journey along with Dante-*personaggio*. In this way, a part of the experience of reading the poem is encountering the spaces that Dante describes as a tool to make sense of God's judgement and justice.[50] In a similar way, Dante repeats architectural models within the poem. Some prominent examples of these include the gates of Hell and Purgatory, the cloisters of Hell and Paradise, the cities of Dis and Empyrean, and the paths of Hell and Purgatory. This allows the reader to compare these different yet linked spaces and understand their meaning.

1.4 Literature Review

This thesis's study of architecture and the urban environment aims to build on studies of Dante's relationship to the city more broadly.[51] Studies focus on Dante's involvement in the Florentine government;[52] his preference for one of

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[50] One of the methodological concepts that informs my work stems from *Vertical Readings in Dante's Comedy*, ed. by George Corbett and Heather Werbb, 3 vols (Cambridge, 2015–2018) <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0100> [accessed 10 December 2020] in which they argue that Dante's text is not meant to be read in only a linear fashion but also vertically where the corresponding canti for each canticle of the poem open up new interpretations. See also Christopher Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View: Dante's Use of Perspective', MLN, 127.1 (2012), 225–32 (p. 226) who argues that the poem should also be read vertically, in a similar way to the mosaic images in the Baptistery of Florence.

[51] For examples, see Bernardino Barbadoro and Luigi Dami, *Firenze di Dante: la città, la storia, la vita, Dante*, ed. by Francesco Mazzoni, 2nd edn (Florence: Le Monnier, 1965); Piero Bargellini, *A Firenze con Dante nel VII centenario della nascita del poeta* (Florence: Azienda Autonoma di Turismo, 1965); George W. Dameron, *Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante*; Guido Di Pino, 'Firenze nella memoria di Dante esule', *Ausonia: Rivista di Lettere ed Arti*, 21.6 (1966), 23–37; Claire E. Honess, "'Di Fiorenza in popol giusto e sano' : The Concept and Image of the City in Dante." (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Reading, 1997) <https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?did=27&uin=uk.bl.ethos.339510> [accessed 3 April 2019]; Mary E. Lacy, *With Dante in Modern Florence* (London: J. Murray, 1912); Stephen Miller, 'Dante: Florence and the Politics of Rome', *Italian Quarterly*, 47–48 (1969), 201–22; John M. Najemy, 'Dante and Florence', in *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*, ed. by Rachel Jacoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 236–56 <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521844304.014> [accessed 19 January 2019]; Tito Pasqualetti, 'Firenze nella *Divina Commedia*, ovvero "Odi et amo"', *Ausonia: Rivista di Lettere ed Arti*, 21.3–4 (1966), 17–31; E. Ragni, 'Firenze', in *ED*, II, 920–27; Reto Roedel, 'Firenze nella *Divina Commedia*', in *Lectura Dantis* (Bellinzona: Istituto Grafico Casagrande, 1965), pp. 136–46; Ernesto Sestan, 'Dante e Firenze', in *Italia medievale* (Naples: Ed. scientifiche Italiane, 1968), pp. 270–91; Ernesto Sestan, 'Firenze', in *ED*, II, 904–13; Ernesto Travi, *Dante tra Firenze e il paese sincero* (Milan: Istituto propaganda libraria, 1984); Keen, *Dante and the City*; Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*.

[52] Peter Herde, *Dante als Florentiner Politiker*, Frankfurter historische Vorträge ; Heft 3 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1976).

the social or political groups;[53] and Florence's depiction in the *Commedia*, as both a negative model and an ideal.[54] Full-length monographs on Dante and the city have also been produced; the most useful for this study are those of Catherine Keen who focuses on the cities of Italy, and Claire E. Honess, whose focus is on citizenship and ideas of Jerusalem. Both Honess and Keen respond to Joan Ferrante's description of Dante's Hell as a city, Purgatory as a kingdom, and Paradise as a city, kingdom, and empire.[55] They both argue that Ferrante's description is too narrow, and suggest that there are features of the city in all three cantiche.[56] Keen argues that the city is the primary image throughout Dante's *Commedia* because the relationship between individual and communal identity is of utmost importance to Dante.[57] She argues that because the

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[53] For the alignment with the *popolo* see Najemy, p. 97 and also Giorgio Petrocchi, *La selva del protonotario: nuovi studi danteschi* (Naples: Morano, 1988). For the *magnati* see Cecil Grayson, 'Florence, Tuscany and the World of Dante', in *The World of Dante: Essays on Dante and His Times* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 1–17 (p. 11); also see, 'The Social and Political Ideal of the *Comedy*', in *Dante Readings*, ed. by Eric Haywood and K. Hyde (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1987), pp. 47–71 (pp. 62, 65–66); Raffaello Ramat, *Il mito dantesco di Firenze* (Florence: Tipografia Giustina, 1964), p. 11; Ernesto Sestan, 'Il pensiero politico di Dante', in *Italia medievale* (Naples: Ed. scientifiche Italiane, 1968), pp. 292–312.

[54] Zygmunt G. Baranski, '"Giusti son due" (*Inf*. 6.73): tra Sodoma e Firenze', in *Sole nuovo, luce nuova: saggi sul rinnovamento culturale in Dante* (Turin: Scriptorium, 1996), pp. 183–219; Giorgio Bárberi Squarotti, 'La Firenze cleseste', in *L'ombra di Argo: Studi sulla* Commedia, 3rd edn (Turin: Genesi, 1988), pp. 215–39; Paolo Brezzi, 'Tre personaggi fiorentini', in *Letture dantesche di argomento storico-politico* (Naples: Ferraro, 1983), pp. 9–26; Otello Ciacci, 'Dentro da la cerchia antica: il canto XVI del *Paradiso*', in *Nuove interpretazioni dantesche* (Perugia: Volumnia, 1974), pp. 96–108; Charles Till Davis, *Dante's Italy and Other Essays*, Middle Ages (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984); Edward D. English, 'Daily Life', in *Dante in Context*, pp. 119–34; Giovanni Ferretti, 'La cecità dei Fiorentini', in *Saggi danteschi* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1950), pp. 113–15; Lloyd Howard and Elena Rossi, 'Textual Mapping of Dante's Journey Back to Political Original Sin in Florence', *MLN*, 106.1 (1991), 184–88 <https://doi.org/10.2307/2905253> [accessed 26 October 2021]; R. Morghen, 'Dante and the Florence of the Good Old Days', in *From Time to Eternity: Essays on Dante's Divine Comedy*, ed. by Thomas Goddard Bergin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 19–37; Najemy; Ricardo J Quinones, *Foundation Sacrifice in Dante's Commedia* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); A. M. Salerno, 'Political Passion and Paternal Love: An Interpretation of the Role of Farinata and Cavalcanti in the 10th Canto of Dante's *Inferno*', *Thought Patterns*, 6 (1959), 127–65; John A. Scott, 'Politics and *Inferno* X', *Italian Studies*, 19 (1964), 1–13 <https://doi.org/10.1179/its.1964.19.1.1> [accessed 26 October 2021].

[55] Joan M. Ferrante, *The Political Vision of the Divine Comedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 46–47, 60–75, 132–37.

[56] Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*, p. 180; see also Honess, '"Di Fiorenza in popol giusto e sano"'; Keen, *Dante and the City*, pp. 124–25; Catherine Keen, 'Boundaries and Belonging: Imagining Urban Identity in Medieval Italy', in *Imagining the City*, ed. by Christian Emden, Catherine Keen, and David R. Midgley, Cultural History and Literary Imagination, v. 7-8 (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 65–86.

[57] Keen, Dante and the City, p. 125.

topography of Florence is divided between households, neighbourhoods, and factions, the inhabitants are divided too, which links the idea of the city's layout directly to ideas of community.[58] Her study mostly focuses on the activities and lives of the city’s inhabitants, as opposed to the topography and architectural features on which this thesis will primarily focus.

As Keen stresses, it is not just in the *Commedia* that Dante takes great interest in the idea of the city as reflective of individual and communal identity. For example, in the *Monarchia*, Dante investigates the origins of civic society and the purpose of the city (I); in the *Convivio*, he argues that since human beings are social animals, they need the city and its community (IV, iv, 1); and in *De vulgari eloquentia* he claims that unity of language leads to social cohesion (I, vii, 2).[59] However, in this thesis the focus will be primarily on the *Commedia.*

Honess argues that the entire *Commedia* is ‘a city writ large’ and all of its elements contribute to its message.[60] She adds to scholarship by ‘us[ing] the historical earthly cities to discuss broader, theological and poetic concerns’ and she uses Jerusalem as her focus, rather than Florence, precisely because Jerusalem is as much a theological idea as a real city.[61] She concentrates on the relationship of individual with community, what it means to be a citizen, and the ways the notions of cities and citizenship enter the imagery and structure of the *Commedia*.[62] This thesis also considers these ideas of individual and communal identity and adopts a similar methodology where the earthly architectural models are used as a lens through which to view themes pertinent to Dante scholarship. The thesis builds on Honess’ work by analysing not only

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[58] Keen, Dante and the City, p. 30.

[59] For a full description and analysis of these works and their relationship to the city see Keen, *Dante and the City*, pp. 52–113. Pertinent to this thesis, Alfred Hiatt interprets *De vulgari eloquentia* from a spatial perspective where language is tied directly to place, see *Dislocations: Maps, Classical Tradition, and Spatial Play in the European Middle Ages*, 2020; Elisa Brilli, ‘*Civitas*/Community’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Dante*, ed. by Gragnolati Manuele, Lombardi Elena, and Southerden Francesca, 2021, pp. 353–67 <DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198820741.013.33> [accessed 9 September 2021].

[60] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, p. 180.

[61] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, p. 5.

[62] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, p. 6.

the city as a whole but also particular architectural and urban spaces which are strongly connected with deeper meanings in the medieval period, such as cosmology, meditation, and identity.

A largely separate set of studies on Dante have explored the importance of the physical environment for Dante. However, these focus predominantly not on the urban environment, but on natural landscapes. This is most explicit in the circles where the landscape facilitates the sinners' torments, some examples being: the gluttons stuck in a constant storm of hail, water, and snow; the angry and sullen stuck in the mud of the river Styx; the wood of suicides; and the lustful stuck in a burning wall of fire. Even when Dante's journey is not going through built spaces, it is engaged with a physical landscape and therefore, this thesis analyses both the architectural spaces of the *Commedia*, such as the City of Dis as an example of Dante's sustained engagement with an imagined architectural space; other spaces which are associated with architecture; other important episodes where a partial architecture is imagined, such as the gates of Purgatory and Hell; and the allusions to earthly architecture within the poem.[63]

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[63] There are a number of Dante scholars who have explored ideas related to space that are outside of the remit of this thesis. Some examples are scholars analysing Dante and landscape who link the landscape to Dante-*personaggio*'s moral progression. See Kenneth A. Bleeth, 'Narrator and Landscape in the *Commedia*: An Approach to Dante's Earthly Paradise', *Dante Studies*, 88, 1970, 31–49 (pp. 33, 41, 44). This thesis will look beyond ideas of morality and will also focus on the built environment rather than the natural landscape. See also Pequigney and Dreyfus, Vol. 3, 51, 76 who analyse the relationship between landscape and punishment. Another area that has received a considerable amount of Dante research is the impact of cartography and geography. For some examples see Theodore J. Cachey, 'Cartographic Dante', *Italica*, 87.3 (2010), 325–54 (p. 326); Theodore J. Cachey, 'Cosmology, Geography and Cartography', in *Dante in Context*, pp. 221–40; Theodore J. Cachey, 'Cosmographic Cartography of the "Perfect" Twenty-Eights', in *Vertical Readings in Dante's* Comedy, Volume 3 (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2017), pp. 111–38 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1zkjxdb.12> [accessed 9 October 2018]; John Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld*, Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994). For scholars looking at the ideologies and symbolism imbued in maps generally see *Space in the Medieval West: Places, Territories and Imagined Geographies*, ed. by Meredith Cohen and Fanny Madeline (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014). The essays in this compilation consider the years 900–1400 and argue that space is determined by Christian cosmology but is also a structured response to contemporary needs and ideologies; see also Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed Their World* (London: British Library, 1999) and Daniel K Connolly, *The Maps of Matthew Paris: Medieval Journeys Through Space, Time and*

Another area of scholarship that informs this thesis is the study of medieval Italian city layouts which identify broad intellectual patterns through the common features related to the overall structure and function of cities and their buildings. For example, many scholars link the layout of the city to cosmology.[64] These scholars provide a framework for my own research by focusing on how these spaces were constructed and experienced through various modes of interpretation related to religious symbolism. In ways which echo Keen's and Honess' work on Dante and the city, other scholars argue that the medieval Italian city layout and the architecture within it were linked to identity, in terms of reconciliation and reuniting warring people.[65]

This thesis adds to the scholarship in this field by considering Dante's relationship with, and interest in, the city of Florence from a different angle: through the lens of the architecture of the city itself, most pronounced in the expansion of Florence taking place during Dante's lifetime. My work on Florentine architecture connects to the already well-established scholarship on Dante and his views of the city of Florence in terms of individual and community

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Liturgy (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2009). Connolly analyses the monastic devotional culture that created the ability for a viewer to manipulate time and place to be present at particular sites and events within history through contemplation and how these practices used images, such as maps, for assistance. These contemplative practices and the idea of a journey through time and space through words and images are informative to understanding Dante's poem and are present in my chapter on cloisters. For an overview of the great abundance of geographic terms and the continued interest in the geographic layout and places referenced within the poem from the beginning of the poem's publication, see Andrea Gazzoni, 'Mapping Dante: A Digital Platform for the Study of Places in the Commedia', *Humanist Studies & the Digital Age*, 5.1 (2017), 82–95.

64 See, for example, Gina Fasoli, 'Città e storia delle citta', *Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo*, XXI.Topografia urbana e vita cittadina nell'alto medioevo in occidente (1974), 17–38 (p. 26) whose study analyses the history of city layouts and notes their use of orthogonal plans connected by a cross, arguing that this layout was tied to politics, practicalities, and the cosmos; Keith D. Lilley also focuses on how the layouts of medieval cities were cosmological representations, see *City and Cosmos: The Medieval World in Urban Form* (London: Reaktion, 2009); Keith D. Lilley, 'Cities of God? Medieval Urban Forms and Their Christian Symbolism', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, n.s., 29.3 (2004), 296–313 (pp. 296–313); Lilley also argues that the city was designed to symbolise a microcosm of the universe and a macrocosm of man, using Plato's Timeaus as the foundation for this interpretation in Lilley, *City and Cosmos*.

65 Chiara Frugoni, *A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World*, trans. by William McCuaig (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 35; See also Areli, p. 428; David Friedman, *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages* (New York, NY: Architectural History Foundation, 1988), p. 8; Helene Wieruszowski, 'Art and the Commune in the Time of Dante', *Speculum*, 19.1 (1944), 14–33 (p. 16) <https://doi.org/10.2307/2856851> [accessed 23 January 2019] who all agree that the expansion of Florence was used to promote the prestige of the city and its political power as well as to combat political fragmentation.

identity and the role that factionalism played in Dante’s condemnation of Florence. But it also opens up new insights to explore in terms of religious practices and the use of architectural space and its influence in late medieval Italian culture.

The *Enciclopedia Dantesca* offers a definition of architecture that encompasses not only the designers, masons, blacksmiths, and carpenters but also those responsible for the murals, sculpture and other decorations within the built environment.[66] It uses Dante’s description of corbels on the terrace of pride as an example of this, as the corbel not only had a practical function — holding up the roof — it was also representational and thus carried its own symbolic meaning. Architecture is related to the well-established field of visual culture and Dante[67] but has only been studied in relation to specific, limited aspects. For example, some of the early scholars interested in Dante and architecture connect the poem with Gothic cathedrals.[68] These scholars have provided a

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[66] Rosario Assunto, 'Architettura‘.

[67] For some examples see Peter H. Brieger, Millard Meiss, and Charles S. Singleton, *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969); Anthony K. Cassell, *Dante’s Fearful Art of Justice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984); Giovanni Fallani, *Dante e la cultura figurativa medievale* (Bergamo: Minerva Italica, 1976). For scholars interested in the visual representations of the cross and its meaning see Ronald L. Martinez, ‘Containers and Things Contained’, in *Vertical Readings in Dante’s* Comedy (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2017), III, 89–110 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1zkjxdb.11> [accessed 11 October 2018]; and also Mary Alexandra Watt, *The Cross That Dante Bears: Pilgrimage, Crusade, and the Cruciform Church in the* Divine Comedy (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2005), pp. 4–14.

[68] The first to make this connection was Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam, *Dante et la Philosophie catholique au XIII siècle* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1859); Benedetto Croce, Giorgio Inglese, and Gennaro Sasso, *La poesia di Dante* (Bibliopolis, Naples, 2021) argue that painting and sculpture are separate from architecture; Hugo Friedrich, *Dante* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1956), pp. 11–12 sees each canto of the poem as a painting where each needs to be read in consideration of the whole, like paintings in a museum; See 'Architettura', in *ED*, where also Assunto notes that all of these must be understood in the context of art historical interpretations of the Gothic cathedral as a representation of Paradise, similar to Dante’s construction of it. It notes the interpretation of *Inferno* as a Romanesque cathedral, and *Purgatorio* as the exterior of a Gothic cathedral with *Paradiso* as its interior; following this tradition Mary E. Wilson looks at the use of sacred geometry and number symbolism as a central element of sacred architecture. She argues that Dante, Robert Grosseteste, and Geoffrey Chaucer were influenced by light metaphysics and optics, exemplified in Gothic architecture, and used these ideologies to explain complex theology to the laity. See ‘Gothic Cathedral as Theology and Literature’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of South Florida, 2009); see also John G. Demaray who takes this connection to the church in a slightly different direction by considering Dante’s poem through the lens of pilgrimage and visionary literature. He

path for interpreting Dante's poem through the lens of the architecture of the church space, which will be a primary focus of this thesis (in relation to chapters 3–6, as well as ideas of cosmology which will be a theme in chapter 2). A scholar who considers additional architectural models from the church space is Christopher Kleinhenz who analyses towers and tombs[69] as well as similar themes to this thesis including processional movement[70] and perspective (chapters 2, 4, and 5).[71]

Scholars interested in Dante's visual environment have occasion to pinpoint specific places or paintings he might have seen.[72] I do not adopt this approach, but instead I focus on understanding the symbolic meaning infused in particular types of medieval architecture such as the tower representing pride or the tomb symbolising identity, in order to interpret how Dante plays with and subverts these meanings. Dante's use of spaces assists the reader to understand the spiritual journey of the poem rather than to look for the earthly

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argues that the poem is an 'analogue for pilgrimage "temples" and churches that in the late Middle Ages were widely considered architectural representations of the external physical and immaterial universe': 'Dante and the Book of the Cosmos', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, 77.5 (1987), i–114 (p. 10) <https://doi.org/10.2307/1006509> [accessed 24 October 2014]; in addition see Eileen Gardiner, 'Visions and Journeys', in *Dante in Context*, pp. 341–53.

[69] See Christopher Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Towering Giants: "Inferno" XXXI', *Romance Philology; Berkeley*, 27.3 (1974), 269–85; Christopher Kleinhenz, 'The Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead: Burial, Entombment, and Cemeteries in Dante's "Divine Comedy"', *Religion & Literature*, 31.1 (1999), 49–59.

[70] Christopher Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy: Toward an Understanding of Dante's Processional Poetics* (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Binghamton, 2005), pp. 2–3; 9–14. He focuses on how movement generates meaning within the *Commedia* and argues that the journey of the entire poem can be understood as a procession, calling this type of reading 'processional poetics'. For example, movement in *Inferno* for the sinners leads nowhere in an ironic twist and the temporal dimension of the poem is only felt by Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil as well as the souls in Purgatory.

[71] Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View' argues that Dante's cultural context shaped certain episodes in the *Commedia*. For example, he notes Dante's keen interest and understanding of different perspectives such as the bird's eye views of *Malebolge* as a cloister or the procession in the Earthly Paradise.

[72] For some examples see Jeffrey Thompson Schnapp, *The Transfiguration of History at the Center of Dante's Paradise* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014) who argues that the mosaic cross at Sant'Apollinare Nuovo was a model for Dante's cross (*Par*., XVIII); Watt, pp. 148–74 is similar to Schnapp because Watt argues that the representation of Justinian in the *Commedia* is based on the mosaic of him in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo and San Vitale in Ravenna; Bourdua argues that Florence's visual culture, including its painters, illuminators, sculptors, and architects, played a key role in Dante's poetry. She outlines some of the key architectural spaces and their decorative programmes that Dante was familiar with, especially those in Florence, like the Baptistery of San Giovanni and the new sculptural and mosaic programme on the façade of Santa Reparata that would soon be the façade of Santa Maria del Fiore.

models for his otherworldly architecture. Therefore, when I draw on individual architectural models, I am not doing so in order to argue that Dante was making reference to — or had in mind — a particular building — but to suggest how these models might open up and provide examples of cultural practices related to architecture.

1.5 Spatial Theory and Movement

This project builds on developments in Dante studies by drawing on the methods of literary studies, art history, spatial theory, and movement. It employs spatial theory, focusing on the main premise that architecture shapes human experience and understanding. The field of spatial theory has developed and grown in the last few decades, especially in the disciplines of geography, philosophy, and architecture; yet in literary studies, it has tended to remain marginal. Therefore, this thesis builds on recent trends in literary studies, but goes further by focusing on the representation of architectural space through spatial theory as the main mode of enquiry.

Henri Lefebvre (1901–1999) is a foundational figure in spatial theory. In his seminal work, *La Production de l'espace* (1974), he considers spaces from antiquity to the nineteenth century and categorises them into: spatial practice, representations of space (including churches, graveyards, halls, squares, and even literary space), and representational space (created in the medieval period with Aristotelian and Ptolemaic conceptions).[73] He argues that a space's form is encoded with ideologies[74] of particular epochs. According to Lefebvre, these spaces are used to control and shape the thoughts of those who encounter

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[73] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 26. He refers to Dante's *Commedia* as the exemplar for representational spaces of the medieval world where 'Aristotelian and Ptolemaic conceptions' created the spaces of 'the Earth, the underground world, and the luminous Cosmos'.

[74] The term 'ideology' has two definitions, defined by W. J. T. Mitchell: 'the first, used by Marxist critics, define it as a false consciousness, a system of symbolic representations that reflects an historical situation of domination by a particular class, and which serves to conceal the historical character and class bias of that system under guises of naturalness and universality. The other meaning of "ideology" tends to identify it simply with the structure of values and interests that informs any representation of reality; this meaning leaves untouched the question of whether the representation is false or oppressive.' See W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 4. This thesis uses the latter definition.

them.[75] Therefore, they are not empty spaces, made only for practical purposes or filled with random decorations; instead, they are filled with ideologies.[76] Lefebvre defines the characteristics of medieval spaces as a representation of the cosmos, linking every space — be that roads, houses, churches, cemeteries, or civic buildings — to the divine order of the universe.[77] According to Lefebvre, Bernard of Clairvaux, Abbot Suger (*c.* 1081–1151), and Peter Abelard (*c.* 1079–1142) 'did more than just shape space, by shaping space they influenced politics and religion'.[78] The idea that a space's form not only structures our understanding of its function but also is imbued with ideologies that can control, shape, and mediate our emotional response, is central to this thesis and helps to guide my 'architectural' interpretation of Dante's poem.

Spatial theory tends to focus on modern examples and sometimes even depicts the medieval understanding of space as primitive or inconsequential;[79] however, scholarship has begun to use Lefebvre's theories and apply them to medieval spaces. In particular, the idea that space is a social construct, imbued with ideologies, has proved fruitful. This type of analysis aligns well with medieval understandings of space, especially religious space, since every element was given a symbolic meaning.[80] All of these texts provide a ground

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[75] Other scholars who use Lefebvre's work in relation to power and control are Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2015); Helen Liggett and David C. Perry, *Spatial Practices: Critical Explorations in Social/Spatial Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995); Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989).

[76] Lefebvre, pp. 17, 26.

[77] Lefebvre, p. 45. See also *Architecture and Order: Approaches to Social Space*, ed. by Michael Parker Pearson and Colin Richards, Material Cultures Series (New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), p. 11 who argue this link to cosmology goes far beyond the medieval period in terms of time and geography.

[78] Lefebvre, p. 255.

[79] For a critique of this trend see Catherine A. M. Clarke, *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester c.1200-1600* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011).

[80] See for example Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), pp. xi–xiii. He argues that landscape is a cultural construct and therefore he focuses on the ideologies it portrays, specifically how space is used to determine and control class relations, forcing the reader to question the spaces they inhabit. See also *The Power of Space in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe: The Cities of Italy, Northern France and the Low Countries*, ed. by Marc Boone and Martha C. Howell, SEUH, Studies in European Urban

and framework for my research, drawing on both modern and medieval theories of space.

Dominique Bauer argues that one of the best ways to study the theme of space in the Middle Ages is to consider spatial images within literature, since concepts such as 'mimesis' and 'representation', which are familiar in literary studies, can also be applied to built environments and their imagery.[81] She argues that:

> although […] architecture is not a clear cut translation of an idea into a building, [she] however do[es] think that architecture may reveal 'concepts' in the sense of attitudes, and ways of how architecture and art work […] provoke […] and function.[82]

Her work is important to this study because it brings together the idea that the space's shape and the practices enacted within it are encoded with meaning.[83]

The aim of this thesis is to understand how the experience and understanding of architecture and urban space in the Middle Ages can inform our understanding of Dante's poem as one of many influences on Dante. In order to do this, we must understand some basic premises. Firstly, medieval

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History (1100-1800), 30 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). This compilation of essays considers the representation of urban life in visual culture (i.e. cartography, painting, and literature) and focuses on the relationship between urban space and power; Richard Krautheimer argues that the modern understanding of conceptions of space and their relationship to each other differs greatly from those in the medieval period. He considers different medieval shapes and their symbolism, such as the circle or cross, to argue that these shapes were copied for what they represented and therefore could vary greatly in actual execution. See Richard Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an "Iconography of Medieval Architecture"', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1942, 1–33; *Medieval Practices of Space*, ed. by Barbara Hanawalt and Michal Kobialka, Medieval Cultures (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), XXIII. This collection of conference papers agrees with the distinction between modern and medieval conceptions of space that Krautheimer pursues. The collection looks at some of the modes of medieval spatial construction, such as text, material culture, and performance.

[81] Dominique Bauer, 'The Spatial Turn, the Gothic Church Building and the Imagery of Architecture', pp. 1–2 <https://www.academia.edu/19152362/The_spatial_turn_the_Gothic_church_building_and_the_imagery_of_architecture> [accessed 13 October 2018].

[82] Bauer, 'The Spatial Turn', p. 4; Dominique Bauer, 'The Design of Space in Gothic Architecture', p. 3 <https://www.academia.edu/1698848/The_Design_of_Space_in_Gothic_Architecture> [accessed 25 November 2018]. Bauer considers the definition of 'Gothic' again in this article to argue that to understand what Gothic means we must understand the coherence of the building through the lens of its socio-liturgical function.

[83] Bauer, 'The Design of Space in Gothic Architecture', p. 11; for a similar study see Carmel Bendon Davis, *Mysticism & Space: Space and Spatiality in the Works of Richard Rolle, The Cloud of Unknowing Author, and Julian of Norwich* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2008).

culture did not differentiate between different modes of representation as modern culture does; rather, the different representational modes, such as architecture and literature or painting and sculpture, were in dialogue with each other. Therefore, this thesis will consider not only the buildings themselves but also the art that is within them. The second premise is that art and architecture are imbued with ideologies and cultural values. This thesis will therefore consider the intersection and interplay between text, image, and culture to produce new readings of Dante's poem by applying art-historical concepts related to spatial and architectural theory.

The study of movement is also essential to understanding the spaces that Dante describes. This includes his journey through the afterlife and the movement of individuals that he encounters. Movement is a means to 'understand the interaction between the human body and the space that it inhabits'.[84] Theorists of movement argue that the interaction one has with one's built environment is fundamental to one's understanding of ideas, discovery, and intellectual growth.[85] This aligns with the Aristotelian idea, expressed by Aquinas, that 'nihil est in intellectu quod non sit prius in sensu' [everything that is known comes from the outside of the body to the mind through the senses].[86] The experience of the world was very important to the generation of memory and intellectual growth. David E. Karmon argues that:

> If the experience of the outside world could penetrate into and reshape the soul itself, it stands to reason that the shapes and forms of the physical environment with which the body came into contact also acquired greater significance. Through the species, the objects of the external world imprinted themselves upon one's identity, and thus these external objects

[84] David E. Karmon, Architecture and the Senses in the Italian Renaissance: The Varieties of Architectural Experience (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), p. 69.

[85] Karmon, p. 65. See also Erin Manning, *Relationscapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy*, 2012, pp. 43, 15; Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, 'Thinking in Movement', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 39.4 (1981), 399–407 (pp. 8–9) <https://doi.org/10.2307/430239> [accessed 8 November 2021]; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Gernot Böhme, *Atmospheric Architectures: The Aesthetics of Felt Spaces,* trans. by Anna-Chr Engels-Schwarzpaul, 2020; Nathaniel Coleman, *Materials and Meaning in Architecture: Essays on the Bodily Experience of Buildings*, 2020, pp. 4–5.

[86] Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, q. 2 a. 3 arg. 19, <http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/qdv02.html>. For a detailed analysis of this phrase see Paul F. Cranefield, 'On the origin of the phrase "nihil est in intellectu quod non prius puerit in sensu', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, XXV.1 (1970), 77–80 (p. 10) <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhmas/XXV.1.77> [accessed 8 November 2021]. See also Karmon, p. 33.

> had the potential to fundamentally transform one's sense of self. […] we are in intimate contact with buildings with more frequency than perhaps any other object of human manufacture – but architecture was also the product of human hands and human minds. Following the Aristotelian logic of sensory perception, through the construction and creation of the built environment, and the strategic alteration of the external world, one also acquired the critical means by which to transform the inner world of an individual, of a community, or even of an entire society.[87]

This idea is especially important with Dante's writing because he also focuses on the experience of the physical environment that he creates, which recalls the built environment of Florence; he takes the reader on the journey with him, revealing different things at different moments, and thus we must also pay attention to how movement is described within the poem to understand the interaction with the built environment.[88] For example, when Dante describes the different friezes and tombs on the terrace of pride, in a sequential order, and reveals different aspects at different moments, we, as readers, are invited to experience these friezes and tombs as one would experience them within a built church structure. When we walk into a church, we are first provided with a clear, straight, view of the altar, but as we move around the church, the altar becomes obscured, and other features of the church are revealed: we crouch down to read an inscription on a tomb slab, we have to manoeuvre around gates and monuments; some things are hidden, and others are completely exposed. If a ritual is being enacted, our senses of sight, sound, smell and even touch are drawn to what is happening.

Karmon also points to the importance architecture has on ideas of identity, community, and society, in ways which echo the ideas of Dante scholars on the role of the city. He argues that since we are constantly immersed within architectural spaces, the way they are designed and used,

[87] Karmon, p. 36; for similar arguments see Michael Camille, 'Before the Gaze: The Internal Senses and Late Medieval Practices of Seeing', in *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw*, ed. by Robert S Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 197–223; *Architecture of the Sacred: Space, Ritual, and Experience from Classical Greece to Byzantium*, ed. by Bonna D. Wescoat and Robert G. Ousterhout (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012). These essays argue that ritual is inextricably connected to the architectural buildings in which it takes place and focus on the importance of movement through space.

[88] Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy*, pp. 3–4. He notes that 'Dante is very conscious of all kinds of movement — his own and that of other people, objects, and elemental forces such as wind, rain and fire' and he also notes Dante's use of the term *muovere* [to move] more than 175 times in poem.

impacts and influences the people who use the space.[89] This is crucial to Dante's relationship with space and his creation of it, but also implicitly for the reader who must understand how space is used and impacts self-identity to understand Dante's use of space.

Movement within the church space was also restricted depending on a number of factors including gender, class, and being a member of the religious or lay community.[90] We might connect this idea with aspects of the structure and experience of Dante's afterlife. In Hell especially, there is a dichotomy created between the sinners and Virgil and Dante-*personaggio* where, in some cases, Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil are able to move throughout the space and traverse boundaries, but the sinners are confined to their circle or subcircle. When the sinners do move, it is because the environment enables the sin to be punished through this movement, such as the lustful in a constant whirlwind or the soothsayers walking with their faces backwards. When the sinners are static, again we find the punishment being facilitated by the landscape or built environment — being immersed in the river of blood or being stuck in a tomb. This play with movement enables the reader to consider how the space created for each of the various sins is different from the other circles. It also invites the reader to understand the circles experientially and multi-sensorially, similar to movement through architectural space generally.

1.6 Chapter Outlines

This thesis engages with a number of concepts and themes prevalent in Dante studies. While each chapter focuses on particular architectural forms, it engages with these spaces through important themes within Dante scholarship. For example, Chapter 2 develops important discussions about individual and communal identity prevalent in Dante scholarship. It seeks to contextualise the idea of the cityscape within medieval Italian thought by providing an overview of how the expansion of Florence enabled the inhabitants to imagine their city as

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[89] Karmon, p. 36. For a similar argument see Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. by John How (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 77, 117–18, 120.

[90] Alice T. Friedman, 'Architecture, Authority, and the Female Gaze: Planning and Representation in the Early Modern Country House', *Assemblage*, 18, 1992, 41–61 (p. 43) <https://doi.org/10.2307/3171205> [accessed 8 November 2021].

an idealised form. By analysing the cityscape of Florence through its main components of walls, streets, gates, and towers it understands the broader concepts of how the shape of the city was connected to the cosmos and how these, in turn, contributed to understandings of individual and communal identity.

After this broad bird's-eye view of the city, the thesis concentrates on religious architectural spaces and the practices enacted within them. Chapter 3 considers the structure of the cloister and its decoration showing how movement through the cloister was used as a tool for meditation. Arguments for reading the *Commedia* as a meditational book exist,[91] but analysing the architecture of the cloister itself opens up new readings of this interpretation by tracing Dante's uses of the cloister to describe the architectural layout of both Hell and Paradise and his references to earthly cloisters. This chapter aims to provide an understanding of how the architecture of the cloister informs Dante's presentation of these spiritual practices of meditation within the *Commedia*. It argues that Dante uses the term deliberately to emphasise the cloister's function as a space used for meditation in order for the reader to apply this meditative approach to the text of the poem.

Chapter 4 analyses how consecration processions impact the spatial quality of a building by transforming the bricks and mortar into a sacred space. This rite was common within Dante's lifetime due to the building boom in cities of Italy; the chapter argues that by interpreting Dante's Earthly Paradise procession in a similar way, new readings are opened up in relation to community, baptism, and movement. A plethora of scholarship exists on interpreting this procession

[91] For some examples see Mary J. Carruthers, The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200 (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Mary J. Carruthers, The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Frances A. Yates, The Art of Memory, first published by Routledge and Kegan Paul in 1966 (London: The Bodley Head, 2014); Demaray.

through its characters[92] and as a type of medieval procession,[93] yet only a small number of studies consider the procession itself as a ritual and performative act.[94] By considering the procession as a consecration ritual, this chapter contributes to the existing discussion surrounding Dante's condemnation of the Church and corrupt society[95] as well as Dante's stated purpose for his poem: to lead its readers towards God.[96]

In chapter 5 I argue that Dante's references to tombs and their descriptions reflect the material culture of the time with the growth of tomb purchases inside and around church structures. This broadens our understanding of Dante's choices about the style of tomb decoration that he describes in the first two realms of the afterlife to comment on and reflect the sin being depicted. Moreover, this analysis enables me to consider many themes already present within Dante scholarship, such as identity and self-fashioning and their connection to baptism, burial, and resurrection, but through a new lens, in the form of tomb architecture.

Chapter 6 combines the religious spatial practices discussed in previous chapters in a case study of Dante's terrace of pride in the *Purgatorio* and its architectural motifs of friezes, corbels, and tombs. I argue that Dante draws connections between the terrace of pride and the foundations of a church,

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[92] See Charles S. Singleton, 'The Pattern at the Center', in *Dante's* Commedia*: Elements of Structure* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019), pp. 45–60; Kenelm Foster, '*Purgatorio*, XXXII', in *Cambridge Readings in Dante's Comedy*, ed. by Kenelm Foster and Patrick Boyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 138–54; Peter Armour, *Dante's Griffin and the History of the World: A Study of the Earthly Paradise (*Purgatorio*, Cantos Xxix-Xxxiii)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). For a fuller bibliography see chapter 5.

[93] For some examples see Lizette Andrews Fisher, *The Mystic Vision in the Grail Legend and in the Divine Comedy* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1917); Isobel Friedman, 'La processione mistica di Dante: allegoria e iconografia nel canto XXIX del Purgatorio', in *Dante e le forme dell'allegoresi*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone and G.C Alessio (Ravenna: Longo, 1987), pp. 125–38; David Ruzicka, '"Sì Ch'a Nulla, Fendendo, Facea Male": Dante's Griffin and Florentine Civic Ritual ("Purgatorio" 29.109–11)', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 130, 2012, 1–45.

[94] Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy*, pp. 2–3; John Freccero, 'Dante's Pilgrim in a Gyre', *PMLA*, 76.3 (1961), 168–81 <https://doi.org/10.2307/460347> [accessed 11 August 2020].

[95] For some examples see Armour, *Dante's Griffin*; Davis; Peter Hawkins, *Dante's Testaments: Essays in Scriptural Imagination*, 1 edition (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); George Corbett, 'Dante's Other-Worldly Surprises and This-Worldly Polemic', in *Imagining the Medieval Afterlife*, ed. by Richard Matthew Pollard, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp 286–302.

[96] Phillips-Robins, pp. 152–53.

which resonate throughout *Purgatorio*. All of the chapters engage with current debates in Dante scholarship but through the new lens of architecture and the built environment and its ability to shape experience and understanding. These analyses also help us understand Dante's audience and how they might have engaged with these episodes through their knowledge of material culture and practices.

This thesis, then, aims to show how architecture becomes a way in which Dante's broader concerns are thought about within the *Commedia*. Each chapter will consider an architectural form or practice to understand these broader concerns, such as ideas of identity, community, corruption, and spiritual growth. The following chapters will guide the reader through the different issues that urban space can help us understand within the text of the *Commedia*.

Chapter 2 **Transforming the Cityscape of Florence: Symbolism, Communal identity, and Cosmology in the Architectural Shape of Dante's Afterlife**

2.1 Introduction

Imagine a late-medieval traveller walking towards Florence from a distance. The traveller would see the construction of the new circuit of walls, creating a physical barrier around the city and a symbol of the city's rapid growth. He or she would see various travellers and merchants lining up to enter the city through its main gates and would see its imposing towers ascending towards the sky. Medieval descriptions and depictions of cityscapes focused on these key architectural features. While much of my thesis focuses on individual elements in the urban landscape, this chapter considers the cityscape as whole. It shows that the city, and representations of it, are shaped to reflect and develop ideas of identity in relation to communal identity as well as to the cosmos. By drawing on these ideas, it will analyse how ideas of the cityscape function throughout Dante's afterlife, especially in the City of Dis and in the Empyrean.

First, it is important to note that there was considerable focus in writing in medieval Italy on the shape and meaning of the cityscape, represented in the *laudes civitatum* tradition. This genre was a predominantly Italian phenomenon beginning in the eighth century and continuing well into the late medieval period.[1] The oldest medieval text is the *Versum de Mediolano civitate*, written

[1] For a full survey see Hyde. He notes that the genre was predominantly Italian with praises being written most often for Milan and Rome. He also notes non-Italian examples such as London, Chester, Durham and York. The date of 1400 is given by Hyde who argues that after this time the genre changed and became a new genre in and of itself. See also; Fasoli, 'Città e storia delle citta'; Frugoni; Keen, 'Boundaries and Belonging: Imagining Urban Identity in Medieval Italy'; Lilley, *City and Cosmos*; Gina Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', in *Le coscienza cittadina nei comuni italiani del Duecentro*, Convegni del Centro di studi sulla spiritualità medievale, 11 (Todi, 1972). For a description of a late-antique manuscript (which survives in an eighth-century Lombard manuscript) that lays out the formula of *laude* civitatum poems see Karl Halm, *Rhetores latini minores* (Breinigsville, PA: Nabu Press, 2010), pp. 587–88.

between 739 and 749, in praise of Milan.[2] It created a formula that was then followed throughout the early and late medieval period where praise is given to the founder, the walls, natural resources, monuments, saints and relics, and local nobility.[3] This formula continued into Dante's time and beyond it, with examples such as the *Florentie urbis et reipublicae descriptio* (1339) and Villani describing Florence in a similar way: the walls, bridges, squares, government, religious institutions, soldiers, supplies, and inhabitants.[4] This poetic tradition and the writing that inspired it, linked the inhabitants' identity (and often their moral character) to the architectural plan and buildings of the city. Dante works with the readers' expectations associated with this genre and uses certain moments in his poem to bring these ideas to the fore, in order to comment on the city of Florence and its moral character as well as the moral character of the afterlife, most explicitly in the cases of the City of Dis and the Empyrean.

2.2 The Cityscape

2.2.1 **Walls and Gates as Symbols of Belonging**

As we saw in the introduction, the expansion of Florence led to the construction of a large number of buildings, but it also included changes to other features that connected the buildings such as the walls, gates, and streets. For example, a new 8km-long circuit of walls, its third set, was built to accommodate the growing population (Figure 9). The walls were two metres wide with fifteen major gates.[5]

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[2] The walls are described at lines 7–15 of the poem: Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', p. 15; Frugoni, p. 55; E. Dümmler, 'Laudes Mediolanensis civitatis', in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881).

[3] For a full description of the poem see Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', pp. 13–20. Fasoli outlines many *laude civitatum* poems and how they follow the same formula, such as the *Versum de Mediolano* (c.1253–1259), the *Chronica parva ferrariensis* (c.1309), and the *Liber de laudibus civitatis ticinensis* (c.1328–1330).

[4] For more examples see Etienne Baluze and Giovanni Domenico Mansi, *Miscellanea: novo ordine digesta & non paucis ineditis monumentis opportunisque animadversionibus aucta* (Lucae: Riccomini, 1761), IV; Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', pp. 38–39.

[5] Areli, p. 431. Areli only describes 12 gates while Davidsohn, Frugoni, and Toker describe 15. Areli's error may be due to the common association of 12 gates with the Heavenly Jerusalem. See

The walls of a city were not just a physical boundary but they also carried strong symbolic weight. In the *laudes civitatum* and visual traditions, they were often used as a synecdoche for the city itself and represented the boundary between the outside, natural world and the inside, ordered, built environment.[6] The walls provided a boundary and protection and they also created an ideological distinction between the insider and outsider.[7] For example, saints' relics were often buried within the walls in order to sanctify them and produce a holy boundary.[8] Chiara Frugoni analyses various artistic representations of cities from the early to late medieval period and argues that the city's walls were an 'essential characteristic of these representations'.[9] Similarly, in the *laudes civitatum* tradition the walls of the city were the most important feature after its founder.[10] For example, the *Versum de Mediolano civitate* praises the walls of Milan which are described in great detail. Another example is Villani who describes Florence's third circuit of walls over two chapters, emphasising their importance.[11] The shape of the walls also had significance: Bonvesin della Riva (1240 – *c.*1313) describes the circularity of the walls of Milan as a symbol of the city's perfection and Rome's shape was compared to a lion, symbolising its strength.[12] Florence's walls, as in the example of Milan, were referred to as a circle [*cerchia*], in all three of its sets.[13]

Davidsohn, VII, p. 479: 'la terza cerchia aveva un perimetro di otto chilometri e mezzo, le mura erano larghe due metri e alte undici metri e due terzi, fino alla sommità della rettangolare merlatura guelfa. La sormontavano gradiose porte e settantatrè torri di difesa; le quindici uscite, alcune delle quali furono chiuse piu tardi'; Frugoni, p. 26; Franklin K. B. Toker, *On Holy Ground: Liturgy, Architecture and Urbanism in the Cathedral and the Streets of Medieval Florence* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2009), p. 128.

[6] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, p. 15.

[7] For a thorough investigation of Dante's use of the dichotomy between insider and outsider see Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*, ch. 2; see also Robert S Lopez, *Intervista sulla citta' medievale* (Bari: Laterza, 1984), p. 7.

[8] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, pp. 17–18.

[9] Frugoni, p. 14.

[10] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, p. 16.

[11] Villani, *Nuova cronica,* IX. CCLVI-CCLVII.

[12] Pequigney and Dreyfus, Vol. 3, 15; for the reference to Milan see: Lopez, p. 10; for the reference to Rome see: Armour, *Dante's Griffin*, p. 81.

[13] For a description of the importance of the walls see Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*, pp. 15–16.

Similar to the *laudes civitatum* tradition, Dante describes Florence beginning with its walls, when Cacciaguida says:

> "Fiorenza dentro de la cerchia antica
> ond' ella toglie ancora e terza e nona
> si stava in pace, sobria e pudica.
> Non avea catenella, non corona,
> non gonne contigiate, non cintura
> che fosse a veder più che la persona.
> […]
> A così riposato, a così bello
> viver di cittadini, a così fida
> cittadinanza, a così dolce ostello,
> Maria mi diè, chiamata in alte grida,
> e ne l'antico vostro Batisteo
> insieme fui cristiano e Cacciaguida." (*Par.*, XV, 97–102; 130–35)

> [Florence within the ancient circle from which she still takes both tierce and nones dwelt in peace, sober and modest. She had no gold chain, no crown, no embroidered gowns, no belt more to be looked at than its wearer to so peaceful, to so comely a life of citizens, to so loyal a citizenry, to so sweet a dwelling, Mary gave me, invoked with loud cries, and in your ancient Baptistery I became at the same time a Christian and Cacciaguida.]

Cacciaguida describes Florence before it began expanding, during the time of its first set of walls. This was a time, according to Cacciaguida, before the corruption that now inhabits Florence took place; it is an idyllic representation of a city. Cacciaguida focuses on the city walls as a defining characteristic of the city: 'la cerchia antica'. The focus on the circularity of the city walls is emphasised by the repetition of circular objects: crown and belt. The crown and belt are symbols of excessive consumption, the root of Florence's corruption, suggesting that the expanding walls are like an expanding belly or the wearing of ostentatious jewellery and clothing. Cacciaguida criticises the Florence of Dante's time by describing the physical layout of the walls which have expanded too much, leading to corruption descending on Florence. The reference to the bells of tierce and nones from the Badia also draws attention to the expanding city, where it has expanded so much that these bells are no longer heard throughout it.

This episode also demonstrates the tie Florentines had to their city of birth, as well as the insider and outsider boundary the walls created.

Cacciaguida recalls his baptism where he was not only welcomed into the Christian community, but also the community of the city, feeling as though he became a part of the Florentine community as well through this act. Dante experienced exile from his city and his family property was destroyed in the November 1301 rampage. The influences of this erasure of his identity become pronounced when we consider the prophecies of exile within the poem.[14] For Dante, even though he was exiled, he would always be a Florentine citizen, demonstrated by his signature: 'Florentinus et exul inmeritus' [a Florentine and undeserving exile].[15] A similar sentiment is given by Farinata degli Uberti (1212–1264), when Dante-*personaggio* informs him that his family and party were exiled from Florence and Farinata responds: 'ciò mi tormenta più che questo letto' [that torments me more than this bed] (*Inf.*, X,77–78). The city you were born and raised in shaped your understanding of the world and your place within it, creating insiders and outsiders based on birthplace, signified by the city walls.

City walls are used by Dante throughout the *Commedia*. For example, he uses them as a synecdoche for the city, as in the Cacciaguida episode above, where Cacciaguida refers to 'la cerchia antica'; and also when he compares the walls of Montereggione to the walls of the ninth circle of Hell:

[…] però che, come su la cerchia tonda
Montereggion di torri si corona,

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[14] For scholarship on Dante and exile see: G. Arnaldi, 'Verona', in *ED*, V, 973–77; Catherine Keen, 'The Language of Exile in Dante', in *Current Trends in Dante Studies*, ed. by Claire E. Honess, Reading Medieval Studies, 27 (2001) 79–102; A. Battistini, 'L'estremo approdo: Ravenna', in *Dante e le città dell'esilio: atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Ravenna (11-13 settembre 1987)*, ed. by Guido Di Pino (Ravenna: Longo, 1989), pp. 155–75; Antonio Belloni, 'Nuove osservazioni sulla dimora di Dante in Padova', *Nouvo archivo veneto*, 41 (1922), 40–80; *Dante e la cultura veneta: atti del Convegno di studi organizzato dalla Fondazione Cini*, ed. by Vittore Branca and Giorgio Padoan (Florence: Olschki, 1967); E. Chiarini, 'Ravenna', in *ED*, IV, 1012–14; E. Chiarini, 'Venezia', in *ED*, V, 927–34; G. De Biasi, 'Padova', in *ED*, IV, 245–47; A. Gloria, 'Dante Alighieri in Padova', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 17 (1891), 358–66; Corrado Ricci, *L' ultimo rifugio di Dante*, 2nd edn (Milan: Hoepli, 1921); Fabrizio Ricciardelli, 'Exile as Evidence of Civic Identity in Florence in the Time of Dante: Some Examples', *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 5.1 (2004), 2 <https://doi.org/10.6092/1593-2214/290> [accessed 8 April 2019]; Giovanni Solinas, *Verona e Dante* (Verona: Circolo Didattico e Comune di. S. Giovanni Lupatoto, 1965); Various Authors, *Dante e Verona per il VII centenario della nascita.* (Verona: Valdonega, 1965); A. Vasina, 'Ferrara', in *ED*, II, 841–42.

[15] *Epistole* V, 1; VI,1; VII, 1.

così la proda che 'l pozzo circonda
    torreggiavan di mezza la persona
li orribili giganti, […] (*Inf.*, XXXI, 40-44)

[for, as above its circling walls Montereggione is crowned by towers, so there above the bank that circles the pit towered with half their persons the horrible giants,]

The physical layout of Dante's afterlife also uses city walls, with the most obvious example being the City of Dis. Following the *laudes civitatum* tradition, when Dante describes Dis, its defensive qualities are denoted by the walls being made of iron (*Inf.*, VIII, 1–21; 67–82) and these walls are repeated twice in his description of Dis, emphasising their importance (*Inf.*, IX, 26; X, 2, 133). Dis' walls also delineate the space of Hell; they are not in the fifth or sixth circle but sit between them.[16]

The gates attached to the walls also offered protection to the inhabitants through their ability to control and limit access into the city. The large scale of the main gates, as well the coats of arms and inscriptions often accompanying them, symbolised one's submission to authority upon entry.[17] For example, Jacques Le Goff states: '[l]a città medievale deve aprirsi di giorno a ciò che l'arricchisce, ma lasciar fuori gli elementi malvagi, e chiudersi di notte al mondo delle tenebre esterne' [the medieval city must open up by day to what enriches it, but leave out the evil elements, and close at night to the world of external darkness].[18] Dante follows these traditional symbols and meanings assigned to gates, an example being when we compare a large open gate such as the one in Hell to the heavily guarded gate of Purgatory, we interpret the meaning of each gate through its form. The gate of Purgatory is almost missed by Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil because it only appears as a crack in a wall at first, limiting those who can enter the sacred space of Purgatory-proper. It is also heavily secured not only by a door but a guard who needs two keys to open it,

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[16] Denise Heilbronn, 'Dante's Gate of Dis and the Heavenly Jerusalem', *Studies in Philology*, 72.2 (1975), 167–92.

[17] Karmon, pp. 93–94; Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*, p. 15; Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformation, and Its Prospects* (London: Penguin Books in association with Martin Secker & Warburg, 1991).

[18] Jacques Le Goff, 'L'immaginario urbano nell' Italia medievale (secoli V-XV)', in *Storia d'Italia: Annali 5. Il paesaggio* (Turin: Einaudi, 1982), pp. 5–43 (p. 16).

and it requires the person approaching to beg for entrance. In contrast, the gate of Hell is wide open, allowing anyone to enter (*Inf*. III, 1–21). The contrasting forms of these two gates enable the reader to understand that the gate of Hell is open to all sinners and anyone who traverses it will be swallowed up into the horrors of Hell, whereas the gate of Purgatory is exclusive to only those who have repented and have hope — it is a protected space (*Purg*. IX, 73–132). The difference between these two gates is repeated when Dante has entered the gate of Purgatory:

> Ahi quanto son diverse quelle foci
> da l'infernali! ché quivi per canti
> s'entra, e là giù per lamenti feroci. (*Purg*., XII, 112–14)
>
> [Ah, how different are these passageways from those in Hell! for here one enters with singing, down there with fierce laments.]

These two gates clearly recall biblical symbolism (Matthew 7:13–14)[19] but the gates also require the person who crosses the threshold to acknowledge, not the power of the city, but God's power (*Inf*. III, 1–9, *Purg*., X, 7–15).[20] The City of Dis' gate is not only physically between the gate of Hell and the gate of Purgatory but its location also symbolises its meaning: it is closed upon Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil's arrival but is later opened by the heavenly messenger (*Inf*., VIII, 115, IX, 88-90).[21] Furthermore, if we were in any doubt that the afterlife is a sort of city, the gates confirm that this is indeed what it is, reinforced by naming Dis 'la città dolente' [the grieving city] on Hell's gate and by Virgil recalling this epithet when he and Dante-*personaggio* look at the moat surrounding the City of Dis (*Inf*., III, 1; IX, 32).

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[19] 'Intrate per angustam portam quia lata porta et spatiosa via quae ducit ad perditionem et multi sunt qui intrant per eam. Quam angusta porta et arta via quae ducit ad vitam et pauci sunt qui inveniunt eam.' [Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it!]

[20] For a summary of the parrallels between the gate of Dis and the gate of Purgatory see Peter Armour, *The Door of Purgatory: A Study of Multiple Symbolism in Dante's Purgatorio* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 54.

[21] Heilbronn, pp. 176–77. She interprets the City of Dis' gate as both a *porta clausa* and a *coeli porta* in the Marian tradition.

2.2.2 Towers as Symbols of Pride and Factionalism

Similar to the walls and gates, towers were one of the first things one saw when approaching the city and therefore they played an important role in shaping conceptions of the city and ideas of communal and individual identity.[22] At the beginning of the fourteenth century there were 150 towers in Florence and some measured around 75 metres high.[23] The architectural form of towers consisted of tall imposing structures made of strong masonry with few openings. They provided defence to the city from outside attack, producing a source of pride for the residents.[24] But they were also a symbol of political strength for the Guelph and Ghibelline factions, leading to the destruction and rebuilding of many of these towers.[25]

The building of the tower in the Palazzo del Capitano, is a good example of the Guelphs' destruction of the Ghibellines' property (Figure 10). It housed the Captain of the People, the head of the Guelph faction. Interestingly, the Palazzo del Capitano was not built near any of the main community sites, such as the cathedral or the market, but was instead located where the Guelph supporters lived, in the east of the city. This strategic location was likely an attempt by the Guelphs to counter their fragility — having just defeated the Ghibellines after over 100 years of Ghibelline rule. But the tower on the palazzo also symbolised the power the Guelphs had over their opponents and the pride they took in this. This is especially emphasised in the fact that the Guelphs ensured their tower was higher than any other in the city — going so far as lopping off the tops of competing towers and instigating a law that reduced all other towers to 29 metres.[26]

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[22] Kleinhenz also notes the different functions of towers and their role as a symbol of pride for Dante: Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View', p. 228. He also notes Dante's sonnet *Non mi poriano già mai fare ammenda* where the Garisenda towers distracts him from seeing a beautiful lady.

[23] Villani, *Nuova cronica,* VII.III.

[24] David Friedman, *Florentine New Towns*, pp. 7, 214; for the connection between towers and pride see also Dean, p. 5.

[25] The crowning on the top of each tower identified the political faction who owned it: rectangular merlons for Guelphs and swallow tail merlons for the Ghibellines.

[26] Najemy, p. 244.

The Ghibelline leadership also employed these same tactics. For example, in 1248 they demolished 36 Guelph towers and palaces.[27] These same acts continued each time they came back into power; such as in 1260, after the Battle of Montaperti, when the Ghibellines ordered the destruction of 103 Guelph palaces, 580 houses, and 85 towers.[28] As the examples demonstrate, towers were used by the factions as symbols of pride and embodied the conflict between the Guelph and Ghibelline factions.

Dante uses the same association of towers with pride and factionalism.[29] This is perhaps best illustrated in *Inferno* XXXI, in which Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil approach lake Cocytus and Dante-*personaggio* thinks he sees three towers in the distance, ringing the walls, similar to a medieval city.[30] Virgil immediately tells him that he has erred in his understanding and that the towers are actually three giants, Nimrod, Ephialtes, and Antaeus, who all attempted to overthrow God or the classical gods (*Inf.*, XXXI, 19–27, 46–78, 91–105). Yet it is towers, not giants, that are the dominant image within the canto since not only does the noun 'torre' occur four times (*Inf.*, XXXI, 20, 31, 41, 107) as well as the verb 'torreggiare', meaning 'to tower' (l. 43), but other towers are also referenced such as the Garisenda tower and the towers of Montereggione.[31] So why does Dante conflate the giants with towers and once he is corrected by Virgil, why does he continue the association?

When Dante-*personaggio* mistakes the giants for towers he errs in his judgement. This error leads to a mis-reading of the towers which is interesting when compared with the reason why the giants are in Hell. All three giants

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[27] Villani, *Nuova cronica,* VI.XXXIII.

[28] 'History of Florence 12-14th C' <http://courses.washington.edu/hum103/HISTORY%20OF%20FLORENCE%2012-14TH%20c.htm> [accessed 14 June 2019].

[29] Davis notes these instances where Dante calls attention to Florence's factional divide, such as in *Purgatorio*, VI, 78, see Davis, p. 78.

[30] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 1: Inferno*, ed. by Robert M. Durling, trans. by Ronald L. Martinez (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 491. See also Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Towering Giants', p. 272. He also notes Sinclair's reading of the towering giants as a comment on the towers of Italy and their 'negative' use for war, arrogance, brute force, etc: Dante Alighieri, John D Sinclair, and Kenneth Koch, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959) I, 393.

[31] Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Towering Giants', pp. 271–72; 272–74; 278, 285 traces Dante's reference to towers throughout the poem.

made errors in judgement leading to their downfall. If the giants had understood their place within the hierarchy of the cosmos, they would not have been destroyed. By referring to these three giants and their errors in judgement, Dante-*personaggio*'s own mis-judgement is better understood. By producing the same act within the reader, the reader and Dante-*personaggio* learn from Dante's mistake: they must not be similar to the giants who attempt to reach beyond their capabilities; this is an important lesson for Dante who is similar to the giants and the tower of Babel because he is attempting to ascend to new limits, both with his poetry but also his journey to God in the character of the pilgrim.

The giants provide the biblical and classical moral lessons while the reference to the towers of Montereggione connects the historical lesson to the present moment and the Guelph and Ghibelline conflict. Montereggione's walls and towers were begun in 1260 after the Sienese defeated the Florentine Guelphs at Montaperti. Although Dante is referring to a different city than Florence with this simile, he is still referring to the conflict of the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

Towers and factionalism are also linked to the tower in the Ugolino della Gherardesca (*c*. 1220–1289) episode (*Inf*., XXXIII).[32] Ugolino and his family were locked in a tower because Ugolino, born into a Ghibelline family, spent his career switching between the two factions, eventually leading to his death and earning him his place in the circle of treason. The horrific description of Ugolino and his family's fate is used by Dante as an example of the horrors that result from the Guelph and Ghibelline political infighting.

This connection between towers, pride, and factionalism continues in Purgatory, most explicitly on the terrace of pride where many of the themes and characters reappear. The most explicit example occurs when Dante-*personaggio*'s path becomes a line of tombstones and he sees Nimrod and his tower of Babel, carved onto one of the tombs (*Purg*., XII, 16–18; 34). Dante

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[32] Towers only appear four other times within Hell: Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Towering Giants', p. 278. Two signal towers appear on each side of the River Styx, a tower appears in the City of Dis, and the Tower of Hunger of canto XXXIII.

depicts an architectural antithesis to the towers of *Inferno* XXXI where Nimrod and the sinners of pride have literally become the lowest architectural form possible in their depiction as tombstones carved into the surface of the path.[33] Tomb slabs on the floor symbolised humility at this time, the very opposite of pride and the virtue that the sinners on this terrace need to learn (William Durand, *Rationale*, 1.1.28). These examples demonstrate how this conflation of pride and towers becomes a tool used by Dante to comment on the Guelph and Ghibelline factionalism and its breakdown of society.

2.2.3 Dante's City of Dis and the *Laudes civitatum* Tradition

Dante's description of the City of Dis follows the *laudes civitatum* tradition and visual representations of cities, described above, where the main features are the circular walls, gates, and towers. The walls of the city are repeated twice in his description of Dis (*Inf.*, IX, 26; X, 2, 133); the towers are repeated three times (*Inf.* VII, 130; VIII, 130; IX, 36); and the gates are also referenced three times (*Inf.*, VIII, 115, 125; IX, 89). This repetition, combined with the fact that Dante reveals various details of the walls, gates, and towers at different times, provides the reader with a concrete image of what the city looks like and also the emphasis of these details leads one to conclude that they must have 'a major significance'.[34]

His description also follows the *laudes civitatum* tradition by connecting the city's physical layout to its people: 's'appressa la città c'ha nome Dite, coi gravi cittadin […]' [we approach the city whose name is Dis, with its weighty citizens] (*Inf.* VIII, 68–69).[35] This connection continues as he enters the city through its gates. Dante's City of Dis is an ironic twist because when he enters the city, and traces its interior perimeter, instead of finding the relics of saints or towers, such as in the *laudes civitatum* tradition, protecting the city, Dante-

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[33] Kleinhenz describes the image of Nimrod as '*superbia* laid low' in 'Dante's Towering Giants', p. 285.

[34] Heilbronn, pp. 171–72. She argues that the tower serves a 'prophetic function […] pointing ahead to the messenger'.

[35] This connection of the city with its citizens also occurs when he enters the gate of Hell: 'Noi siam venuti al loco ov' i' t'ho detto | che tu vedrai le genti dolorose | c'hanno perduto il ben de l'intelletto' [we have come to the place where I told you you will see the grieving peoples who have lost the good of the intellect.] (*Inf.*, III, 16–19).

personaggio finds souls of the Epicureans stuck in tombs for eternity because they did not believe in the resurrection of the body (*Inf.*, IX, 112–123).[36] Ironically, Dante-*personaggio* encounters a type of tower with the figure of Farinata, whose rising up from his tomb mimics the giants who are mistaken for towers surrounding lake Cocytus in both his physical appearance and because of his pride (*Inf.*, X, 31–33; XXXI, 19–33).[37]

The negative results of the factionalism of Florence, and other Italian medieval cities, were also reflected in the *laudes civitatum* poems. *The Liber de laudibus civitatis ticinensis* (c.1328–1330) is informative because it notes the charity of the people but then also describes the fact that the greatness of the city is being brought down by the few who have power and are abusing that power.[38] This is an example that Keen draws on to describe how the general formula was being subverted in order to describe the factionalism that was rife within Italian cities. Since the genre was well established at this time, it allowed the writers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries freedom to play with the typical formula to produce new meaning and condemn the current political strife within the cities. Keen argues that the strict dichotomy of the city versus the wilderness is subverted when describing the factionalism of the cities. An implicit example of this is in a tract by Pieraccio Tedaldi (*c.*1300–*c.*1349/50) which compares Florence to Faenza. Tedaldi heaps praises onto Florence but then refuses to label Faenza a city at all, instead referring to it as a countryside [campagna].[39] Other more explicit examples are found in works that describe the city's inhabitants; rather than noble and charitable people of the early poems, we find prostitutes and gamblers (Cecco Nuccoli 1320–1350) or thugs, thieves, and other criminals (Guittone d'Arezzo *c.*1230–1294).[40] Another

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[36] The City of Dis is also described as as a reverse of the Heavenly Jerusalem: Mark Musa, *Advent at the Gates: Dante's Comedy* (Bloomington, 1974), p. 186; Heilbronn, pp. 186–87; Dante Alighieri and Charles S. Singleton, *The Divine Comedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 40.

[37] Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Towering Giants', pp. 274–75.

[38] Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', p. 37.

[39] Mario Marti, 'Pierraccio Tedaldi 24 "S'io veggio il dì"', in *Poeti giocosi del tempo di Dante* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1956), p. 740, ll.9–14.

[40] Cecco Nuccoli, 'Poem 17, "El mi rincresce"', in *Poeti perugini del Trecento*, ed. by Nerio Moscoli, Franco Mancini, and Luigi M. Reale (Perugia: Guerra, 1997), II, pp. 151–52; Guittone d'Arezzo, 'Poem XV "Gente noiosa"', in *Le rime*, ed. by Francesco Egidi (Bari: G. Laterza, 1940), pp. 31–35.

example is when Guittone d'Arezzo describes Arezzo, transforming it from a utopia to a dystopia.[41] These examples play with the opposition of city and wilderness, also found in Dante's City of Dis: the reader finds that it is an inverted city, instead of finding a built environment of houses, squares, and churches, Dante-*personaggio* will find an infernal unbuilt landscape with a river of blood (XII), a wood of suicides (XIII), and a burning plain of sand (XIV), which 'symbolise the political and spiritual perversion of the city'.[42] The City of Dis is also full of sinners, similar to the criminals found in the works of Nuccoli and Guittone. Dante and the poetry of his time play with this opposition to comment on the current factionalism that is tearing apart the cities — changing them from the communal utopias of old to a factional wilderness.

As Gina Fasoli points out, this is important when considering Dante because his descriptions of Florence in the *Commedia*, especially in the Cacciaguida canti noted earlier, are similar to the formula of the *laudes civitatum*: reference is made to the origins of the city with the description of the ancient circle of walls, but in a similar manner to Tedaldi, Nuccoli, and Guittone, Dante converts the praise into a reproach of the important families (*Par.*, XV, 97–148; XVI, 34–154).[43] Dante's City of Dis plays with and inverts the ideals represented in the *laudes civitatum* and visual tradition in order to convey the meaning and nature of his City of Dis. We will return to the City of Dis later in this chapter when we discuss the connection of the city with the cosmos.

2.2.4 **Streets as Symbols of Moral Character**

Changes to the streets of Florence played a contrasting role in the imagination of the city. The streets were straightened in order to combat the division and isolation inherent in the street pattern and within the warring people. As David Friedman notes,

> From a townscape of isolated neighborhoods shot through with back alleys accessible only to the people who inhabited them and dominated by the

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[41] Keen, 'Boundaries and Belonging: Imagining Urban Identity in Medieval Italy', pp. 78–79.

[42] For a similar reading of the inversion of the city see Keen, *Dante and the City*, p. 131. For a detailed analysis of the City of Dis see Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*, chapter 4 especially; see also Pequigney and Dreyfus, Vol. 3, 64.

[43] Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', p. 39.

> urban castles of the powerful extended families of the nobility, the government attempted to remake the city into a spatially unified whole. Straight, wide streets were the primary instrument of change. The new roadways rationalized the city's space and improved hygiene. More important, they established a system of public space protected by the new merchant regime that tied all the areas of the city together […] The street system converged on the center of town, where the great buildings that served the whole community were prominently sited.[44]

Design decisions were made based on practical, social, and Christian ideological motivations. The straight, wide streets improved hygiene and rationalised the space, but they also contributed to a sense of unity and helped the inhabitants come together at its centre in shared public spaces. Before these projects took place, streets were narrow and twisted, creating sanitation and traffic problems as well as facilitating criminal activity.[45] Furthermore, the nobility often owned the streets, creating a hierarchical system within the city similar to the feudal system which characterised the countryside.[46] The expansion allowed areas of the city, once dominated and controlled by the nobility, to be liberated by the campaign to straighten and widen them, which offered open passage to everyone. If the nobility attempted to restrict access, such as putting up barriers on the streets, they would be fined.[47] As a result, the law itself and the expansion techniques restricted the influence of the upper class.

A Statute of Florence from the early fourteenth century concerning the construction of the Via Larga (now the Via Camillo Cavour) describes the different functions these improvements had: 'ad augendum decorem et utiliatem civitatis Florentie et precipue de pulcris et rectis viis et introitibus civitatis eiusdem' [to enhance the decorum of the city of Florence and to be useful and especially to increase the number of beautiful straight streets and entrance routes].[48]

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[44] David Friedman, *Florentine New Towns*, p. 8; see also Dean, p. 6 who notes the commune setting laws for the minimum width of streets as well as works to straighten the streets.

[45] The improvements to traffic-flow and the reduction of criminal activity were such major concerns for the commune that it even issued laws to ensure their success. The commune also used compulsory purchases in order to improve access to the main structures. For more information, see Dean, p. 6.

[46] Friedman, Florentine New Towns, p. 16.

[47] Friedman, *Florentine New Towns*, p. 215.

[48] Pampaloni, p. 144, document 76.

Straightening the streets was also associated with ideas of cleanliness and, in turn, symbolised the moral correctness of the city, transforming the chaotic and immoral city of the past century.[49] A *lauda* by Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444) called *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis* (*c.* 1403–1404), describes the streets:

> Indeed it seems to me that Florence is so clean and neat that no other city could be cleaner. The great diligence of its inhabitants ensures and provides that all filth is removed from the streets, so you see only what brings pleasure and joy to the senses.[50]

According to Karmon, Bruni's description of the 'superlative hygienic conditions of Florence could be translated into the creation of a unified sensory regime […] every citizen of the city, from the ruling magistrates to the humblest beggar on the street, shared the same sensory values and thus worked in unison'.[51] The alterations to the streets became a tool to order as well as work to enhance the unity and harmony of its people, in the hopes of transforming the city as well as its people.[52]

The straightened streets had biblical associations as well. Hugh of St Victor noted in his *Didiscalicon* that 'the taut cord shows the path of the true faith'[53] and in Isaiah the 'straight way' represents the perfection of a world recreated in accordance with God's will for it. The fourteenth-century Statute about the Via Larga, provides an example of this when it states: 'de novo construatur ad cordam et recta linea ab una dictarum portarum ad alteram […]' [[It] ran from the gate in the old wall to one in the new circuit along a straight line measured by a cord].[54]

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[49] Karmon, p. 90. Karmon also notes that Leonardo Bruni's *laude civitatum* 'argues Florentine civic cleanliness could be taken as a material demonstration of Florentine civic virtue'.

[50] The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society: Francesco Petrarca, Coluccio Salutati, Leonardo Bruni, Francesco Barbaro, Poggio Bracciolini, Angelo Poliziano, ed. by Benjamin G. Kohl, Witt, Ronald G., and Welles, Elizabeth B. (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), p. 138.

[51] Karmon, p. 90.

[52] Karmon, p. 90.

[53] Hugh of Saint-Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, ed. by Jerome Taylor (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 141–42.

[54] Pampaloni, p. 144, document 76.

Dante also makes many references to *vie, cammini* [streets/paths] within his description of the afterlife. Often he adheres to the idea of straight paths as morally correct and curved or twisted paths as immoral. The most obvious example of this as an architectural metaphor occurs in the opening lines of *Inferno* I:

> Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
> mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
> ché la diritta via era smarrita. […] (*Inf.*, I, 1–3)
> [In the middle of the journey of our life, I came to myself in a dark wood, for the straight way was lost.]

The straight way is understood in scholarship as the path of the just person, leading to God (Psalm 23:3, Prov. 2:13–14, 2 Peter 2:15).[55] But this straight moral path is often compared to the twisted immoral path. For example, when Dante has entered the gate to Purgatory-proper he states:

> Poi fummo dentro al soglio de la porta,
> che 'l mal amor de l'anime disusa
> perché fa parer dritta la via torta, (*Purg.*, X, 1–3)[56]
> [When we were within the threshold of the gate, in disuse because of human souls' evil love, which makes the twisted way seem straight]

Or when Dante speaks to Forese Donati (1250–1296), he describes his path from Hell to this point in Purgatory and how the mountain of Purgatory affects the souls who ascend it:

> […] salendo e rigirando la montagna
> che drizza voi che 'l mondo fece torti. (*Purg.*, XXIII, 125–26)
> [climbing and circling about the mountain that straightens you whom the world twisted.]

Lastly, Aquinas offers another example of the straight versus the twisted path in the Heaven of the Sun (*Par.*, X, 16–21). Dante creates literal 'vie' throughout the afterlife as well, such as the way that so many of the punishments in Hell involve going round and round, unlike the new straight wide streets of Florence, the infernal streets lead nowhere — they are blind alleys in as much as they

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[55] Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 1: Inferno, p. 34.

[56] For an analysis of the different scholarly interpretations of these lines see Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, p. 56. In all of the interpretations, the idea that the purgative process straightens those who are twisted and brings them closer to God is implied.

always lead back to where they started (*Inf.*, III, 52–69, XV, 34–45, XVIII, 25–39, XX, 7–9). Dante draws on the biblical implications of straight and twisted paths and he uses this motif frequently throughout the *Commedia,* suggesting that he may have been influenced by both the biblical tradition and the expansion in parallel, as it were.[57]

2.3 Representations of Medieval Cities and the Cosmos in the *Commedia*

Some of the themes in relation to streets, such as connectedness, unification, and moral correctness, also play a role in the representation of cities and how they relate to broader understandings of the cosmos. When depicted as seen from the outside, medieval cities were often represented as a circle created by the walls and a cross produced by the streets and gates at each of the cardinal points; the most famous example of this type of circle and cross representation is the Heavenly Jerusalem and its earthly counterpart (Figure 11, Figure 12, Figure 13, Figure 14, and Figure 15). A circle and cross became shorthand for Jerusalem on medieval maps, even though, in reality, Jerusalem's walls created a rectangle, and the Heavenly Jerusalem's walls are described as a square in Revelation 21.[58] Oddly, then, the cross and circle neither adhere to the reality of Jerusalem nor the Heavenly Jerusalem's biblical description; but both of them were commonly described and depicted as a circle and cross.[59] Many scholars, including Frugoni and Keith D. Lilley, have argued that the combination of the circle and cross symbolised divine protection and had cosmological significance.[60]

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[57] In any case, they are both drawing on this same biblical symbolism and tradition.

[58] Honess, From Florence to the Heavenly City, p. 119.

[59] Frugoni, p. 21; Marie-Thérèse Gousset, 'La représentation de la Jérusalem Céleste à l'époque carolingienne carolinginne', *Cahiers Archéologiques; Fin de l'Antiquité et Moyen Âge; Paris*, 23 (1974), 45 (p. 54); Lilley, *City and Cosmos*, p. 17.

[60] Frugoni, p. 22; Lilley, *Urban Life In the Middle Ages: 1000-1450*, p. 139; Lilley, 'Cities of God? Medieval Urban Forms and their Christian Symbolism', p. 297. Liley posits that a combination of both the morphological and iconographic approaches to understanding the layout of medieval cities through Christian symbolism are crucial to our understanding of how these cities were experienced. He considers this through three types of 'mappings': 1] textual and visual representations that present the city as a microcosm; 2] the geometric layout of the city as a symbol of the microcosm; 3] how the microcosm is drawn onto the landscape by religious processions.

The *laudes civitatum* poems provide examples of aligning a city with the Heavenly Jerusalem, such as the *Versum de Mediolano civitate*, which includes a prayer that makes a direct link between the Heavenly Jerusalem and Milan:

> Dio custodisca la città, cui ha concesso la grazia di essere protetta da tanti santi martiri e confessori e conceda a tutti i cristiani la grazia di entrare nella città celeste.[61]
>
> [May God, look after the city, to which he has given the grace to be protected by so many saints, martyrs, and confessors, and [may he] grant to all Christians the grace to enter into the heavenly city.]

In this prayer, it is hoped that God will be an active agent in the protection of the city and this favour extends into the afterlife where the people of the city are received into the Heavenly Jerusalem. Other cities aligned themselves with the Heavenly Jerusalem through the physical layout of the built environment. For example, the cross pattern is evoked in Imola's layout being described by the sacred number twelve with its twelve chapels, three in each of the four quarters. Other examples are Utrecht, Bamberg, and Paderborn who arranged their churches to produce cross shapes.[62] The urban design of Florence also attempted to align itself with the Heavenly Jerusalem. For example, just as the Heavenly Jerusalem was depicted with 12 gates, a 1339 Statute of Florence describes 12 gates attached to the new walls, even though there were 15 gates by this time. The Statute alters reality so that the 12 gates link Florence to the divine protection and perfection of the Heavenly Jerusalem.[63] It is significant that the Statute, a written law, enacted by the government and intended for practical purposes and records, alters reality in order to make this claim.

Another association Florence made with Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem is its reference to its walls as circles [*cerchia*] even though, similar to Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem, none of the iterations of the walls of Florence were arranged in a circular shape; its third circle of walls looked more similar to a pentagon. Yet examples of the circularity of Florence's shape are found in

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[61] Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica nella "Laudes civitatum"', p. 16.

[62] Philip Sheldrake, *The Spiritual City: Theology, Spirituality, and the Urban* (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), p. 70 <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:101:1-201412186193> [accessed 19 November 2019].

[63] Frugoni, p. 26.

references to all three stages. For example, it was described as a series of concentric circles, such as in Bruni's *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis*:[64]

> Hec autem menibus cingitur atque suburbis. Suburbia rirus ville circumdant, villas autem oppida; atque hec omnis extima regio maiore ambitu circuloque complectitur. (30–32).
>
> [The city itself is ringed by walls and suburbs. Around the suburbs, in turn, lies a ring of country houses, and around them the circle of towns. The whole outermost region is enclosed in a still larger orbit and circle.]

As noted earlier, Dante also uses the term 'cerchia' to describe Florence as well as the physical walls surrounding the City of Dis and the ninth circle of Hell (*Par.*, XV, 97; *Inf.*, VIII, 79–81, XXXI, 40–44).

An example of the cross, formed by the newly straightened streets, mentioned above, is found in Villani's account of Florence's layout:

> La larghezza e croce della detta città facemmo misurare, e trovammo, che dalla porta alla Croce [...] ch'è da levante, infino all porta del Prato d'Ognissanti in sul Mugnone ch'é dal ponente, andando per la via diritta, onde si corre il palio, ha braccia quatromilatrecentocinquanta; e dalla porta di san Gallo in sul Mugnone ch'è di verso tramontana, infino alla porta Romana di san Piero Gattolino oltrarno [...].[65]
>
> [We measured the width and length of the city and found that it is 2350 cubits from the Porta alla Croce [...] in the east to the Porta del Prato d'Ognissanti on the Mugnone river in the west, and it is 5000 fathoms from Porta di San Gallo in sul Mugnone in the north to the Porta Romana near San Piero Gattolino in the south.[...].]

Villani's description emphasises the cross shape made by the newly straightened streets and four main gates, laid out at the four cardinal points — Porta alla Croce in the east, Porta del Prato d'Ognissanti in the west, Porta di San Gallo in the north and Porta Romana di San Piero Gattalino in the south. In addition, in 1242, Florence returned to its Roman four-ward division, emphasising the cross shape[66] and the rogation day procession performed by the canons of Santa Reparata traced a cross pattern of the city streets for spiritual rather than practical objectives. In fact, most of the routes are completely illogical and waste a great deal of time. It was 'intended to, and did,

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[64] Davidsohn, VII, pp. 475–76, 479, 501; Robert Buranello, 'The Structure and Strategy of Leonardo Bruni's *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis*', *Quaderni d'italianistica*, 16.1 (1995), 17–31 (p. 19) <https://doi.org/10.33137/q.i..v16i1.10381> [accessed 7 June 2021].

[65] Villani, *Nuova cronica,* IX.CCLVII.

[66] Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 130.

sacralise the streets, city walls, and critical features such as gates and bridges of Florence' in order to align it with the Heavenly Jerusalem, protect it from the outside world, and unify the whole city both socially and spatially.[67]

Visual depictions of Florence also represent it as a circle and cross, such as the 1355 fresco in the vault of the Palazzo dell'arte dei giuidici e notai (Figure 16). The walls of the city clearly create a circle and the cross shape is produced by the four gates at each of the cardinal points and is emphasised by each of these gates having a larger tower in comparison to the other eight. In the centre, this cross shape is highlighted by the same cross being formed by the four emblematic shields of the community: the lily of the Florentine commune, the eagle of the *parte Guelfa*, the cross of the Florentine *popolo*, and the red and white emblem which represents the Florentine and Fiesolan communities. The fresco provides an aerial view of the city, a view only available to God; this perspective clearly defines the boundaries of the city and its quarters. Frugoni argues that the city and its people were linked in the *laudes civitatum* poems,[68] and this idea is manifested in visual form in this fresco where it is not just the walls and towers that are represented but the people who inhabit the city who are represented through the shields, creating a unified and balanced whole. This perspective enables the viewer to see the quarter that their family's house is in as well as their parish church, allowing them to understand their place within the community, linking the material city with its people. This is an idealisation of Florence, showing it as an ordered space, with all of its parts working in harmony. David Friedman compares the concentric rings of the fresco to the layout of Dante's afterlife and also notes that the fresco represents: 'the political institutions, alliances, and history that made up the Florentine government in the mid-fourteenth century' and as a result, it 'reveal[s] little about the actual topography, but a good deal about the fourteenth-century urban ideal'.[69]

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[67] Toker, *On Holy Ground*, pp. 120, 123. Toker also notes that the procession celebrating the Scrutinies of Lent also traced a cross pattern (p. 139); see also Lilley, 'Cities of God? Medieval Urban Forms and Their Christian Symbolism', p. 307.

[68] Frugoni, pp. 3–4; for an overview of the structure of *laudes civitatum* which includes the walls and gates, primary sites, and achievements of citizens see Hyde.

[69] David Friedman, *Florentine New Towns*, p. 203.

This fresco is a symbolic representation of the city rather than an attempt to reproduce it with geographical accuracy. As noted earlier, the Guelph and Ghibelline factionalism of Florence left scars across the city where the ruling faction demolished towers, tombs, and other buildings associated with their enemy. The visual and written descriptions of Florence represent it as an ideal, based on the circle and cross model, aligning the city with Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem and the divine protection associated with them. This symbolism brought its design closer to God and created order and symmetry, removing the chaos and disorder of the factionalism. Similar objectives occurred in the cities of Bergamo and Ravenna where the rebuilding of the city was viewed as an attempt to heal and reunite the warring people.[70] Therefore the layout of the city was directly linked to the morality of its people.[71]

2.3.1 The City of Dis as a Built Environment

In a similar way, Dante creates an ordered and structured afterlife, deploying the same principles of balance and symmetry, even in Hell. Although less obvious than the Empyrean, discussed below, the City of Dis also conforms to the circle and cross pattern.[72] Dante first describes the City of Dis in *Inferno* VIII when he sees a high tower, mosques, a gate, a moat, and the city's walls. But before they enter, Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil circle the city, first on foot when they circle the moat that surrounds Dis (*Inf.*, VII, 127–28) and then in the boat which brings them across the moat:

> Non sanza prima far grande aggirata,
> venimmo in parte dove il nocchier forte
> "Usciteci," gridò: "qui è l'intrata." (*Inf.*, VIII, 79–81)
>
> [Not without first making a large circle did we reach a place where the pilot loudly cried: "Get out. Here is the entrance."]

[70] Frugoni, pp. 73, 35.

[71] For a similar connection of the city to the community see Keen, *Dante and the City*, p. 30.

[72] Kleinhenz notes that it is in Hell and Paradise that cities are referred to, whereas Purgatory is never referred to as a city. This sets up an opposition between the cities of Hell and that of Paradise: Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Towering Giants', pp. 272–73.

The circular quality of the city's iron walls is illustrated in the boat's journey and this circularity continues as Dante moves throughout the different sub-sections of the city.

The cross pattern of Dis is alluded to when Dante states:

> […] lasciammo il muro e gimmo inver' lo mezzo
> per un sentier ch'a una valle fiede,
> che 'nfin là sù facea spiacer suo lezzo. (*Inf.*, X, 134–36)
>
> [we turned from the wall and walked toward the center, along a path that cuts straight to a valley whose stench was displeasing even up there]

As Dante-*personaggio* moves from the interior city wall further into the city, they follow a straight path to the circle of the violent.[73]

Dante has the pilgrim walk into the City of Dis and notes the spatial experience of entering the city in order to dramatise the fact that, when seen from afar, the City of Dis is ordered, similar to the ideal represented in the *laudes civitatum* and visual tradition, but when one zooms in and enters the city, disorder and chaos take over. This is similar to the city of Florence fresco and the *laudes civitatum* poems which present the city as an ideal, yet the reality was that Florence had constant factional battles. The aerial perspective chosen aligns with God's perspective, and since God is the creator of all things, there is order in Hell for those who can see it from his perspective but not for the sinners who are within it, similar to the inscription on the Gate of Hell where Hell is made by love, justice, and wisdom even though its residents cannot understand

[73] Although much later in date, the illustrations to Alessandro Vellutello's commentary (1544) employ the circle and cross pattern three times to illustrate the City of Dis. Vellutello's commentary was published in Venice by Francesco Marcolini. There are a total of 87 woodcuts, likely by Giovanni Britto, though this attribution is debated. The city is represented as a set of circular walls, surrounded by a moat, and with 4 towers at each of the walls' cardinal points that act as gates. In Dante's entire description of the City of Dis, he is not explicit about the number of towers he sees in the distance so the four towers are Britto's choice, as is the fact that he has left out the mosques. Furthermore, neither Vellutello, nor any of the Renaissance commentaries, mention the Heavenly or Earthly Jerusalem in their commentary for this canto, suggesting there is a visual memory carried through the imagery. Also see British Library, Yates Thompson MS 36, ff. 14r, 16r, 18r where Priamo della Quercia illustrates the City of Dis three times, emphasising its importance. See also, Bodleian Library, MS Holkham misc. 48, p. 14 and Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, MS Reg. Lat. 1896, fol. 97v. Heilbronn also notes the connection of the City of Dis with the Heavenly Jerusalem through the Marian imagery of Mary as a gate, see Heilbronn, pp. 169, 186–87, 175.

it (*Inf.*, III, 1–9). Therefore, Dante's narrative dramatises that which is implicit in the *laudes civitatum* and visual traditions.

2.3.2 The Empyrean as a Built Environment

Dante's Empyrean is referred to as a city a number of times within the *Commedia* (*Inf.*, I, 121–29; *Purg.*, XIII, 94–96; XVI, 96; XXXII, 100–02; *Par.*, XXX, 130–32) and it also aligns with the circle and cross pattern. It is important to note that although Dante presents the Empyrean 'architecturally', it is a metaphor as the Empyrean is outside of time and space; however, for Dante-*personaggio* to comprehend it, the Empyrean is transformed metaphorically into a city. Similar to the City of Dis, we do not find buildings and streets, but instead we find the community of the saved: here the inhabitants literally create the material structure with their thrones. It is interesting that a later, mid-fifteenth-century, illumination of Dante's Empyrean illustrates Dante's focus on the necessity of the community to the city and it strongly replicates the features we found in the Heavenly Jerusalem depictions described above (Figure 17 and Figure 15). Since Dante's Empyrean describes the space of the Heavenly Jerusalem, it is not surprising that he uses features of the Heavenly Jerusalem from medieval art, such as its towers (*Purg.*, XVI, 96) and the circle and cross pattern, in his description of it.[74]

The Empyrean's circular quality is described in *Paradiso* XXX, when, after Dante drinks from a river of light with his eyes, it becomes a circle (ll. 73–90). Its circular features are further described throughout the Empyrean as well as its connection to cities: its circumference is larger than the sun (ll. 103–05); it is a city which encircles thrones (ll. 130–32); and in canto XXXI the Empyrean is referred to as a white rose (ll. 1, 10–11) and direct references to the cities of Rome and Florence are made (ll. 34, 39).

[74] This circle and cross pattern has been noted by Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City*, p. 119. It is important to note that the circle and cross pattern is prominent in medieval art but is not Biblical.

The thrones and their inhabitants, described in *Paradiso* XXXII, create the cross pattern. Dante uses plain language, a list form, and he repeats spatial positions such as ‘sotto’ [below] and ‘giù’ [down], like in this example:

> Ne l'ordine che fanno i terzi sedi,
> siede Rachèl di **sotto** da costei [...]
> puoi tu veder così di soglia in soglia
> **giù** digradar, com' io'ch'a proprio nome
> vo per la rosa **giù** di foglia in foglia. [...]
>
> e sotto lui così cerner sortiro
> Francesco, Benedetto e Agostino, [...] (*Par.*, XXXII, 7–8; 13–15; 34–35)
>
> [**Below** her, in the third tier of seats, sits Rachel you can see, following each other **down** tier by tier, as I with the name of each go from petal **down** to petal in the rose and **below** him in the same way Francis, Benedict and Augustine have been assigned to divide,]

He also uses directions such as ‘sinistra’ [left] (l. 121), ‘destro’ [right] (l. 124), and ‘contro’ [opposite] (ll. 133, 136), allowing the reader to place the figures within the proper tier. In addition, Dante describes a cross dividing the circle into quarters. Mary sits at the uppermost central, top position, below her is Eve, Rachel, Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, Ruth, and the other Hebrew women (ll. 4–18). The bottom arm of the cross, moving from bottom to centre, consists of John the Baptist, Francis, Benedict, Augustine, and other saintly men (ll. 28–36). The right and left arms of the cross are made up of the souls of the Hebrew children before Christ and the baptized children after Christ (ll. 40–48). The list of souls continues later in the canto and we begin to notice a pattern of Old Testament on the right and New Testament on the left, such as the pair on either side of Mary: Adam and Peter and on their outer sides are John the Evangelist and Moses (ll. 118–32). This pattern reminds us of the figural relationship between the Old Testament figures who prefigure the New Testament characters, which complete and perfect the Old Testament characters.[75] With these characters of the Old and New Testaments the spatial relationship that Dante describes manifests their temporal relationship. This symmetrical, unifying, and balancing quality again recalls descriptions of the Heavenly Jerusalem.

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[75] Erich Auerbach, ‘Figura’, in *Dante: The Critical Complex*, ed. by Richard H. Lansing (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), pp. 1–66 (p. 29).

As Keen points out, Dante's Empyrean is made up of people, not buildings, as an expression of its ideal nature.[76] Just as the viewer of the Florentine fresco could see where they fit within the city of Florence, assisting them in the microcosmic understanding, so too can the reader of Dante's Empyrean envision where they will be seated if they follow the path to God.[77]

The fact that Dante follows the tradition of representing Earthly and the Heavenly Jerusalem as a circle and cross is not surprising, but why does he use this layout? He creates a diagram that Dante-*personaggio* and the reader can use to gain knowledge and reach the vision of God. Steven Botterill notes that 'a reader can be forgiven for thinking that […] this canto's exhaustive description of the arrangement and population of the "candida rosa" of the Empyrean is ill-timed, not to say superfluous […]'.[78] However, he argues that St Bernard, Dante's guide in the last stage of his journey, uses language that allows him to explain the complex concept of why children are in the Empyrean when they did not have the opportunity to choose the Christian faith. Therefore, Bernard commands him to 'come along now with your eyes' (l. 115), one of twenty-five references to sight within the Empyrean, and tells him where each person sits. Dante is given an aerial view normally restricted to God looking down on the cities of the world. He is given this privileged view to contemplate the position of each figure and understand their relationship with each other, leading Dante to understand why the baptised children are here (ll. 49–83). It is through contemplation and the aid of Bernard, the teacher, that this single image is created. Once this is gained, he can move beyond the image to see God.

Florence was a city scarred by factionalism, a city full of disorder and chaos in its material fabric and people. By aligning Florence with the principles of unity and order in its descriptions and depictions an ideal city is formed, combating the chaos and disorder of the factions. Dante's Empyrean is an example of the perfection represented in the ideal city of God, from which

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[76] Keen, Dante and the City, p. 195.
[77] Frugoni, p. 25.
[78] Steven Botterill, *Dante and the Mystical Tradition: Bernard of Clairvaux in the Commedia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 87.

earthly political society has wandered so far. Dante's exile from Florence provided him with an alternative perspective of the city; removing himself from the crowded streets allowed him to see Florence’s vices but also its potential, similar to the aerial view perspective of the fresco of Florence and the view presented to Dante-*personaggio* in the Empyrean. The disorder of the material fabric of the city distorted the Florentine people’s understanding of their place, leading to factionalism and warring. By employing features such as balance and symmetry, through the circle and cross pattern, both the descriptions of Florence and Dante’s Empyrean symbolise the order of the universe. The City of Dis and the City of the Empyrean sit in opposition to each other: one is the infernal and the other is the heavenly. Yet they are still cities inhabited by people. This shows that they are connected, even if they are in opposition to each other, and emphasises the order of the entire universe that Dante highlights throughout the poem.[79]

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have considered the composite picture of the city as a whole, the elements which connected it, and how these were interpreted, in order to see how Dante plays with these interpretations to build his afterlife. Each component part, be that the walls or the streets, symbolised different ideas of identity and meaning. The expansion in the city of Florence in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries had a major effect on its people, changing the fabric of the city as well as its psyche. This chapter considered the visual make-up of the cityscape and its connection to both communal and individual identity as well as how the city was associated with the cosmos. I analysed how Dante employs the same ideas represented in the *laudes civitatum* and visual representation of cities within his afterlife to argue that the morality of the city was intricately linked to the architecture and its layout.

The next three chapters will analyse the architectural spaces of cloisters, churches, and tombs, as well as the religious practices that took place within these spaces such as meditation, processions, and burial practices, which form

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[79] Keen, Dante and the City, p. 197.

part of the practice of thought that shapes the whole of Dante’s poem. I suggest ways in which these architectural models and the practices enacted within them were understood within their cultural context and employed by Dante.

Chapter 3 **Walking through the Cloister: Memory, Meditation, and Spiritual Growth in Dante's Afterlife**

3.1 Introduction

The architectural space of the cloister is referred to eight times in Dante's *Commedia*, in all three cantiche (once in *Inferno*, three times in *Purgatorio*, and four times in *Paradiso*). This chapter analyses each example to understand Dante's use of the cloister as both a synecdoche to refer to physical monastic complexes on Earth (similar to the walls of a city standing for the whole city) and to describe the structures of both Hell and Paradise in the afterlife.[1] Dante invites the reader to compare his other-worldly descriptions to their earthly models through metaphors and similes and he also asks the reader to compare the repeated architectural models of the cloister within the poem. As noted previously, Dante often uses architectural models but then subverts and plays with the reader's expectations of them. This subversion of the reader's expectations allows them to question how space is being used and how it can be interpreted. This makes architectural space and its description an active agent in understanding and spiritual growth within the poem.

Taking Dante's use of the cloister as a synecdoche for the monastery complex, we can question why Dante chose the particular term 'chiostro' rather than 'monastero' [monastery], 'ermo' [hermitage], or 'collegio' [convent] – all terms that he uses in other areas of his poem. Although 'chiostro' rhymes more easily with other words compared to 'monastero' or 'collegio', this analysis will demonstrate that Dante's choice is not simply driven by considerations of rhyme but can tell us more about the architectural spaces of the poem.

This chapter first examines the cultural context of the cloister in medieval Florence by considering Florentine examples as well as the layout and function

[1] Dante uses the cloister as a synecdoche in *Fiore* LXXXVIII as well but it is not a common term in his work.

of the claustral space more generally. It then compares these features to Dante's descriptions of the physical layout of Hell and Heaven as cloisters as well as Dante's use of the term to describe earthly cloisters. It considers the metaphorical meanings of the cloister in mnemonic theological texts which are an example of the intellectual and spiritual practices enacted within these spaces. I argue that Dante was influenced by the lived experience of the cloister space and that he uses it deliberately to emphasise the cloister's function as an architectural space used for meditation, in order for the reader to apply this meditative approach to the entire poem. One of the key components of meditation is to contemplate God's work to bring oneself closer to Him and thus salvation. The use of the claustral space is one of the ways in which Dante shows his reader how to follow the path to salvation.

3.2 The Built Environment of the Cloister

The cloister's general features remained consistent throughout the late medieval period and across various orders.[2] The earliest known representation of a medieval cloister is found on the Plan of St Gall, created during the reform synods at Aachen in 816 to 817. As the Plan indicates, a cloister was laid out in a square or rectangle and was enclosed on all four sides, typically attached to the south side of the nave. It had a covered walkway around its perimeter which enclosed a central garden (Figure 18 and Figure 19).[3] This general layout

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[2] Michael Thompson, *Cloister, Abbot & Precinct in Medieval Monasteries* (Stroud: Tempus, 2001), pp. 129–30.The Carthusians did use the cloister layout but they deviated from the traditional layout of the attached buildings by creating individual cells that surrounded the cloister area.

[3] *Plan of St Gall*, ninth century, Reichenau, Stiftsbibliothek Sankt Gallen, MS 1092. It is important to note that the function of this plan has been widely debated by scholars and the fact that it only exists in one manuscript calls its influence into question. However, the main point is that this is the earliest example we have of a representation of a cloister and the majority of them follow this same layout. For an overview of the Plan of St Gall see: Walter Horn and Ernest Born, *The Plan of St. Gall: A Study of the Architecture and Economy of and Life in a Paradigmatic Carolingian Monastery* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979); Walter Horn, 'On the Origins of the Medieval Cloister', *Gesta*, 12.1/2 (1973), 13–52; Warren Sanderson, 'The Plan of St. Gall Reconsidered', *Speculum*, 60.3 (1985), 615–32; Alfons Zettler, 'Der St. Galler Klosterplan: Überlegungen zu aeiner Herkunft und Entstehung', in *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814-840)*, ed. by Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 655–68; Lawrence Nees, 'The Plan of St. Gall and the Theory of the Program of Carolingian Art', *Gesta*, 25.1 (1986), 1–8; John McNeill, 'The Continental Context', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 159.1 (2006), 1–47 <https://doi.org/10.1179/174767006x147433> [accessed 16 March 2020]. McNeil traces the origins of the cloister to the Roman courtyards, peristyle gardens, atria, and the Late Antique *villa rustica*.

remained consistent throughout the medieval period and is followed in the Florentine cloisters of the period, such as the cloisters at San Miniato al Monte, Santa Maria Maddalena, Santissima Annunziata dei Servi di Maria, San Marco,[4] the Badia,[5] San Piero Scheraggio,[6] the chiesa degli Umiliati,[7] Santa Maria del Carmine,[8] Santa Reparata, Santa Croce, Santa Maria Maggiore, and Santa Maria Novella.

Although the layout of the cloister remained consistent, when Dante uses the term to describe the physical structure of both Hell and Heaven as cloisters in *Purgatorio* (VII, 20–21; XV, 52–57; XXVI, 127–30) and *Paradiso* (XXV, 122–29), it is surprising because the physical topography of Hell and Heaven do not immediately bring to mind the cloister's physical layout. Firstly, Dante's main geometric shape in all three realms is a circle rather than a square or rectangle. For example, Dante describes the Empyrean as a cloister in *Paradiso* XXV (ll. 122–29) but the main architectural models of the Empyrean are a rose and a stadium. Similarly, although Dante describes *Malebolge* as a cloister in *Inferno* XXIX (ll. 37–42), this area of Hell is also compared to a sequence of moats surrounding a castle (*Inf.*, XVIII, 10–12).[9]

Movement is also an important feature of the cloister since the inhabitants of the monastery or convent would move around its perimeter throughout the day. Although there are instances of Dante following a walkway around the perimeter of some spaces, he does not always follow this trajectory, often crossing through spaces or moving in other ways, sometimes unbeknown to him, such as in *Paradiso*. Thus, the physical layout of Dante's Heaven and Hell does not adhere to the general layout of a medieval cloister. Instead Dante,

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[4] Davidsohn, VII, p. 510. Davidsohn notes the cloister at Santissima Annunziata dei Servi di Maria was built in 1298. The current building of San Marco sits on the location of the original Sylvestrine monastery.

[5] Davidsohn, VII, p. 523.

[6] Davidsohn, VII, p. 520.

[7] Davidsohn, VII, p. 530. Now known as La chiesa di San Salvatore in Ognissanti.

[8] Davidsohn, VII, p. 536. Founded in 1268.

[9] It also conforms to the structure of a labyrinth as shown by Penelope Reed Doob, *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages*, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501738463> [accessed 28 July 2019].

similar to his contemporaries analysed below, uses the term cloister because of its function and its metaphorical meaning as a tool for meditation.

3.3 The Cloister as a Tool for Meditation

Cloisters had a variety of purposes: the mundane tasks of shaving or the hanging of laundry took place there, alongside the reading and writing of manuscripts, prayer, and processions. In Latin medieval texts, the term 'claustrum' is not used to describe the physical layout of the space or its practical uses.[10] For example, in the Rule of St Benedict, which describes the daily life of the religious in detail, the term is only used in passing. Even in Bernard of Clairvaux's *Apologia*, which includes his famous condemnation of art in cloisters, the cloister is only a small portion of a large work on how the Cistercians were meant to act. So, the term is not found in the guides or rules for living a monastic life. Instead we find it is used for one of its metaphorical meanings: the cloister symbolised and was used for meditation. We find the term 'claustrum' used in treatises focused on the meditative life of the religious, which is appropriate since one would walk around it, using the bays and their decorations to stimulate meditation. The term could denote the cloister itself, it was used as a synecdoche for the monastery as a whole, as it is in Dante, and it was also used metaphorically to denote the spiritual state of the religious in their meditation.[11] This final meaning is indicated in the Plan of St Gall: the inscription in the northern range reads 'Hinc pia consilium pertractet turba salubre' [Whence confusion of faith may undergo healthy advice]; this detail

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[10] Vernacular Italian poetry does not use the term often, but three examples exist: Brunetto Latini, *Il Tesoretto: The Little Treasure*, ed. & trans. by Julia Bolton Holloway, Garland Library of Medieval Literature, v. 2. Series A (New York, NY: Garland, 1981) l. 2702; Guido Cavalcanti, *The Complete Poems*, trans. by Marc A. Cirigliano (New York, NY: Italica Press, 1992) 49a *la bella donna dove Amor si mostra* l. 5. Also see Guido Orlandi's *La bella donna dove Amor si mostra* (l. 5) in Valentina Pollidori, 'La Rime di Guido Orlandi', in *Studi di filologia italiana: bulletino dell' Accademia della Crusca* (Florence: Sansoni, 1995), LIII, 55–202 (pp. 179–80).

[11] For an overview of the use of the term 'claustrum' and its origins see Paul Meyvaert, 'The Medieval Monastic Claustrum', *Gesta*, 12.1/2 (1973), 53–59 and also the other contributions in this volume; for the Cistercian use of the term see Megan Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and Their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries*, Medieval Church Studies (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), pp. 65–68.

denotes the function of the cloister as a space in which to gain clarity of faith — a space to be used to meditate and direct your attention towards God.

In these treatises the cloister is also used as a mnemonic device.[12] Mnemonic devices were used as a tool to train the memory from the classical period onwards.[13] The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (*c*. 86–82 BC) was the main source used during the medieval period and it defines the memory as an architectural place where one puts images.[14] One begins by thinking of a building, the author suggests a home, where one can deposit particular images within each room. Classical and medieval memory training distinguish between natural and artificial memory where the former is simply the recalling of images and the latter is an exercise or training which leads to invention in the form of further understanding of God's plan and works; as a result, memory during this time was understood differently than it is today — it was a tool used to obtain knowledge and to create.

Christiana Whitehead's study of architectural models reveals that the cloister became a popular architectural model for mnemonic practices from the

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[12] Similar examples of using the cloister as a mnemonic device are found in a variety of theological treatises, such as: Sicardi Cremonensis, 'Mitrale Seu De Officiis Ecclesiasticis Summa', in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. by J. P. Migne (Chadwyck-Healey Inc., 1996), CCXIII, COL. 25 <http://pld.chadwyck.co.uk/> [accessed 30 March 2020]; Honorius Augustodunesis, 'Gemma animae', in *PL*, CLXXII, COLS 590B–C; William Durand, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (Naples: Josephum Dura Bibliopolam, 1859) <https://archive.org/details/RationaleDivinorumOfficiorumDurandoEBeletho> [accessed 10 July 2020]; Peter of Celle, 'De disciplina claustrali, V', in *Peter of Celle: Selected Works*, ed. by Hugh Feiss, Cistercian Fathers Series, 100 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987); Thomas Bradwardine, *De Memoria Artificiale Adquirenda* Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 169 and London, British Library, MS Sloane 3744; Hugh of St Victor, *De Tribus Maximis Circumstantiis Gestorum,* Paris, Bibilotheque Nationale, MS Lat. 15009.

[13] There are three classical sources for training the memory: Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. by Harry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library, 403 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954); Cicero, *De oratore: Books I-II*, in *Cicero: in twenty-eight volumes, 3,* trans. by E. W. Sutton and Harris Rackham, The Loeb classical library, 348, Reprinted (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942); Quintilian, *The institutio oratoria*, trans. by Harold Edgeworth Butler, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), CXXIV–CXXVII. For our purposes, I focus on the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* since Cicero and Quintilian follow the same steps that it lays out and it was the main source used during the medieval period.

[14] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 14, uses the term 'signs' but they also have the same function.

twelfth century onwards.[15] She argues that by using the cloister as a mnemonic device:

> […] every last detail of the church building and the ceremonies enacted within that building were supplied with an (often fourfold) allegorical gloss, giving to the places and liturgical operations the same authority and hermeneutic depth as the narratives of the scriptures themselves.[16]

This fourfold allegorical gloss enabled each area of the monastery to be encoded with moral meaning. Many theologians already identified as influential for Dante wrote treatises on mnemonic devices. For example, Albertus Magnus and Aquinas both employ the memory practices outlined by the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as a moral exercise in which one remembers and meditates on the virtues and vices as a means to gain salvation, placing the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in a very specific and also Christian framework.[17] In Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* he explains how metaphors and imagery are used to interpret Scripture:

> Est autem naturale homini ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia veniat: quia omnis nostra cognitio a sensu initium habet. Unde convenienter in sacra Scriptura traduntur nobis spiritualia sub metaphoris corporalium.[18]
>
> [Now it is natural to man to attain to intellectual truths through sensible objects, because all our knowledge originates from sense. Hence in Holy Writ, spiritual truths are fittingly taught under the likeness of material things.]

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[15] See Christiania Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory*, Religion and Culture in the Middle Ages (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003) where she traces the architectural models of the temple, ark, church, cloiser and castle; also see Christiania Whitehead, 'Making a Cloister of the Soul in Medieval Religious Treatises', *Medium Aevum*, 67.1 (1998), 1–29; van Stefaan Liefferinge, 'The Geometry of Rib Vaulting at Notre-Dame of Paris: Architectural or Exegetical Space?', in *Space in the Medieval West: Places, Territories, and Imagined Geographies*, ed. by Meredith Cohen and Fanny Madeline (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 37–49 (pp. 37–49). In a similar study Stefaan van Liefferinge argues that the rib-vaulting in Notre-Dame in Paris uses the measurements of Noah's ark, described by Hugh of St Victor and that students used Hugh's ark as an architectural mnemonic device. Therefore, when someone walked through the church, they could meditate on various aspects of his treatise by recalling the different compartments within the ark depending on which area they were in.

[16] Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, p. 52.

[17] Albert the Great analyses the faculty of memory in: Albertus Magnus, *De Bono,* in *Opera Omnia,* Vol. XXVIII:, ed. by H. Kuhle and others (Aschendorff: Monasterii Westfalorum, 1951); Albertus Magnus, *Opera omnia,* Vol. IX*: Commentary on Aristotle's De memoria et reminiscentia*, ed. by August Borgnet (Paris: Ludovicum Vives, 1890).

[18] Dante makes reference to this idea in *Paradiso* IV, 40–42. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae: Latin Text and English Translation,* trans. by Thomas Gilby (Cambridge: Blackfriars, 1964), q. 1, a.

Therefore, the art of memory was translated into a Christian framework and became one of many motifs allowing the material world to signify the spiritual realm.

Although the shift of using the cloister as a meditative tool did not occur until the twelfth century, we can see the use of the cloister as a mnemonic as early as St Augustine (354–430) in his *Confessions*, when he states:

> Intus haec ago, in aula ingenti memoriae meae. Ibi enim mihi caelum et terra et mare praesto sunt cum omnibus, quae in eis sentire potui, praeter illa, quae oblitus sum.[19]
>
> [Inside me, in the vast cloisters of my memory are the sky, the earth, and the sea, ready at my summons, together with everything that I have ever perceived in them by my senses, except the things which I have forgotten.]

The earliest known claustral allegory is a treatise entitled *De claustro animae* by Hugh of Fouilloy (*c.* 1096–1172), an Augustinian canon who was prior at Laurent-au Bois. It instructs an audience of canons and monks to build a cloister within the soul.[20] The cloister is built of four walls (contempt of oneself, contempt of the world, love of God, and love of one's neighbour) and each wall consists of twelve columns representing behavioural qualities.[21] Students meditated on each of these features as they walked through the cloister; Whitehead aptly notes that this practice 'equips every moment in the daily monastic regime with an additional meditative dimension by linking each of the habitual spaces of operation with a moral idea or attitude'.[22] Therefore, even apparently mundane actions become moments for meditation. The treatise goes on to include other locations within the monastery such as the refectory, dormitory, chapter house, and bedchamber, each representing a different level of meditation.[23] This treatise is particularly important to this study because it provides an example of how the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s architectural mnemonics could be put into practice. Where the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*

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[19] From *Confessions,* X. 8. 14.43-45 (CCSL 27, p.162).

[20] In the medieval period this work was attributed to Hugh of St Victor but in either case, it serves as an example of the architectural mnemonic. There are 357 surviving manuscripts and it was copied in many Latin and vernacular manuscripts with origins in France, England, and Italy (MS Canon. Bibl. Lat. 14, second half of thirteenth century, north-eastern Italy).

[21] For similar uses of the four walls, see Cremonensis, CCXIII, COL. 25.

[22] Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, p. 63.

[23] Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, p. 65.

provides the general list of rules for making places, outlined below, *De claustro animae* is a step-by-step example of how to make the place within the mind and what images to put within it. Furthermore, it is an example of the various architectural spaces that could be used within such a practice and the shift from Roman to medieval places.[24] This shift to contemporary locations is important when studying the architectural places that Dante describes because considering the locations he encountered within his everyday life (ie. church, cloister, city walls, towers, etc.) provides insight into his poetic spaces. Hugh's audience would be extremely familiar with the cloister of the monastery just as Dante's audience would be familiar with the architectural models found in Florence and other Italian mercantile cities — by using spaces that the audience is familiar with, they are able to construct the space within their own mind.[25]

There is some evidence that the cloister mnemonic was also used by a lay audience. The prose treatise called *Li Liure du cloistre de l'âme* (*c.* 1300), instructs those who cannot participate in the religious life to build a cloister in their heart (1.4–8).[26] This manuscript provides evidence that the claustral mnemonic device was not limited to those who entered the religious life. Treatises similar to this, especially in the late fourteenth century, became very popular amongst the laity and there is evidence that preachers recommended the laity use the cloister as a devotional exercise.[27] To clarify with an example: when someone enters a church, they are shaped by the religious practices and form of that church but these experiences are not meant to be left at the door when that person exits it, they are meant to reflect a bigger reality of where

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[24] Whitehead also notes that this treatise influenced many Latin and vernacular offspring in *Castles of the Mind*, p. 68.

[25] This is not to say that the spaces each reader creates would be identical; however, that each would know of a tower, cloister, church, etc. that they could use as their model and could visit regularly to secure its place within their mind.

[26] It survives in nine manuscripts and was translated into Middle English in the late fourteenth century, entitled *The Abbey of the Holy Ghost*. Another example of the adoption of the cloister mnemonic used for different audiences is in Peter the Venerable, *De Miraculis*, p. 2.14.10–16. He suggests to his audience of hermits that although they do not inhabit a physical cloister, they can build one in their mind.

[27] Yates, p. 96. She uses the examples of *Summa de exemplis ac similitudinibus rerum*, Lib.VI, cap. xlii, by Giovanni di San Gimignano (c. early fourteenth century) and the Italian vernacular *Ammaestramenti degli antichi*, by Bartolomeo da San Concordio (c. early fourteenth century).

one's place is within the cosmos and how to behave within the cosmos generally. Consequently, the cloister is not just a space where the soul is improved only when it is used as originally intended, but the model is used for how to act in the world.

The cloister space itself was not restricted to the religious, allowing late medieval lay audiences knowledge of the physical layout. The building boom in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Florence provided Dante and his contemporaries with a number of cloister models, as noted earlier. For example, from 1279 Santa Maria Novella's Cloister of the Dead was used for services while the church was under construction, providing access to the laity.[28] Although flood damage has destroyed many of the frescoes, the still extant walls provide evidence of an elaborate programme, used to stimulate meditation. Access to cloisters was not dependent on construction issues alone, but rather, the laity were also permitted into the cloister during donations and processions, such as on Palm Sunday and the feast of the Purification of the Virgin. Other events involved the laity such as the *mandatum* rite, which involved the washing of the feet of the poor and sick, taking place in the southern wing every Saturday.[29] So, the examples of cloisters that Dante uses in his poem would have made sense to his contemporaries because they had had this real-life experience of them both because of the building boom and because of the rituals they experienced within these spaces.

The cloister was a useful mnemonic device because its architectural layout adhered to the rules of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* for places: (1) the rooms of the architectural place must form a series to produce order, allowing one to move backward or forward from any point in the sequence. The cloister's bays, through columns and vaulting, create a series of small sections. This

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[28] Dante also claims he attended the *studium* here. For reference to attending the *studia* here and at Santa Croce see Alighieri, *Convivio* II.12; George W. Dameron, *Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante*, pp. 273-74.

[29] Maximilian Sternberg, *Cistercian Architecture and Medieval Society*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 221 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 185 <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10757084> [accessed 7 May 2019]; see also M. Bruun, 'Procession and Contemplation in Bernard of Clairvaux's First Sermon for Palm Sunday', in *The Appearances of Medieval Rituals: The Play of Construction and Modification*, ed. by Nils Holger Petersen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 67–82. In addition, see *Regula* 53 and *Ecclesiastica officia* 119.4 for the *mandatum* rite.

series of bays is often sculpted or painted with images that could be used to trigger meditation in a sequential order; in addition, its square layout creates the ideal circumstances to practice the sequence in various orders; (2) the place chosen should be a solemn place without crowds and be distinct because too much stimulus and similarity leads to confusion. The cloister's sculptural programmes differentiate each bay, as does the designation of different functions to each range, creating order;[30] the space also had rules for silence, making it a solemn place; (3) each place should not be too large or too small, too brightly lit or too dark. The cloister's design allows for natural light to fill each bay; (4) there must be intervals between places of a moderate length. This is produced by each bay which was a manageable size.[31]

Furthermore, the sculptural or painted ornamentation found in many cloisters, including that of Santa Maria Novella, could either be used to differentiate the spaces or to stimulate meditation on the particular image itself, adhering again to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s rules: (1) they must be striking; this could mean novel, marvellous, beautiful, unusual, ridiculous, or ugly and achieved by 'somehow disfigur[ing] them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint'[32] — one cannot help but think of Dante's disfigured sinners in Hell, such as Mohammed with his body split down the middle. The reason behind these striking images is that they

[30] Cassidy-Welch describes a function for each of the four walkways: the north range was for liturgy due to its adjacency to the church and the door leading directly into the transept to the monk's quire; the eastern range was for discipline because it was adjacent to the chapter house which was central to confession and the daily running of the monastery; the south range was dedicated to domesticity because this was where the refectory and kitchen were located; finally, the west range was for labour and was often used by the lay brothers. Although a comparison of this with the Plan of St Gall shows some differences, it is agreed amongst scholars that each of the four alleys denoted different functions based on the adjacent buildings that were attached to each of them; also see Thompson, p. 37.

[31] Yates, pp. 24–32; Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 13; Cicero III.XVI-XIX.

[32] "aut si qua re deformabimus, ut si cruentam aut caeno oblitam aut rubrica delibutam inducamus". Yates, pp. 24–32; Cicero, pp. 220–21; 218–19 (III.XXII).

must produce an emotional response in the viewer because 'ordinarily things easily slip from the memory while striking and novel things stay longer.'[33]

Abbot Suger notes that these grotesque images helped a monk to 'purge over time the demonic spirits from his soul so that it could be restored by the harmony of his meditation'. Therefore, these images 'served as a starting point for the cleansing of memory and for spiritual reform.[34] Abbot Suger links the use of the physical space to the mind and the spiritual growth of the individual. These images were meant to be used as 'hooks' to stimulate meditation in the viewer which is why they often created a long narrative based on one's movement through the cloister.[35] As the descriptions of the claustral space and images indicate, the cloister was a suitable architectural mnemonic, adhering to the rules laid out in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium.*

The cloister's use as a meditative tool allowed the space to take on multiple meanings depending on the sequence and focus of the individual. Honorius provides an example of these dynamic meanings. Honorius's work was widely circulated in the twelfth century and his works, including his *Elucidarium,* were often translated into the vernacular.[36] He wrote many didactic treatises and sermons that used monastic architecture as a pedagogical tool such as his *De claustrali vita* which describes ten metaphorical meanings of the cloister.[37] Though I will not use all of these metaphors in my analysis, I will

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[33] 'usitatae res facile e memoria elabuntur, insignes et novae diutius manent.' Yates, pp. 24–32; Cicero, pp. 220–21; 218-19 (III.XXII); see also Lori Ann Garner, *Structuring Spaces: Oral Poetics and Architecture in Early Medieval England*, Poetics of Orality and Literacy (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011) who considers Old- and Middle-English verse to argue that architecture is linked to affect and memory; in addition see Kristine Tanton, 'The Marking of Monastic Space: Inscribed Language on Romanesque Capitals' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Southern California, 2013), pp. 4, 12. Her main argument centres around how capitals 'play[ed] a significant role in understanding how the monks conceived of and used the cloister' and that the spatial programme of the capitals was linked directly to the liturgy. She argues that while the monks or nuns moved throughout the monastery they used the capitals 'to construct multiple alternative connotations depending on each capital's relationship to specific ritual activities, adjacent imagery, and the role of the viewer'.

[34] Thomas E. A. Dale, 'Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa', *The Art Bulletin*, 83.3 (2001), 402–36 (pp. 402, 429–30).

[35] Dale, p. 428.

[36] Not much is known about him but he was likely born in Germany or Northern Italy during the final quarter of the eleventh century. He travelled to England and settled in Regensburg where most of his work was written.

[37] Anne L. Clark, 'Teaching Dante as a Visionary Prophet', *Pedagogy*, 13.1 (2013), 105–13 (pp. 142–46).

consider six of them in the context of Dante's poem: specifically, 'a school of virtues for the unlearned' and 'a place of exercise in various arts for the untrained' (reflected in *Inf*., XXIX; *Par.,* III, XXI–XXII); 'a safe asylum**,** like a strong fort' (relevant to *Par*., III); 'a prison' or 'hospice' (reflected in *Inf*., XXIX); 'a hell' (relevant to *Inf*., XXIX; *Purg*., VII) ; and 'a paradise' (reflected in *Purg*., XV, XXVI; *Par*., XXI–XXII, XXV).[38]

Studies, such as those of Mary J. Carruthers and Frances A. Yates, have observed Dante's use of this pedagogical practice of memory training within the poem but they focus more on an overarching theme or they examine the images that Dante uses such as the sinners of Hell and their connection to the grotesque images found in cloisters.[39] In contrast, I will look at the architectural space of the cloister that Dante encounters to understand why he uses the cloister and how it relates to the cultural practices of the time.

3.4 The Cloister as a Physical Structure of Hell and Paradise (*Inf*., XXIX and *Par*. XXV)

Dante first mentions a cloister in Canto XXIX of *Inferno*. Dante-*personaggio* is in the last section of *Malebolge*, the eighth circle of Hell, where the sins of fraud are punished. This circle contains the souls of the forgers and counterfeiters who are riddled with disease. Dante states:

> Così parlammo infino al loco primo
> che de lo scoglio l'altra valle mostra,
> se più lume vi fosse, tutto ad imo.
> Quando noi fummo sor l'ultima chiostra

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[38] 'Igitur claustrum est omnibus omnia; scilicet principibus, bellorum procellas fugientibus, est portus salutis; negotiatoribus, aestum curarum declinantibus, est refrigerii obumbraculum; servis vel arctatis, a nimio labore cessantibus, est lectus quietis; militibus hostes suos fugientibus, est certum asylum, ut firmum castrum; indoctis, schola virtutum inexercitatis, exercitium diversarum artium, vagis vel criminosis carcer, imo hospitium; inexpertis caminus probationis, poenitentibus infernus purgans, rebellibus infernus crucians, sapientibus et charitate ferventibus paradisus affluens deliciis, aeternis eos replens divitiis.' Honorius Augustodunesis, 'De Claustrali Vita', in *PL*, CLXXII, COLS. 1247–1248, p. col. 1248c. For a full analysis of all of the metaphors see Giles Constable, 'Metaphors for Religious Life in the Middle Ages', *Revue Mabillon*, 19 (2008), 231–42 <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.RM.5.101165> [accessed 20 March 2020].

[39] See for example, Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, pp. 99; 257; 239–41, 175–76; 239; 250. See also Yates, pp. 20; 105.

di Malebolge, sì che i suoi conversi

potean parere a la veduta nostra, […] (*Inf.*, XXIX, 37–42)

[Thus we talked as far as the first place on the ridge to show the next valley, if there were more light there, down to its bed. When we were above the last cloister of Malebolge, so that its converts could appear to our sight,]

Dante could have used the term circle [*cerchia*], a more common word for describing the layout of *Inferno*, and specifically the eighth circle of Hell. Also, this circle is more often referred to as a set of ditches or pits, as it is at line 7 of this canto, in contrast to the square shape of a cloister.[40] In addition, the main architectural model of *Malebolge* is not a cloister, but rather, a sequence of moats surrounding a castle (*Inf.*, XVIII.10–12).

Even though the architectural shape of the eighth circle is different from a cloister, the fact that Dante places this term at the end of the line and links it to other claustral imagery within the canto, shows that it is significant. An example of claustral imagery is the pairing of 'chiostra' with 'conversi' in their placement at the end of lines 40 and 41. 'Conversi' may refer simply to converts, or, more likely, lay brothers who lived within religious communities to assist with the more arduous tasks, such as agriculture, allowing the community to be self-sufficient.[41] Cristoforo Landino (1424–1498) explains in his 1481 commentary that Dante uses the term 'conversi' because Dante has compared the structure of *Malebolge* to a cloister.[42] Landino links 'conversi' with the cloister, acknowledging the common practice of lay brothers' use of the cloister and emphasising the religious meaning of 'chiostra'.[43] Therefore, the reference to lay brothers strengthens the monastic imagery. But Dante uses it ironically because rather than encountering lay brothers, we find the sinners of forgery and counterfeit who are punished with disease for falsifying personhood, money, words, and metal. Dante's use here has multiple meanings, recalling the term's etymological meaning of a 'closed space' (the area between two

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[40] Dante uses different nouns to describe the space of *Malebolge*, for example, in this canto he uses: *bolge* [ditches or pits] (as discussed) but also *valle* [valley] at lines 8 and 65 to describe the tenth *bolgia* (See also *Inf.*, XVIII, 98;104: *la prima valle* and *l'altra bolgia*).

[41] Thompson, p. 55.

[42] Cristoforo Landino, gloss to *Inf.*, XXIX, 27–39 (*DDP*).

[43] Of the other medieval commentaries of the *Commedia*, none refer to Dante's use of the term. It is worth noting that Dante's use of "sermone" (l. 70) (discussed below), much like "conversi", emphasises the religious meaning of "chiostra".

banks) and Honorius' definition of the cloister as a prison, lepers' hospital or asylum, given the punishment of the souls in this space.[44]

Dante-*personaggio* hears strange laments that are so loud he must cover his ears (ll. 43–45). The area that Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil enter is not the quiet, meditative area of a cloister, where silence was paramount,[45] but a space filled with cries. The aromas of the cloister garth are replaced with smells of rotting limbs (l. 51). Dante describes the space that the souls occupy as a dark valley in which the souls languish in heaps (ll. 65–66) — the heaps of bodies and their cries are in opposition to Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil who are silent and able to move throughout this cloister: 'Passo passo andavam sanza sermone,' [Step by step we walked without speech] (l. 70). The repetition of 'passo passo' draws attention to the slow, regular, and meditative pace of their walking. And their movement is further emphasised when Dante describes the souls in the final line of the *terzina* as souls who cannot lift their bodies (l. 72). The static nature of the sinners contrasting with the movement of Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil, is a common trope within *Inferno*. Here though this contrast, combined with the space itself being described as a cloister, creates an image of Dante-*personaggio* walking through this space as one would a cloister — in silence and in meditation of its sculptural programme — a programme made up, not of stone carvings, but of the sick sinners of Hell.

Another example of the claustral imagery is the sinners' sickness itself. Many monastic complexes also had specific cloisters for growing medicinal herbs and they often funded hospitals, such as Santa Maria Novella which had an infirmary cloister and funded two hospitals.[46] In this canto a connection between Dante's cloister and hospitals is also made, when Dante refers to the hospitals of Valdichiana, Maremma, and Sardinia (ll. 46–51), which were built to

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[44] Claire E. Honess, 'Lettura e interpretazione del canto XXIX,' in *Voci sull'Inferno di Dante* (Rome: Carocci, 2021), 735-52 (pp. 744–45)

[45] A period called 'locutio' was the only time where speech was permitted in the cloister. See Meyvaert, p. 54.

[46] James Wood Brown, The Dominican Church of Santa Maria Novella at Florence: A Historical, Architectural, and Artistic Study (Edinburgh: O. Schulze, 1902), p. 53.

treat malaria with funds from religious communities.[47] Thus, the use of the term 'conversi', the references to hospitals, the sickness inflicted on the sinners, and the contrast of static and active, reinforce the claustral imagery of this canto.

The cloister becomes a space of meditation for Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil who are the only characters using the space correctly: they walk through the space and study the figures of sin to understand how the sinners erred. An example of this follows as Dante-*personaggio* sees two men covered from head to foot in scabs (l. 75), who are unable to scratch enough to relieve their itch even though their nails rip off the scabs (ll. 79–84). This grotesque description creates a vivid image in the reader's mind, allowing him/her to meditate upon this horrible sin, store it, and use it for further meditation in the future. Once the grotesque image is fixed in the mind of Dante-*personaggio*, he needs to attach a moral meaning to the mental image, so Virgil instructs Dante-*personaggio* to speak to two sinners (ll. 100–02). Dante-*personaggio* begins by saying:

> "Se la vostra memoria non s'imboli
> nel primo mondo da l'umane menti,
> ma s'ella viva sotto molti soli,
> ditemi chi voi siete e di che genti;
> la vostra sconcia e fastidiosa pena
> di palesarvi a me non vi spaventi." (*Inf.*, XXIX, 103–08)
>
> [So may your memory not be stolen from human minds in the first world, so may it live for many suns, tell me who you are and of what people; let not your filthy and disgusting punishment make you fear to reveal yourselves to me.]

In these two *terzine*, the poet creates a connection between the earthly realm and Hell, between how the sinners erred and their current punishment. Dante wants the memory of these two sinners to be preserved, not for the sinners' fame, but instead, so that Dante-*personaggio* and the reader can hold the grotesque images in their minds, meditate on them, and ensure they do not err

[47] Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 1: Inferno*, p. 460. See also Guido da Pisa, gloss to *Inf.*, XXIX, 46–51 (*DDP*): 'In ista comparatione ponit autor tres contratas que extivo tempore, et maxime in augusto, naturaliter sunt infirme. Prima est Vallis Clane. Est autem Clana quedam aqua in Tuscia, mortua, fetida, et valde corrupta […]. Secunda est Marittima Tuscie […]; que quidem contrata extivis diebus mirabiliter est infecta. Tertia est Sardinea […] que propter malum aerem et aquas metallinas multum estivo tempore habitatoribus est infesta'.

as the sinners have. I am not arguing here that this is the first time this framing occurs, it occurs throughout the spaces of Hell, but here the connection of the cloister with this practice, appears to reinforce the necessity of learning through example.[48]

Similarly, by considering the rhyming of 'mostra', 'chiostra', and 'nostra', a further connection between the cloister and its ability to facilitate learning is made. The verb 'mostrare' is important here, especially since its variants are paired three other times with 'chiostra' (*Purg.*, VII, 19–21, *Par.*, III, 107–09, *Par.,* XXII, 50–52). As well as its basic meaning of ' to show', 'mostrare' can also mean 'to explain', 'to demonstrate' or 'to reveal' linking it to the pedagogical programme of Dante's poem where Dante-*personaggio* is provided with an example of sin or righteous action and through this example, he learns the correct way to act in order to gain salvation.[49] The explanations of the souls in all three realms is fundamental to his learning. By pairing the terms 'mostra' and 'chiostra', Dante is emphasising the necessity of teaching and learning through the use of examples and explanation. This is further emphasised by the final rhyme of 'nostra'. Whenever the term 'chiostro' is used in the poem, it rhymes with the possessive adjective 'nostro' or 'vostro'. The use of the possessive adjective 'nostra' is significant here, since it is the only time within the eight references to 'chiostra' that that term does not apply to the groups of people in the afterlife. In Heaven the term is linked to the communal identity of the people in the afterlife and their ability to help each other (*Par.*, III, 106–11, XXV, 125–27). However, in this case the term refers to Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil rather than the group of sinners in Hell because the group of sinners, although heaped together, have no ability to change their circumstances or help each other, as demonstrated in the constant ripping of the sinners' scabs. The reference to the cloister combined with the explanations and demonstrations of meditation within the canto emphasise the primary function of the cloister as a space used for meditation.

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[48] This ability of the cloister to connect Earth and Hell becomes more explicit as we compare more references.

[49] Similar to 'tutta tua visïon fa manifesta' [make manifest all your vision] in *Par.*, XVII, 128 or St Peter telling Dante to speak in *Par.*, XXIV, 46–57.

It is particularly apt for Dante to play with the expectations of the space in *Malebolge*, the area of fraud. The structure of *Malebolge* is described after the descent on Geryon's back which provides a bird's eye view of the architectural space (*Inf.*, XVII–XVIII). *Malebolge*'s main architectural model is a set of moats, so why does Dante decide, at the end of the journey through *Malebolge* to describe *Malebolge* as a set of cloisters? I argue that Dante does this to make a point about where he is and the sin that is being punished in that space. Dante plays with the main function of the cloister, as a tool for meditation to help the reader understand the position of the Falsifiers in Hell and the punishment inflicted on them. The sinners of the tenth *bolgia* are damned because of their use of alchemy (*Inf.*, XXIX, 118–20; 133–39). The use of the term cloister comes as a surprise but if we recall how Dante subverts the expectations of architectural models, such as the City of Dis which is actually an inversion of the city, we can also see how Dante subverts our expectations of the cloister. The alchemists are similar to the religious meditating upon God because they had great minds and were clever enough to accomplish their sins. Yet, they misused their intellect; they had the ability to use their minds for good but instead they used them for evil. Thus, their sin matches their punishment, they are permanently stuck within a cloister in which the main function is to use your mind to meditate on the greatness of God, constantly reminding them of their erroneous pursuits. They are forced to meditate only on the constant itch and pain of their scabs.

This becomes even more apparent when we consider the reference to the cloister as a prison. This idea originated in the association of the cloister and its links to the human body where the soul is imprisoned in the body. The monastery as a whole was thought to imprison the body from the outside world. This was not an enforced imprisonment, but rather a voluntary one in order to free the soul from its body and earthly qualities; however, the sinners in this circle can only focus on their body with its constant itch. In addition, the cloister was seen as a barrier, protecting those who were in it from the dangers of the outside world. For example, Abelard describes a conversation with a regular canon in which the cloisters were described as 'non loca dignitatis, sed poenitentiae carceres nuncupatis' [not places of dignity but prisons of

penitence.].[50] Another example is the recluses of Petershausen who were described as 'those who have suffered themselves to be enclosed in prisons for the name of Christ'.[51] And finally, we are reminded of Honorius' ten meanings of the cloister, one of which is a prison.[52] The cloister was a place for discipline and purgation, in order to rid oneself of the dangers of the earthly world in order to focus on God. The act of meditation required discipline and hardship; it was not an easy task but one that required undivided attention and devotion. This is particularly apt for canto XXIX because the corruption of the world, represented in the misuse of intellect for the pursuits of alchemy, has penetrated the safe barrier of the cloister.

Furthermore, it is a lesson to Dante-*personaggio* and the reader that although one would expect to find humans who are using their intellectual abilities to pursue God in the cloister, this is not so in Hell and also not so on Earth. Dante combines three of the metaphorical meanings used by Honorius but then inverts them: the corruption of the world, represented in the misuse of intellect for the pursuit of alchemy, has penetrated the safe barrier of the cloister. Its use as a place to exercise untrained arts is inverted as these sinners focused on the wrong art of alchemy and it is also not a school of virtues but rather one of sin. The safe space of a cloister is not always safe; instead, it can be full of crime and corrupt individuals such as these sinners. Corruption can and does still exist in the earthly cloisters, which we will see in *Paradiso* more explicitly, but here it is a reminder that especially in the architectural area of Fraud, nothing can be trusted.

By analysing the cloister in this canto, we see an example of how Dante uses an architectural model and then immediately subverts its meaning to tell the reader something about the space he is in and the sinners who are punished there. Dante plays with the function of the cloister as a space of meditation. The claustral space of Hell is not quiet and meditative but filled with

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[50] Peter Abelard, 'Epistola XII', in *PL*, CLXXIX, COL. 352A and in Peter Abelard, Letters IX–X IV , ed. Edm. Smits, Groningen, 1983, p. 268.

[51] Otto Feger, 'Casus monasterii Petrishusensis, Pref., 21', in *Die Chronik des Klosters Petershausen* (Lindau: J. Thorbecke, 1956), p. 34.

[52] For a more thorough investigation of the cloister as a prison see Constable, pp. 237–38.

screams and the smell of rotting limbs. Dante-*personaggio* is the only one who uses the space correctly, by moving through it and storing the grotesque images of the heaped sinners in his mind to avoid making the same error. The sickness inflicted on the sinners is linked to the infirmary cloisters of the period, but here in a space that should be a reprieve where medicines can be used to heal, the torments instead continue. By using the model of the cloister Dante provides a further understanding of the alchemists' sin: they misused their intellectual abilities for evil rather than using it to seek God. As a result, Dante plays with metaphorical medieval meanings of the cloister as a prison, hospice, a place of exercise in various arts for the untrained, school of virtues, a hell and a paradise, in order to remind the reader that corruption can be found in the safest of places. Instead, Dante-*personaggio* and the reader must be vigilant in their journey and store all the examples of sin and virtue within the cloister of their mind in order to use their intellect to pursue God.

As he does in *Inferno* XXIX, Dante describes Hell's structure as a set of cloisters in *Purgatorio* VII (ll. 16–21). But he also refers to Heaven as a cloister three times: in *Purgatorio* XV in relation to heavenly charity (ll. 52–57), in *Purgatorio* XXVI when Guido Guinizelli describes Heaven as a cloister with Christ at its head (ll. 127–32), and in *Paradiso* XXV when St John explains that only Mary and Jesus have their bodies in Heaven (ll. 122–29).

These descriptions of Heaven as a cloister are the most easily understood metaphor because this metaphor was prevalent in medieval culture. For example, Peter Damian (*c*. 1007–1072/73), whom we will encounter in my analysis of *Paradiso* XXI, refers to the cloister as a Heaven on earth.[53] Many of the mnemonic claustral treatises link the cloister to Paradise, specifically the garden at its centre: the fountain found at the centre of the garth was often linked to the 'lignum vitae'[54] and the grass and other plants were linked to the

[53] Peter Damian, 'Laus eremitcal vitae', in *PL*, CXLVIII, COLS 231–32.

[54] Dynes provides the examples of Durand, Sicardi Cremonensis, and Honorius: 'The Medieval Cloister as Portico of Solomon', *Gesta*, 12.1/2 (1973), 61–69.

pleasures found in Paradise.[55] Therefore, the cloister garden served as a constant reminder of the goal in meditation: to reach the Heavenly Jerusalem.[56] Dante draws on this by having Dante-*personaggio* enter Paradise through the Garden of the Earthly Paradise, the very garden that the cloister garth imitates and is connected to. The garden of the Earthly Paradise as a prefiguration of Heavenly Paradise is found in medieval Paradise typology.[57] The *Rationale divinorum officiorum*,[58] the authoritative late-medieval commentary on the liturgy, written by Durand, states:

> claustrum coelestem significat paradisum [...] Diversitas autem officinarum et officiorum in claustro, diversitas est mansionum cum diversitate praemiorum in regno. Moraliter vero claustrum est animae contemplatio, ubi se recipit, a turba cogitationum carnalium separatur, et sola coelestia meditatur. (*Rationale*, 1.1.42)
>
> [The cloister signifies the celestial paradise [...] [where] the diversity of the work areas and offices in the cloister is the diversity of dwellings with their diverse rewards in the heavenly kingdom. In the moral sense, the cloister is the soul's contemplation, where it retreats when it separates itself from the carnal thoughts of the crowd and only meditates on celestial things.]

Durand links the cloister's physical structure to the layout of Heaven and connects the cloister to the act of meditation by turning away from sins towards

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[55] McNeill, p. 11. See also Mary W. Helms, 'Sacred Landscape and the Early Medieval European Cloister. Unity, Paradise, and the Cosmic Mountain', *Anthropos*, 97.2 (2002), 435–53 (p. 436) who argues that the garden at the centre of the cloister represents the first three days of creational paradise and therefore, constituted the symbolic centre of the cloister complex. She goes on to argue that the 'entire monastery can then be interpreted as a representation of the cosmic mountain on whose summit paradise is believed to be situated'.

[56] For some examples see Augustodunesis, CLXXII, COLS 590B–C; Peter Damian, CXLVIII, COLS 231–2; Cremonensis, CCXIII, COL. 25., in *PL*.

[57] For a fuller explanation see Johan Chydenius, *The Typological Problem in Dante: A Study in the History of Medieval Ideas* (Helsinki: Academic Bookstore & Northern Antiquarian Bookstore, 1958), pp. 102–3; 108. He also references Dante's use of the garden motif as a symbol of the Empyrean at *Par.*, XXVI, 110; XXXI, 97; XXXII, 39.

[58] This treatise is crucial to understanding liturgy in Italy during Dante's time because it was widely circulated, with over three hundred extant manuscripts; it was first circulated in 1286 and then in its final form in 1294–1296. It was used in universities and it was the 'most copied liturgical treatise of the late medieval period'. Although Dante did not have access to a copy of the treatise, as far as we know, the influence of Durand's text indicates that its ideas were circulating widely in Italy. Furthermore, Durand brings together traditional ideas from early medieval ecclesiology, and he is known as the 'systematiser and transmitter of liturgical interpretation rooted in patristic methods of spiritual exegesis of the Bible'. Since Durand synthesises these traditional modes, he provides a thorough summary of traditional practices and understanding. See Stephen Mark Holmes, 'Reading the Church: William Durandus and a New Approach to the History of Ecclesiology', *Ecclesiology*, 7.1, 29–49 (p. 37) and Holmes, p. 37.

Heaven, in a similar way to Dante-*personaggio*'s journey.[59] This movement away from the material towards the spiritual as well as the liminality associated with cloisters is also reflected in *Paradiso* XXV when St John explains his material body remains on earth until the Resurrection because it carries sin:

> […] "Perché t'abbagli
> per veder cosa che qui non ha loco?
> In terra è terra il mio corpo, e saragli
> tanto con li altri che 'l numero nostro
> con l'etterno proposito s'agguagli.
> Con le due stole nel beato chiostro
> son le due luci sole che saliro,
> e questo apporterai nel mondo vostro." (*Par.*, XXV, 122–29)
>
> [Why do you dazzle yourself to see what has no place here? On earth my body is earth, and it will be there with the others until our number equals the eternal purpose. Only the two lights that ascended have the two stoles in the eternal cloister, and you shall take this back to your world.]

St John repeats 'terra' [Earth, soil] which amplifies the physicality of his body through his explanation that his body remains in its physical form on Earth and it is only Christ and the Virgin Mary who have their bodies in the non-space of the Empyrean. The text moves from the earthly physical space to the non-space of Heaven in the eternal cloister and then shifts again to the earthly when St John tells Dante-*personaggio* to take this knowledge back with him to Earth. This fluctuation between the space of Earth and non-space of Heaven is another example of the liminality of the cloister and its role in connecting the two realms.

The rhyme also emphasises the liminal nature of the cloister. 'Nostro' refers to the people of Heaven who provide information for Dante-*personaggio* to take back to 'il mondo vostro', — connecting Heaven and Earth. But the rhyme also highlights the cloister's primary function as a tool for meditation. Now Dante will be the instructor to those souls on Earth who will learn from his teaching, found through his journey in the *Commedia*.

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[59] Another example is Honorius' *Gemma animae* which describes the cloister as a metaphor for the Heavenly Jerusalem: 'Just as the blessed are separated from the sinners, so those who have chosen the religious life are segregated from the worldly' and 'each person has his own place, just as in heaven there are many mansions, their occupants being assigned according to merit' from Dynes, p. 61.

To conclude this section, the term ‘chiostro’ is used to describe the physical structures of both Heaven and Hell. How can Dante refer to two spaces that appear to be oppositional or at least very different in terms of their form, as the same architectural model? Dante is able to do this because dynamic meanings are imbedded in the traditional definition of the cloister, as denoted by Honorius, such as the cloister as a liminal space, as the Heavenly Jerusalem, as Hell, and as Heaven.

3.5 The Cloister as a Synecdoche for Earthly Spaces (*Par.* III and XXI–XXII)

Paradiso III, which also references a cloister, maps well onto Durand’s description of dwelling places when Piccarda Donati helps Dante-*personaggio* understand the degrees of blessedness in Heaven. Durand’s dwellings denote the different areas of Heaven which Dante describes as spheres; Dante ranks them in a similar fashion to Durand, where it is the reward or blessedness that distinguish each space. This canto, similar to many others in this cantica, follows Dante’s pedagogical framework for meditation where a problem is presented by Dante-*personaggio*, information is gained from either his guide or a soul he encounters, and this stimulates further understanding. Here, Dante-*personaggio* discusses a problem in his understanding with Piccarda (ll. 64–66): the hierarchy of the spheres of Heaven, where the blessed appear to Dante-*personaggio* in different spheres. And through an explanation by Piccarda (ll. 70–87), Dante-*personaggio* arrives at further knowledge (ll. 88–96) — that the souls do not desire a different degree of blessedness because each soul is as blessed as it can be, which means they lack nothing and therefore, cannot desire more.

Once this understanding is obtained Dante-*personaggio* moves on to ask Piccarda how her actions on Earth led to her position within the Heaven of the Moon. Her explanation refers to a cloister, but instead of an otherworldly cloister, we find the first of three references to cloisters on Earth. Piccarda joined the order of Poor Clares (founded by St Clare (1194–1253)) by taking vows and entering San Damiano near Assisi but her brother removed her in order to marry her off for political purposes:

> “Del mondo, per seguirla, giovinetta

fuggi'mi e nel suo abito mi chiusi,

e promisi la via de la sua setta.

Uomini poi, a mal più ch' a bene usi,

fuor mi rapiron de la dolce chiostra:

Iddio si sa qual poi mia vita fusi.

E quest' altro splendor che ti si mostra

da la mia destra parte e che s'accende

di tutto il lume de la spera nostra, […]" (*Par*., III, 103–11)

[To follow her, I fled the world when a girl, and enclosed myself in her habit, and promised to follow the path of her sect. Later, men more used to evil than to good tore me out of the sweet cloister: God alone knows what my life was after that. And this other splendor who appears to you at my right side and who is burning with all the light of our sphere]

If we recall Honorius' cloister as a safe asylum or strong fort, Piccarda emphasises the safety represented by the cloister when she flees the world to enter the convent, and this is reinforced by phrases such as 'nel suo abito mi chiusi' [I enclosed myself in her habit]. The protective character is also emphasised by the fact that Piccarda explains that she was torn out of the 'dolce chiostra' [sweet cloister].[60] In this canto, the cloister of Earth represents safety from the outside world but the safety of the cloister is breached: Piccarda is kidnapped, raped, and forced into marriage. Although her vows were broken, this was not of her own accord. In this sense, Piccarda's earthly cloister is similar to that of *Inferno* XXIX because it has been broken and corrupted by the outside world, those within the space are torn from it and are thus unable to use it correctly. Yet her continued devotion outside of the claustral space is a lesson to Dante-*personaggio* and the reader, where the knowledge gained in the cloister can be replicated in the cloister of the mind, similar to *Li Liure du cloistre de l'âme.* This episode for Dante-*personaggio* and the reader is an example of how to pursue God through the mind rather than through the physical security of the cloister.[61]

[60] In his exchange with Guido Orlandi, Cavalcanti also refers to the cloister as 'dolce' and with sexual connotations: Cavalcanti 49a *la bella donna dove Amor si mostra*, l. 5. Orlandi does not use the specific term in his reply but it is implied and once again has sexual connotations. Furthermore, Cavalcanti does use it in *La bella donna dove Amor si mostra*, rhyming it in a similar way to Dante with *mostra* and *vostra* (ll. 1,3,5) Pollidori, LIII.

[61] This use of the cloister of the mind is repeated when Piccarda describes Constance of Hauteville's story later in the canto (ll. 112–18).

It is not surprising that Dante uses the cloister as an architectural model within the Heaven of Saturn (*Paradiso* XXI–XXII) or that this Heaven is also filled with monastic metaphors and imagery of meditation since this is where Dante-*personaggio* encounters the contemplatives. However, Dante's main meditative imagery is a ladder, not a cloister, and instead he describes an earthly cloister, similar to the Piccarda episode. Peter Damian explains who he was on Earth:

> […] "è consecrato un ermo
> che suole esser disposto a sola latria.
> […] Quivi
> al servigio di Dio mi fe' sì fermo
>   che pur con cibi di liquor d'ulivi
> lievemente passava caldi e geli,
> contento ne' pensieri contemplativi.
>   Render solea quel chiostro a questi cieli
> fertilemente, e ora è fatto vano,
> sì che tosto convien che si riveli.
>   In quel loco fu' io Pietro Damiano, […]" (*Par.*, XXI, 110–21)
>
> [There is a hermitage once devoted only to God's worship. There I became so fixed in the service of God that with but the juice of olives I easily survived heat and frosts, content in my contemplative thoughts. That cloister used to produce fertile harvests for these heavens, but now it has become so empty that soon it must be revealed. In that place I was Peter Damian,]

Peter Damian refers to the cloister found in the Camaldulensian Eremo della Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana. Dante uses the cloister here as a synecdoche for the whole monastic complex. Upon first reading the passage, the conflation of 'ermo' [hermitage] and 'chiostro' seems odd. The use of 'ermo' emphasises the image of Peter Damian in the wilderness alone, facing harsh climates and subsisting on olive juice rather than within a monastic complex that has a 'chiostro'. Although the hermitage was located on the side of Mount Catria, away from civilisation, it was a large complex of buildings and was 'a severely ascetic combination of eremitic life (some of the monks lived in individual small

buildings) and cenobitic (others lived in common under the Benedictine Rule)'.[62] So, although it was a hermitage in which some individuals lived alone, many lived in a community together and thus they needed a large complex to accommodate them. During his time as prior (1043–1072), Peter Damian built a new cloister for the community, but he also expanded the library and oversaw other building works, so why does Dante refer only to the cloister here?[63]

Peter Damian compares the cloister during his lifetime, when it was used correctly and thus was full of people devoted to their search for knowledge of God, to its present circumstances: 'vano' [empty] of people seeking God, due to the corruption of the Church and its obsession with wealth (ll. 106–42). Peter Damian compares the current corrupt popes to St Peter and St Paul who are examples of poverty (ll. 127–35). As noted earlier, the Plan of St Gall was created during a time of reform which emphasised a clearer focus on God and a distancing from the world, very similar to the reform movements of the tenth to twelfth centuries.[64] The fact that the cloister's origins are linked directly to reform movements is important when considering Dante's use of it in these canti that discuss earthly corruption. The cloister forms a barrier to the outside world and the silence found within it allows the occupier to focus his or her attention on God.

The close proximity of the term 'chiostro' with Peter Damian's sole activity: 'pensieri contemplativi' [contemplative thoughts], align this passage with the function of the cloister as a spatial tool to further one's knowledge of God through meditation. It is a synecdoche for a hermitage or monastic complex but he uses it because the cloister's main function was to stimulate meditation on God. By doing so, Dante sets up a pedagogical framework for how to interpret

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[62] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 3: Paradiso*, trans. by Robert M. Durling Robert M. Durling with notes by Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 433.

[63] Irven Michael Resnick, Divine Power and Possibility in St. Peter Damian's De Divina Omnipotentia (Leiden: Brill, 1992), p. 11.

[64] These synods called for a return to a stricter adherence to the *Regula* of St Benedict of Nursia and clearer guidelines about the relationship between monastic communities and the laity were discussed. See Horn, 'On the Origins of the Medieval Cloister'.

and use space both correctly and incorrectly. Instead of finding a safe space where meditation occurs, we find an empty space, devoid of the pursuit of God.

Similarly, *De miraculis* by Peter the Venerable (*c*. 1092–1156) describes a demon attempting to infiltrate the cloister of the Cluny monastery; however, it is unable to enter because of the religious activities that occur there: prayers, meditation, processions, acts of charity, and communal goodwill, implying that the spiritual acts that take place protect the physical monastic complex (I.15).[65] But for Peter Damian's monastery, these acts that saved the cloister are not present and thus the evil of the world has infiltrated its walls.

The cloister was often referred to as a liminal space where Heaven and Earth met.[66] Peter of Celle (*c*. 1115–1183) describes it as "[lying] on the border of angelic purity and earthly contamination."[67] Recalling Durand as well, it is a place where one must rid oneself of earthly sin and meditate on the spiritual. The liminality of the cloister strengthens the cloister's function as a tool for meditation, since one must use the concrete images of vice and virtue perceived by the senses to ascend to abstract knowledge and in some cases, ecstatic visions of Heaven. This connection between the cloister and the act of meditation is reinforced by the monastic metaphors and imagery of meditation that appear throughout *Paradiso* XXI. It begins with Dante-*personaggio*'s eyes fixed on Beatrice:

> Già eran li occhi miei rifissi al volto
> de la mia donna e l'animo con essi,
> e da ogne altro intento s'era tolto. (*Par*., XXI, 1–3)
> [Already my eyes were fixed again on the face of my lady, and my spirit, too, removed from every other object.]

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[65] For an analysis of the story see Marc Saurette, 'Making Space for Learning in the Miracle Stories of Peter the Venerable', in *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages*, ed. by Micol Long, Tjamke Snijders, and Steven Vanderputten (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), pp. 111–39 (pp. 111–39 (esp. 127–31)) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvnb7nbt.9> [accessed 19 March 2020].

[66] Helms, pp. 436, 440, 444.

[67] Celle, p. 79; 'Est autem claustrum in confinio angelicae puritatis et mundane colluvionis.' Gerard de Martel, *Sources Chretiennes* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1977), CCXL, CLII.

The motif of Dante-*personaggio* gazing at Beatrice occurs frequently within Paradise,[68] and is an example of the rules of memory training where Dante-*personaggio* uses his senses, here sight, in order to meditate to gain higher knowledge. Furthermore, he ensures the mind is uncrowded since Dante-*personaggio*'s only thought is for Beatrice — he is concentrating and ready to learn more (Rule 2 of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*). Each time this motif is used Beatrice functions as a path to further knowledge through Dante-*personaggio*'s gaze and his advancement is represented by Beatrice's beauty burning brighter at each stage (ll. 7–12). Beatrice explains that Dante-*personaggio* must begin his meditative practice, by connecting what he sees with his mind:

> "Ficca di retro a li occhi tuoi la mente,
> e fa di quelli specchi a la figura
> che 'n questo specchio ti sarà parvente." (*Par.*, XXI, 16–18)
> [Probe with your mind, following your eyes, and of them make mirrors for the figure that will appear to you in this mirror.]

This instruction is followed by a meditative image of food (l. 19), which bears the fruit of a new vision of a ladder (l. 29). Peter Damian also uses food imagery when describing the cloister ('render […] fertilemente' ll. 118–19). By using similar imagery to describe both the cloister and ladder, a connection is made between them. This ladder is the dominant image within the Heaven of Saturn, which is fitting since Jacob's ladder was a metaphor used for the contemplative life, where each rung represents a different stage, bringing the observer closer to God, similar to the sculptural imagery of the cloister.[69] Although the cloister is not the dominant image within the canto, it functions in a similar way to Jacob's ladder, and adds to the canto's focus on meditation. The cloister is a stimulative tool for meditation towards the goal of further knowledge of God by ascending from the earthly to the heavenly; a goal towards which Dante-*personaggio* is currently progressing through his interactions with the souls of Paradise.

The Heaven of Saturn continues into *Paradiso* XXII. It begins similar to canto XXI with Beatrice directing Dante-*personaggio*'s gaze in order to gain new

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[68] For some examples see, *Par.*, I, 64–65; III, 22–24, 127–29; VIII, 40–41; IX, 16–18; XVIII, 130–132; XXI, 16–21.

[69] For a further explanation of the ladder and its origins in *Genesis* 28 see notes by Durling and Martinez, *Paradiso*, p. 429.

knowledge (ll. 19–21). The image of the cloister appears again when St Benedict of Nursia (*c*. 480–547) condemns the corruption of religious orders (ll. 25–99), similar to Peter Damian's connection of the cloister and his invective against the Church. St Benedict compares two moments in time — the time before he arrived at the monastery of Monte Cassino, when the souls of the towns surrounding it were corrupt because they worshipped at an ancient pagan temple and the time when St Benedict was there and he was able to turn the people towards God (ll. 37–45). Similar to Peter Damian, St Benedict also uses food imagery connected to the act of meditation — nourishing the mind rather than the body (ll. 46–48). St Benedict points out different contemplatives:

> "Qui è Maccario, qui è Romualdo,
> qui son li frati miei che dentro ai chiostri
> fermar li piedi e tennero il cor saldo."
> E io a lui: "L'affetto che dimostri
> meco parlando e la buona sembianza
> ch' io veggio e noto in tutti li ardor vostri […]" (*Par*., XXII, 49–54)
>
> ["Here is Marcarius, here is Romuald, here are my brothers who fixed their feet within the cloisters and kept their hearts firm." And I to him: "The affection you show in speaking with me and the good appearance that I see and note in all your fires"]

Dante's repetition of 'qui' [here] reinforces the fact that they have stopped their feet in one place: 'fermar li piedi', locating the contemplatives spatially within their respective cloisters. Furthermore, earthly monastic spaces are mentioned, first with Monte Cassino and then with the mention of Marcarius (*c*. 200–*c*. 290)[70] and Romuald (959–1007) who are associated with earthly hermitages.

As St Benedict continues his speech, he directs Dante-*personaggio*'s gaze towards Jacob's ladder (ll. 67–72). The image of the ladder is followed by St Benedict's condemnation of the monastic orders:

> "Ma per salirla mo nessun diparte
> da terra i piedi, e la regola mia
> rimasa è per danno de le carte.

[70] Although there were many Egyptian hermits bearing the name Marcarius, Durling and Martinez note that it was likely Marcarius the Ancient that Dante had knowledge of. For our purposes the fact that he is likely referring to an Egyptian hermit is enough for the argument. See notes by Durling and Martinez, *Paradiso*, p. 448.

> Le mura che solieno esser badia
> fatte son spelonche, e le cocolle
> sacca son piene di farina ria." (*Par.*, XXII, 73–75)
>
> [But now no one lifts his feet from earth to climb it, and my Rule has become a waste of paper. The walls that used to be abbeys have become caverns, and the monks' cowls are sacks full of evil flour.]

Similar to Peter Damian, St Benedict uses St Peter and his poverty as an example of the proper way to behave, including St Francis as well. He contrasts this with the current religious community and we find that no one lifts their feet to climb the ladder in the pursuit of God because they are too interested in wealth (ll. 73–90). The repetition of 'i piedi' [feet] links the imagery of cloister and ladder and their liminal qualities. If we think back to *Inferno* XXIX, we remember that Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil were the only ones using the space correctly because they were able to walk among the sinners and fix their static images in their mind, while the sinners remained in heaps, unable to move. The dichotomy between static and active is once again present in St Benedict's comparison of those who were active in their pursuit of God and those who are static, unable to reach God, or even ascend the first rung of the ladder. This imagery of static versus active is particularly relevant to the cloister imagery because of the cloister's function as a thoroughfare connecting the different parts of the church, but also because one would walk around the cloister, meditating on the different images, which would produce a narrative, rather than only contemplating one image, standing still. Dante uses the cloister in combination with the ladder to also evoke movement, not just horizontally, but vertically, where moving around the cloister in meditation is also moving 'up' in order to reach Heaven itself.

This canto is filled with architectural imagery — walls, caverns, abbeys, hermitages, cloisters, and convents (ll. 73–74, 49, 51, 90). This is rare within the poem, especially within Paradise where the reader is usually confronted with abstract forms such as lights forming circles. This focus on physical buildings or their parts strengthens the connection between the earthly spaces and the heavenly non-space and is an example of the cloister's liminal qualities. This becomes evident in this canto because it also contains a reference to the non-space of the Empyrean:

> "Ivi è perfetta, matura e intera

ciascuna disïanza; in quella sola
è ogne parte là ove sempr' era,
perché non è in loco e non s'impola,
e nostra scala infino ad essa varca,
onde così dal viso ti s'invola: […]" (*Par.*, XXII, 64–69)

[There every desiring is perfect, ripe, and whole; there alone is every part where it has always been, for it is not in space and turns on no pole, and our ladder is the bridge from here to there, and therefore flies so far beyond your sight.]

St Benedict tells Dante-*personaggio* that the Empyrean does not exist in space: 'perché non è in loco e non s'impola' [for it is not in space and turns on no pole] (l. 67). However, the only way to understand the non-space is by comparing it to its opposite, space. The cloister, similar to Jacob's ladder, provides an example of how to move from a space to a non-space — from the physical space of the cloister to the mental space of meditation. This concept is one of the hardest that Dante has to grapple with when he is in the Empyrean — not only in trying to explain it to the reader but understanding it himself through Dante-*personaggio* as well. Dante uses the common use of prefiguration where an earthly model is typologically linked to its heavenly fulfilment. Dante may reference the cloister and so many images of architecture within this canto to facilitate this concept of moving from space to non-space. Dante-*personaggio* and the reader are coming closer to the Empyrean and consequently they are given clues regarding how they will encounter this non-space. They need the liminality that the cloister and, more explicitly here, the ladder provide in order to move from the physical, architectural forms of Earth to the non-space of the Empyrean.

This liminality and the connection of Heaven and Earth is furthered by Beatrice at the end of the canto when she tells Dante-*personaggio* '"Tu se' sì presso a l'ultima salute […] | che tu dei | aver le luci tue chiare e acute"' [You are so close to the final salvation that you must have your eyes clear and sharp] (ll. 124–26). Before he can move further up the ladder and into the Heaven of the Fixed Stars he must first look down on Earth to see the distance his 'piedi' [feet] have travelled (ll. 127–32). The repetition of 'piedi' puts Dante-*personaggio* in the position of the souls who have climbed Jacob's ladder to find salvation. Dante-*personaggio* reviews each of the spheres he has passed through and the world beyond them (ll. 133–53). This long explanation of his

journey once again connects Earth to Heaven but it also provides Dante-*personaggio* with a bird's eye view, a view usually restricted to God and also found in Dante-*personaggio*'s view of *Malebolge* (*Inf.,* XVI–XVIII). This particular perspective allows Dante-*personaggio* to see the world in its 'base appearance' ['vil sembiante'], causing Dante to smile (l. 135). The distance allows Dante-*personaggio* to understand the macrocosmic level and God's plan both temporally and spatially. This review of all the spaces Dante-*personaggio* has encountered also allows him to fix the knowledge he has gained in the spaces — similar to moving through the sequence of spaces in meditative practices. Now that he has ensured that the images are fixed in their respective spaces he can move on to the next stage in his knowledge — demonstrated in his turning his eyes back to Beatrice's in the final line of the canto (l. 154).

The cloister's function as a tool for meditation is emphasised in the canti where the term occurs, assisting Dante-*personaggio* and the reader in Dante's overall pedagogical programme. The cloister as a metaphor for protection and security and as a barrier from the evils of the world is employed by Dante but is subverted in a similar way to *Inferno* XXIX. In addition, the claustral space is only a safe space for those who use it properly, and the mere fact of inhabiting the claustral space does not guarantee an individual's salvation. The cloister is one of many liminal tools used within *Paradiso* to emphasise the connection between Heaven and Earth. This liminality is connected to the cloister as a tool for meditation as well as the earthly models' connection to Heaven. The cloister's liminality also helps Dante in his quest to describe the non-space of the Empyrean by comparing it to its opposite, space.

Dante's three references to earthly cloisters occur in *Paradiso* rather than *Inferno* or *Purgatorio* because Heaven is not the opposite of the world, it is not an escape from it, just as the cloister does not produce a concrete barrier from the world or the guarantee of Paradise. Instead, the cloister links Heaven and Earth through its use as a mnemonic device and its teaching is not restricted to the four ranges of the cloister space but can be used within the world. Dante is not suggesting to his reader that removing oneself from the world is the only way of gaining salvation. On the contrary, any Christian believer can and should use the cloister's function of meditation in their everyday existence.

3.6 Conclusion

I have analysed the cloister as an architectural model to understand its multiple meanings within Dante's *Commedia*. Dante uses it as a synecdoche to describe earthly monasteries and to describe the physical structure of Hell and Heaven. Dante plays with metaphorical medieval meanings of the cloister, allowing the reader to interpret the space and the people Dante-*personaggio* encounters. By considering the physical cloisters of Dante's Florence and contemporary treatises employing them as architectural mnemonics, I argued that the common cultural practices are in a dynamic relationship with Dante's work. Specifically, I argued here that Dante calls attention to the function of the cloister as an architectural space used for meditation, and through his calling attention to this function, readers are encouraged to apply this meditative approach to the text of the poem. By pairing this example of using space to stimulate meditation with the condemnation of the Church, he is providing a warning that although the cloister, or more broadly the religious life, can be a safe space and lead to salvation, it must be used properly. It should be used as a space to further connect oneself to God, by moving through it, storing the images, and meditating on them, to avoid erring. By using the cloister model and combining it with various religious orders and persons, he provides a lens for reaching God to any Christian believer. For Dante, there are multiple ways to engage with God, whether that be the mendicant orders who engage with the community, or hermits who remove themselves from the community, or a layperson who participates in his or her parish. However, the poem suggests that there must be some sort of space in which one reflects on one's life and one's relationship to God. Dante's use of the cloister is an example of how he draws on multiple ways to reach God with the correct tools and intentions. In the next chapter I analyse the significance of processional movement throughout the *Commedia*, especially in the Earthly Paradise procession, in terms of its mediation in medieval culture as a form of making spaces sacred, considering themes of performativity, community, transformation, and consecration.

Chapter 4 **Making Space Sacred: Processions, Community, and Movement in the Earthly Paradise**

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined the claustral space in the *Commedia* as both a synecdoche and to describe the physical structure of Hell and Heaven. I argued that Dante uses the medieval spiritual and intellectual practices of the time to emphasise the cloister's function as an architectural space used for meditation, in order for the reader to apply this meditative approach to the poem.

This chapter considers another religious practice which features repeatedly in the poem: processions. It examines how this cultural practice was shaped by the architectural space of the church in which it took place and shaped the experience of that space. It considers questions of what it means to make something sacred, to think in a sacred way, and to be sacred. As this thesis' aim is to understand how architectural space influences and transforms human understanding and identity, consecration processions are a good model because Florence's building boom offered many opportunities for both Dante and his audience to experience these processions since many churches were built or re-built. In addition to this, the procession directly impacts the experience of the spatial quality of the building, transforming the bricks and mortar of the church into a sacred space through movement, song, speech acts, and other performances by both the religious and lay community. In this chapter I argue that by interpreting Dante's Earthly Paradise procession in the context of a consecration procession, new readings are opened up in relation to ideas of transformation, community, baptism, and movement.

Processions were an important component to the daily life of the late-medieval populace. In Santa Reparata alone, there are fifty processions listed for the calendar year between the *Ritus in ecclesia servandi* (1173–1205) and

Mores et consuetudines canonice Florentine (*c.* 1230) ordinals,[1] and Toker goes even further by arguing that there were around 80–100 processions per year.[2] Processions could range in degree by taking place inside the church, making stops at various altars; or they could move outside of the church space and through the streets connecting different places together.[3] Kathleen Ashley and Wim Hüsken note that although processions were 'extremely popular public performances' in the late medieval period 'this form of social behaviour has been so thoroughly naturalised in our accounts of Western European history that it merited little comment as a cultural performance choice over many centuries'.[4] Ashley and Hüsken define a procession as 'the movement of a group in the same direction with an identified purpose'.[5] Scholarship on Dante also considers processional movement, such as the work of Helena Phillips-Robins who argues that Dante leads his readers to God through their lived communal experiences and that processions are one of these reference points, 'bring[ing] a known, shared dimension' to the unknown space of the afterlife.[6] Similarly, Matthew Treherne notes that interpreting the Earthly Paradise procession as a type of performance is crucial to our understanding of it.[7] So what function did these processions serve and can a better understanding of them help us to understand processional movement in Dante?

The most elaborate procession in the *Commedia* takes place in the culminating canti of *Purgatorio* when Dante-*personaggio* is in the Earthly

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[1] Toker defines ordinals as 'instructions for each liturgical office taking place within the calendar year'. See Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 29. For the manuscripts see MS Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana 3005 and MS Florence, Archivio dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore 1a.3.8.

[2] See Helena Phillips-Robins for an analysis of the ordinals as a way to reconstruct the liturgical practices of Dante's time. She notes that these types of documents are not often used in Dante studies but argues that although Dante would not have read the ordinals, he would have lived the practices described: Phillips-Robins, pp. 12–13. For a list of the processions see table 3.2 in Marica Tacconi, *Cathedral and Civic Ritual in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence*, Cambridge Studies in Palaeography and Codicology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); and also see Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 120.

[3] *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Kathleen M. Ashley and Wim N. M. Hüsken (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), p. 8.

[4] Ashley and Hüsken, p. 7.

[5] Ashley and Hüsken, p. 14.

[6] Phillips-Robins, pp. 37, 152–53.

[7] Treherne, *Dante's* Commedia *and the Liturgical Imagination*, Leeds Studies on Dante (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2020), p. 88.

Paradise (XXIX-XXXIII). Discussion of these canti in Dante scholarship takes it as a given that the main event is a procession, yet, as Ashley and Hüsken note, processional movement is not the normal means by which we move through space and its neglect within scholarship requires attention. With this in mind, I wish to engage with the spatial aspects of this procession and consider how thinking about this episode in terms of processional movement enables a new way of thinking about the spiritual change of the pilgrim at this moment in the poem.

Interpretation of the procession in the Earthly Paradise has tended to focus on the Scriptural sources that Dante explicitly references within the canto, Ezekiel's and John's visions (ll.14–149),[8] as models for his procession;[9] but by focusing on the performative aspects, and specifically on the idea of movement through space combined with ritual acts, other interpretations of the episode are revealed. Therefore, this chapter seeks to balance the Biblical interpretation of the episode by considering the performative aspects inherent in the dynamic movement of the procession.

Although a plethora of scholarship exists regarding the symbolic meaning of every figure of Dante's procession, a sparsity of scholarship exists considering the procession itself as a ritual and performative act.[10] Kleinhenz

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[8] Revelation 1:10–20, 4:1–11, 6:1 and Ezekiel 1:4–11.

[9] Andrea Ciotti, 'Processione Mistica', in *ED.*

[10] For the most agreed upon identifications of the figures see Ciotti, 'Processione Mistica', in *ED*. The interpretation of the gryphon as a representation of Christ's dual natures was consistent from the fourteenth century until the nineteenth century when a variety of new hypotheses were proposed. Modern scholars who support the argument of the gryphon as Christ are: Joseph Chierici, *Il grifo dantesco: unita fantastica e concettuale della Divina Commedia* (Rome: S. De Luca, 1967); Erich von Richthofen, 'Traces of Servius in Dante', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 92, 1974, 117–28; Sergio Cristaldi, 'Per dissimilia': Saggio sul grifone Dantesco', in *Arcadia: Accademia letteraria Italiana, atti e memorie*, 3 (Rome, 1988), IX, FASC. 1, 57–94; Lino Pertile, *La puttana e il gigante: dal 'Cantico dei cantici' al paradiso terrestre di Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 1998); Demaray, pp. 35, 61; Singleton, p. 48; John Strong Perry Tatlock, 'The Last Cantos of the "Purgatorio"', *Modern Philology*, 32.2 (1934), 113–23 (p. 1); Foster, '*Purgatorio*, XXXII', p. 140. Although support for the gryphon as Christ far outweighs that of any other interpretation, the gryphon has been interpreted in more or less plausible ways as: the pope, the Ghibelline faction, Cherubim, the Church Faithful, Dante's demon, imperial Rome, Rome and its empire, and so on. In order of argument: Adolphe Napoléon Didron, *Iconographie chrétienne: histoire de Dieu* (Paris,

offers the fullest interpretation when he argues that the entire poem can be read as processional movement and that by interpreting these movements, we can more fully comprehend the specific meaning of the journey — a concept which he coins as 'processional poetics'.[11] He offers many examples within the poem such as the litany procession of *Inferno* XX, the banners of *Inferno* XXXIV as a satirical inversion of Christ's triumph, and, of course, the procession in Earthly Paradise.[12] Though I think his interpretation goes a little too far in interpreting some of the movements within the poem as processional, such as in *Inferno* I when Dante follows Virgil or the Eagle of Justice in *Paradiso* XIX and XX, his emphasis on the importance of movement within the poem points to an area that needs further investigation. As Kleinhenz notes, 'Dante is very conscious of all kinds of movement — his own and that of other people, objects, and elements, such as wind, rain and fire'.[13] Therefore, movement within the poem has symbolic meaning and deserves to be interpreted as a key to understanding meaning. Other scholars that consider processional movement focus their attention on the most explicit example — that of the procession in Earthly Paradise: this scholarship examines religious and civic processions as models for Dante's Earthly Paradise procession. For example, John Strong Perry Tatlock argues that Dante's procession is modelled on the episcopal procession, as described by Honorius in his *Gemma animae* (*c*. 1120). His analysis reveals similarities between the two processions: in the episcopal procession seven acolytes begin the procession holding candles, many biblical

1843), pp. 229–30, 323, 469–70; Gabriele Rossetti, *Comento analitico al 'Purgatorio' di Dante Alighieri*, ed. by Pompeo Giannantonio (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1967), pp. 367–69; Frédéric-Guillaume Bergmann, *La Vision de Dante au Paradis terrestre ('Purgatorio', canto XXIX, V. 16-XXXII, v. 160)* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1865), p. 9; John Earle, 'Introduction', in *Purgatory: An Experiment in Literal Verse Translation*, trans. by Charles Lancelot Shadwell (London: Macmillan and Co., 1892); Peter Dronke, '*Purgatorio*, XXIX', in *Cambridge Readings in Dante's Comedy*, ed. by Kenelm Foster and Patrick Boyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 114–37 (pp. 131–33); Armour, *Dante's Griffin*; John A. Scott, *Dante's Political Purgatory*, 1996, p. 189. For a full overview of scholarship on Dante's gryphon see Ruzicka. Another example is the significance of the candles which, instead of being ascribed a singular meaning like the gryphon, are interpreted as having several meanings: the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments, and the seven churches that John is instructed to write to in Revelation. For some examples see Tatlock, p. 113 and Singleton, p. 47.

[11] Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy*, pp. 2–3. For similar work on movement within the poem see Freccero who argues that Dante's movement is unidirectional.

[12] Kleinhenz, Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy, pp. 11; 14–19.

[13] Kleinhenz, Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy, p. 3.

figures are represented such as the prophets and apostles, a *carroccio* is pulled, and Christ is represented by the bishop.[14]

Some other examples are Lizette Andrews Fisher and Isobel Friedman who argue that Dante models his procession on the one that takes place during the feast of Corpus Christi.[15] This procession included large candles and youths who have garlands of flowers around their heads.[16] Peter Anderson notes that the procession is related to a Palm Sunday procession in Jerusalem because they enter the Temple enclosure from the East.[17] David Ruzicka, on the other hand, argues that civic processions are a model because of the 'ostendali' [banners] which he links to the *gonfaloni* of the Florentine guilds (*Purg*., XXIX, 79).[18] These examples provide a good starting point to think about Dante's procession through its performative acts but these analyses are only peripheral to their authors' main argument and do not unpack the significant meaning that the processional movement can have for Dante-*personaggio*, the souls in the afterlife, and the reader.

All of the above provide an example of a procession that Dante might have known, but unlike these examples, I will delve into a particular procession, the consecration procession and its connection to architectural space. The intention of this chapter is to give primary consideration to the performative aspects of the procession, in particular, how Dante uses space in the processional movement in combination with ritual actions. It combines this idea with already well-established arguments in Dante scholarship that liturgical references within the poem invite a response from the reader, suggesting they perform these actions in order to strengthen their relationship with God.[19] I acknowledge that

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[14] Honorius Augustodunesis, 'Gemma animae', *PL*, 172, CLXXII, COL. 585B see cap IV-VI especially; Tatlock, p. 114.

[15] Fisher, pp. 92–113; Isobel Friedman, p. 127.

[16] Ruzicka, p. 20.

[17] Although many processions enter the church from the East, so this seems to be more to do with his larger argument of the Earthly Paradise as a figure of Jerusalem. See William Anderson, *Dante the Maker* (Brooklyn, NY: S4N Books, 2010), p. 370.

[18] Ruzicka, p. 19.

[19] Heather Webb, *Dante's Persons: An Ethics of the Transhuman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 28 <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198733485.001.0001> [accessed 11 August 2020]; Phillips-Robins, pp. 10–11.

multiple layers of meaning co-exist and overlap, but I am adding to existing ideas in a way that goes beyond a simple allusion, adding important layers of understanding to what others have suggested.

Before turning to these arguments, I give a brief overview of late medieval Florentine processions and I provide a background on consecration processions; I then consider the *Commedia* and the processional moments that foreshadow the Earthly Paradise procession; and finally I turn my attention to the Earthly Paradise procession itself.

4.2 Processions in Late Medieval Italy

Processions played a vital role in the life of the people of Florence and their experience of the built environment of the city. They were a part of many civic and religious celebrations, being a component of calendar events such as Saints' feast days and Holy week, as well as occasional events including funerals, weddings, consecrations, the movement of relics, during times of calamity, triumphs in battle, tournaments, and they took place every Sunday during High Mass, among other times.[20] A group that included the clergy and the laity would move from various sites in the city, depending on the event, often carrying candles, banners, crosses, and relics. Hymns and prayers were heard as well as bells which were rung all around the city. Incense was burned and musicians often accompanied the procession. They sometimes included a *carroccio* [wagon] which was pulled along by oxen and on it were the banners of the city as well as an altar — connecting the civic and religious aspects of the community's life in the city.[21] These liturgical acts are of particular importance when considering Dante because

> '[t]he liturgy celebrated by the Church Militant on earth was also understood as providing a foretaste of the worship offered by the Church Triumphant in

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[20] Ashley and Hüsken, pp. 7–10; See also Sharon T. Strocchia, *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), p. 11.

[21] For arguments relating to the connection of religious and civic processions see 'Celebrating Authority in Bristol, 1475-1640', in *Urban Life in the Renaissance*, ed. by Susan Zimmerman, Ronald F. E Weissman, and David Harris Sacks (London: Associated University Presses, 1989), pp. 187–223 (p. 192) who argue that processions were used as a means to convey authority. See also, Ashley and Hüsken, p. 15 for an argument on how processions not only reflected social power structures but created them.

> heaven. The liturgy, furthermore, gave people concepts for making sense of their existence in this world and the next.'[22]

Dante's use of liturgy in the afterlife, such as processions, connects the spaces of Earth and Heaven. Furthermore, according to Treherne, the liturgy creates a bond between the individual and God, the same concept that Dante, through his writing, is trying to obtain for himself and the reader.[23]

Large religious and civic processions offered a rare opportunity for all members of society to participate in religious rituals. People were eager to attend these ceremonies because of their elaborate nature, the indulgences offered, and because there were often people of significance who attended them. For example, Bruno of Segni (*c.* 1045–18 July 1123) describes the consecration of Santissima Trinità in Cava, Salerno in 1092 in his *Historia consecrationis*:

> Tam vero magnifica consecrationis pompa fuit, ut continuo suavissimi odores cremarentur, dulcissimi concentus audirentur, organorum ac tibiarum ad iucundissimum numerum modulationes, ut non aures modo audientium, sed et animos ad pietatem religionemque mira ratione accenderent.[24]
>
> [truly such was the magnificent pomp of the consecration that the most charming odours were burnt continuously, the most sweet harmony was heard, the modulations of organs and flutes, at the most pleasant intervals, so that they were heard, not in the manner of ears, but, reason being amazed, they excited even souls to piety and religion.]

Bruno's description notes the variety of sensory perceptions that were played upon simultaneously, creating a spectacular effect.[25] The pomp and spectacle witnessed at these events created excitement to observe and participate in them. Furthermore, the community was also eager to attend these processions

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[22] Phillips-Robins, p. 3.

[23] Treherne, *Dante's* Commedia *and the Liturgical Imagination*; Treherne, 'Liturgical Personhood: Creation, Penitence, and Praise in the *Commedia*'; Matthew Treherne, 'La Commedia di Dante e l'immaginario liturgico', in *Preghiera e liturgia nella 'Commedia': Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Ravenna, 12 Novembre 2011*, ed. by Giuseppe Ledda (Ravenna: Centro dantesco dei Frati minori conventuali, 2013), pp. 11–30.

[24] 'Historia consecrationis sacri monasterii Sanctissimae Trinitatis Cavensis solemniter factae a beatae memoriae Urbano papa secundo, Annon Domini MXCII die quinta Septembris', in *Rerum italicarum scriptores: raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, ed. by Lodovico Antonio Muratori and others (S. Lapi, 1733), VI, V, p. 47.

[25] For an argument about the multisensorial experience and its affective power see Ashley and Hüsken, p. 113.

for their transformational possibilities.[26] There is also evidence that clerics had ecstatic visions because of the multi-sensorial spectacle.[27] Though many of these sensory experiences were also present during other liturgical moments, consecration processions marked a new moment in the life of the community since they were specific to the city in which the church was built.

As noted earlier, Dante and his contemporaries had the opportunity to attend processions frequently since there were a number of processions associated with feast days and other events throughout each calendar year;[28] the building boom created a need for additional processions, in the form of consecration processions, since there were a number of churches either being built or rebuilt in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, such as Santa Maria Novella which was re-consecrated on 18 October 1279 by Cardinal Latino.[29]

The gathering of large crowds for consecration processions was well established by Dante's time. For example, when Santa Maria Novella was originally consecrated (30 October 1094) 'innumerabilis populus ibi fuerunt' [an innumerable multitude of people was there].[30] Bruno of Segni, mentioned above, also notes the number of people gathered: 'Merito ad ecclesiarum dedicationem tanta populorum undique turba concurrit' [Rightly, such a large crowd of people gathers at the dedication of churches][31] or for an example from further afield, we find Abbot Suger, who, at the consecration of St Denis in France, stated:

> Rex ipse e jusque decuriones tumultuosum impetum arcebant, et virgis et baculis regredientes ad portas protegebant.[32]

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[26] Louis I. Hamilton, A Sacred City: Consecrating Churches and Reforming Society in Eleventh-Century Italy (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 6.

[27] Hamilton, pp. 72–73.

[28] Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 34.

[29] See the section on the expansion of Florence in the introduction of this thesis for further details and lists.

[30] Brown, pp. 13–14. Original in Archivio di Stato, Cartapecore del S. M. Novella.

[31] Bruno of Segni, 'Libri sententiarum', in *PL*, CLXV, COL. 879C.

[32] Gerda Panofsky-Soergel, 'Libellus alter de consecratione ecclesiae sancti Dionysii', in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and Its Art Treasures*, ed. by Erwin Panofsky, Second Edition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 82–121 (pp. 114–15) <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvs32rrm.9> [accessed 3 June 2020].

> [the King himself and his officials kept back the tumultuous impact and protected those returning to the doors with canes and sticks]

These are just three of many examples of the large crowds that gathered at the consecration of churches. I will now turn to the history of consecration processions in order to understand their importance for late-medieval Italy.

4.3 Consecration Processions in Late Medieval Italy

Consecration processions (a part of dedication rites) are one of the oldest rites and they are documented soon after the legalisation of Christianity.[33] Eusebius of Caesarea (260–341) is often cited as the author of the earliest example of the dedication rite in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*.[34] In its simplest form, the rite consisted of an inaugural mass and the deposition of relics into a new altar, as prescribed at the second Council of Nicea in 787. The rite existed in a variety of formats depending on various factors such as the year, place, and local needs. For example, five different versions existed in southern Italy during the eleventh century.[35] Though this creates difficulties in understanding precisely what occurred in specific churches at specific times, work has been done to establish some of the commonalities between the rites in secondary scholarship.[36]

Even during Dante's time, the Church was aware of these issues and attempted to find solutions. For example, in the *Rationale*, Durand describes the

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[33] Mette Birkedal Bruun and Louis I. Hamilton, 'Rites for Dedicating Churches', in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy*, ed. by Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2016), pp. 177–204 (p. 177). For examples throughout the medieval period see Hamilton who considers consecration processions in Italy during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Also see, Lee Bowen, 'The Tropology of Mediaeval Dedication Rites', *Speculum*, 16.4 (1941), 469–79 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2852845> [accessed 3 April 2015]; Lilley, 'Cities of God? Medieval Urban Forms and Their Christian Symbolism'; Laurence Hull Stookey, 'The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theological Sources', *Gesta*, 8.1 (1969), 35–41 <https://doi.org/10.2307/766672> [accessed 16 March 2015].

[34] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by Gustave Bardy, Sources Chrétiennes, 31, 41, 55 and 73 (Paris: Cerf, 1952).

[35] Birkedal Bruun and Hamilton, p. 187.

[36] See especially Hamilton; Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton, *Understanding Medieval Liturgy* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2016). See also Brian V. Repsher, *The Rite of Church Dedication in the Early Medieval Era* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998); Eric Palazzo, *L'évêque et son image: L'illustration du pontifical au moyen âge.* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2000); D. Méhu, *Mises en scène et mémoires de la consécration de l'église dans l'occident médiéval* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2008); Dana M. Polanichka, 'Transforming Space, (Per)Forming Community: Church Consecration in Carolingian Europe', *Viator*, 43.1 (2012), 79–98 <https://doi.org/10.1484/j.viator.1.102543> [accessed 1 April 2019].

variety of rites and practices within individual churches and also provides a description of how he intends to avoid this problem of variation by focusing on the 'common and usual' practices of the Church:

> Non igitur lectoris moveatur animus si fortassis in hoc opusculo legerit quae in sua non noverit Ecclesia observari, aut non invenerit quicquid ibi servatur. Non enim uniuscujusque loci specialia, sed communes atque usitatiores ritus hic prosequimur, qui communem, non particularem doctrinam tradere laboramus, nec sit nobis possibile quorumlibet locorum specialia percrutari. (*Rationale*, Proemium, 14)
>
> [Let not, then, the reader be angry if he perchance read in this work of observances which he never saw in his own Church: or does not read of some that are there in use. For we endeavour not to go through the particular rites of particular places, but those which be more common and usual: because we labour to set forth that doctrine which is of universal, and not that which is of particular bearing, nor would it be possible for us to examine the particular rites of every Church.]

Durand will be a significant source for this chapter because of his importance to late-medieval Italian liturgical understanding, as noted earlier. Durand also provides a thorough examination and description of the dedication rite in his text:

> […] dicendum est qualiter Ecclesia consecratur. Et quidem omnibus de Ecclesia ejectis, solo Diacono ibi remanente recluso, Episcopus cum clero ante fores Ecclesiae aquam non sine sale benedicit. […] Postmodum vero, clero et populo insequente, circumeundo Ecclesiam exterius cum fasciculo hyssopi parietes cum aquae benedicta aspergit, et qualibet vice ad januam Ecclesiae veniens percutit super liminare cum baculo pastorali, dicens: Attollite portas principes vestras, etc. […] Tertia vero vice, reserato ostio, ingreditur Pontifex Ecclesiam, cum paucis ex ministris, clero et populo foris manente, dicens: Pax huic domui, et dicit litanias. Diende in pavimento Ecclesiae fiat crux de cinere, et sabulo, ubi literis graecis et latinis totum describitur alphabetum. Et iterum aliam aquam sanctificat cum sale, et cinere, et vino, altare consecrat. Deinde duodecim cruces in parietibus depictas chrismate inungit. (*Rationale*, 1.6.6)
>
> [we have to speak of the manner in which a church is consecrated. All being excluded from the church, a single Deacon remaining shut up within, the Bishop with his Clergy before the doors of the church proceedeth to bless water mixed with salt. Next, the Bishop, the Clergy and people following him and performing the circuit of the church, sprinkleth from a rod of hyssop the external walls with Holy Water; and as he arriveth each time at the door of the church he striketh the threshold with his pastoral staff saying, "Lift up your heads, o ye gates". But the third time, the door being thrown open, the Bishop entereth the church with a few of his attendants, the Clergy and people remaining without, and saith, "Peace be to this House"; and then the Litanies. Next on the pavement of the church let a Cross be made of ashes and sand; upon which the whole alphabet is described in Greek and Latin characters. And then he sanctifieth more water with salt and ashes and wine, and consecrateth the Altar: Lastly, he anointeth with chrism the Twelve Crosses depicted on the wall.

In my analysis of Dante's procession in the Earthly Paradise I will explore the implications of some of these in detail; however, for now, it is important to be aware of the general features and the fact that the rite included movement within and outside of the church and through these movements, accompanied by ritual acts such as song, prayer, aspersions, and the deposition of relics, the space was transformed into a sacred space.[37]

Durand's account of the rite concurs with many aspects outlined in ordinals, the main sources that document consecration processions from earlier periods. For example, the *Romano-Germanic Pontifical* (*PRG*), of mid-tenth-century Italy, contains a collection of the rites of the bishops and abbots with episcopal privileges. The *PRG* continued to be copied up to the fourteenth century and was widely disseminated throughout the Holy Roman Empire.[38] *Ordo* XL, the most referred to example of the *ordines,* lists thirty-one steps for the rite, many of which are also represented in Durand's *Rationale*, such as the triple circuit around the church with aspersions, the recitation of the antiphon '*Tollite portas'*, and the cross being drawn on the church pavement (Figure 20).

Ordinals provide a good understanding of what was prescribed for the consecration of the church but, as noted earlier, not all dedication rites followed all of these steps, some either changed the number of times an action happened or steps were removed completely.[39] For example, a tenth-century manuscript (Vat. Lat. 4770), has less than half the steps of *Ordo* XL. One of the reasons for the wide variety of rites was that consecration processions, like so many other liturgical events, were altered based on local practices and preferences.[40] Furthermore, the location of the church and its adjacency to other features could alter the liturgy. For instance, if a church was on a hill, circling it might be impossible due to the landscape; or if the church was within

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[37] See also Antonio Sennis, 'Narrating Places: Memory and Space in Medieval Monasteries', in *People and Space in the Middle Ages, 300-1300*, ed. by Wendy Davies and others, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 15 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), p. 289 who looks at the practices of sacralising spaces and how this practice redefines the notion of space by merging time and space.

[38] Hamilton, pp. 14–16.

[39] Birkedal Bruun and Hamilton, p. 182; A study by Hamilton also provides a number of charts for comparison in Hamilton, pp. 27–50.

[40] Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 31.

a monastic complex, it would be difficult to make a full circuit. In addition, consecration processions had a variety of different functions outside of their main aim: to delineate the sacred space of the newly constructed church building from the outer space of the city. They were also used as an opportunity to shape the identity of the community, revitalise the bond between inhabitants of the city, and to condemn violence. These processions also provided a time of reflection for the community since the dedication feasts were particular to each space within a specific city and each year the community was reminded of their support in creating the church by the reading which included a description of the church's construction, the patrons, and any miracles that had occurred since its creation.[41] Since the consecration was specific to the city in which the church was built, bishops took this as an opportunity to discuss the common interests and responsibilities the people had towards the structure and each other. For example, in October 1279, Santa Maria Novella was re-consecrated by Cardinal Latino who used the opportunity to preach about peace in his ongoing effort to heal the city's factional divide.[42] The dedication rite offered a good opportunity for this because the 'Peace of God' (condemning violence against non-combatants) was an important step of the rite.[43] Compagni notes a similar attempt to restore peace in 1301 when Friar Benedetto came in secret to the *signori,* pleading for them to ask the bishop to arrange a procession in order to combat the discord between the White and Black Guelfs.[44] The importance of community in the consecration will be explained further when I consider the baptismal nature of the Earthly Paradise procession and when I discuss the de-consecration of churches.

Consecration ceremonies were also fraught with considerations relating to finance and power, and frequently contested. Benjamin David Brand asserts that 'few if any liturgies communicated the dominion of a local bishop over a

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[41] Hamilton, pp. 65–66, 77.

[42] George W. Dameron, *Episcopal Power and Florentine Society, 1000-1320* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 48; Dino Compagni, *Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence*, trans. by Daniel E. Bornstein (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), Book I.3.

[43] For Dante's engagement with the factionalism of Florence and its relation to the architecture of Florence, see chapter 2.

[44] Compagni, Book II. 13 (p. 43).

church and its relics more than the consecration of that house of worship'.[45] During the rite, the bishop would announce the tithes and oblations necessary to maintain the church, enabling him to procure funds for the church. In addition, the consecration required the translation of a relic into the altar. As a result, the bishop was able to control which relics went to which institution, often taking relics from rural outskirt communities and bringing them into the city.[46] Furthermore, the bishop was responsible for the management of the city's symbolic identity through the movement of relics. An example from eleventh-century Florence illustrates this point: the cult of St Minias was set up by Bishop Ildebrando (1008–1024), supported by Henry II, and the church dedicated to St Minias was re-consecrated in 1018. During the rite, the bishop appointed the abbot and reserved the right for himself and his successors to maintain this privilege. Therefore, the rite allowed the bishop to maintain control of the church and its properties. This control was manifest in the early thirteenth century when the clergy wanted to appoint their own abbot and the bishop excommunicated them.[47] In response to the bishop's control and his connection to Henry II, the reformers of Santa Reparata chose the cult of St Zenobius as opposed to St Minias. By using the deposition of the relic at the consecration procession of 1030, the clergy of Santa Reparata communicated their affiliation with the papacy rather than the emperor.[48] Therefore, one of the additional functions of the dedication rite was to assert power; a theme I will return to when I consider the de-consecration of churches.

There are common themes associated with the dedication procession: community, baptism, and moral change through movement. I will discuss all of these with reference to Dante's Earthly Paradise procession but will first turn our attention to the latter two to understand how the church was transformed into a sacred space through performance of the rite.

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[45] Benjamin David Brand, Holy Treasure and Sacred Song: Relic Cults and their Liturgies in Medieval Tuscany (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 9.

[46] Brand, p. 12.

[47] Brand, pp. 185–91.

[48] Brand, p. 184.

4.3.1 **Sacred Space: Movement and Baptismal Connections**

The combination of movement and ritual actions are both necessary to transform the space into a sacred place. Durand's *Rationale* and *Ordo* XL describe ritual acts that transform the space, such as: various movements, including the triple circuit around the church; speech acts, such as the blessing of water mixed with salt and the recitations of antiphons; the singing of songs such as the litany; and ritual actions such as the sprinkling of Holy Water, striking the door with the bishop's staff, the drawing of a cross on the floor, and anointing twelve crosses on the wall.

In the medieval period, this transformation of the church was compared to the baptismal transformation of the souls of individuals. For example, Durand states that 'Domus igitur dedicanda est, anima sanctificanda' [the house, therefore, must be dedicated, the soul sanctified] (*Rationale*, 1.6.7).[49] This statement implies that the sanctification of the church is also a sanctification of the participants in the rite. One can trace a similar argument in the earlier, French, Ivo of Chartres (*c.*1040–1115), whose *Sermo* 4 of his *De sacramentis dedicationis*, describes a similar connection of the dedication rite and baptism:

> Quoniam ad dedicationem praesentis basilicae hodie devote convenistis, oportet utquod in his sanctis manufactis fieri videtis, totum impletum esse in vobis cognoscatis.[50]
>
> [Since you have come devoutly to the dedication of this basilica today, it is necessary that you understand that what you see done to this saintly man-made [edifice] has all been fulfilled in you.]

Ivo of Chartres, similar to Durand, makes a direct connection between the actions performed in the church and that of the soul, connecting the processional performance to the soul as well as the church structure itself. This connection between baptism of the individual and that of the church is found in many works written by Christian theologians such as Hugh of St Victor and

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[49] This same phrasing is seen in Hugh of St Victor's *The Mystical Mirror of the Church*, ch. II, 239.
[50] Ivo of Chartres, 'Sermo 4', in *PL*, CLXII, COL. 527.

Honorius and even dates to St Augustine, proving its influence and wide-circulation.[51]

One of the primary actions that transformed the church space was the triple aspersion of the church. Durand, for instance, links the triple aspersion of Holy Water during the three circuits of the church to baptism, as a means of transforming the space:

> Manifestum quidem est quod haec aqua, cujus aspersione Ecclesia consecratur, baptismum significat, quia quodammodo ipsa Ecclesia baptizatur; ipsa vero Ecclesia illam utique Ecclesiam designet, quae in ea continetur, scilicet fidelium multitudienem; (*Rationale*, 1.6.9)
>
> [It is manifest indeed that this water, by the aspersion of which a church is consecrated, signifieth Baptism, because in some sort the church itself is baptised; and the church itself assuredly denoteth that Church which is contained in it, namely, the multitude of the Faithful.]

And, again, we see Ivo of Chartres making a similar argument:

> Ista aqua ad quamdam baptismi imaginem gyrando ecclesiam tunc exterius aspergimus, quia ubi more baptizatorum non potest fieri trina mersio, necesse est ut qua possumus sacramenti similitudine trina fiat aspersio.[52]
>
> [We circulate and asperse the church with water on the outside because when there cannot be a triple immersion [of the church] in the same way as of those baptised, it is necessary that there is a triple aspersion so that we can make it resemble the sacrament.]

The connection between the body of the individual and that of the church is once again explicit here and these descriptions explain a key step in the transformation of the church — the triple aspersion of the space performed during the circuits of the church's exterior. [53] By linking this act to baptism, the church, like the individual, is transformed from the profane to the sacred. And we can understand the way in which movement within or around the space

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[51] St Augustine for example writes: 'Tunc autem sermo noster congruus erit, si in se aliquid aedificationis habeat, quod utilitati animarum vestrarum Deo vos interius aedificante proficiat. Quod hic factum corporaliter videmus in parietibus, spiritualiter fiat in mentibus; et quod hic perfectum cernimus in lapidibus et lignis, hoc aedificante gratia Dei perficiatur in corporibus' Augustinus Hipponensis, 'Classis III, *De Sanctis*, Sermo Cccxxxvi, In *Dedicatione Ecclesiae*, I, Cap. VI', in *PL*, XXXVIII, COLS. 1475 See also Hugh of St Victor's *De sacramentis* II .5.1, PL 176:439. 201; Honorious Augustodunensis, 'Gemma animae', in *PL*, 172, cols. 590D. See also Margot Elsbeth Fassler, *The Virgin of Chartres: Making History Through Liturgy and the Arts* (Yale University Press, 2010) for a description of the connection between consecration and baptism drawn from Genesis 28.

[52] Ivo of Chartres, CLXII, COL. 527.

[53] Bowen, p. 472; Ivo of Chartres, CLXII, COL. 527; Hugh of St Victor, 'De sacramentis Christianae fidei', in *PL*, CLXXVI, COL. 439.

combined with other ritual acts, manifests change, which is a main theme within this thesis. I will now analyse some processional moments within Dante's poem that use this same concept of movement to facilitate change.

4.4 Movement and Procession in the *Commedia*

Processional movement — or, at least, movement that recalls processions — occurs throughout the *Commedia*. One example of this is the repetition of circuits.[54] As noted above, in consecration processions, three circuits were traced around the church. This movement combined with other processional acts has a transformative effect on the architectural space, changing it into a sacred space. Furthermore, as noted earlier, this transformative effect was not restricted to the building itself, the participants could also be transformed in a similar way to how they are transformed at baptism. Dante plays with the idea of the architectural spaces of the afterlife shaping and transforming the participants.

In some circles of Hell, the sinners' movement through space enables the punishment to occur. This play with movement enables the reader to consider how the architectural space influences the punishment of sinners in different circles. One example of this takes place in the fourth *bolgia* of *Malebolge*. Here, Dante calls to mind the model of procession through the soothsayers' movement:

> […] e vidi gente per lo vallon tondo
> venir, tacendo e lagrimando, al passo
> che fanno le letane in questo mondo. (*Inf.*, XX, 7–9)
>
> [I saw people coming along the curving valley, silent and shedding tears, at the pace taken by litanies in this world.]

The soothsayers walk at a slow pace, weeping in silence. Dante is specific about their pace — it is the pace of a litany procession in which the participants walk very slowly begging God and the saints for help. Dante's choice of a litany procession as punishment is ironic, given that the soothsayers are being punished because they saw the future as predetermined, making their prayers

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54 For a similar consideration see Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy*.

superfluous. This irony is given greater weight, here in Hell, because help will never be provided and also because the litany implies an acknowledgement of sin, an act that these souls have not performed, because if they had done so on Earth, they would be in Purgatory.

But the movement itself is also important. The reader knows that each *bolgia* forms a moat in the shape of a circle (*Inf.* XVIII, 1–26). In this canto, Dante reinforces the circular character of the *bolgia* by describing it as 'tondo'. The circular shape of the space makes the procession's movement superfluous, just like their pleas to God for help. There is no beginning or end to their procession. The circular movement, for earthly consecration processions, combined with other performative actions such as the songs and prayers of the participants, changed it into a sacred space, but here there is no transformation on the part of the sinners or the space, everything remains unchanged. There is no beginning or end here, the alpha and omega traced on the floor during consecration processions is not found, similar to how we will see it found in the Earthly Paradise procession, where the beginning and end are emphatic since the procession documents all of history. In Hell, this movement will continue forever yet no change will occur. Therefore, the circular movement of the soothsayers in a procession is not only ironic but if we compare it to the other circular movements within the poem and consecration processions, the movement plays with the contrast of static versus active because even though the sinners are moving, they remain unchanged.

Movement is different in Purgatory because it implies a transition of the souls' morality and a movement towards God. Many of the souls in Purgatory are in motion, even though it can be very slow, such as the almost stationary proud who are similar to corbels. And ultimately, (even if the purgation we witness is static, such as in the case of the avaricious) they are all in movement upwards towards Heaven. It might have been precisely to underline this that it is after witnessing this most static punishment that Dante shows us the 'release' of a soul (Statius) as if to show that even lying face down, when properly morally configured, is progress of sorts. This movement enables the souls to purge their

sin.[55] They remain on each terrace for a period of time but are then able to move to the next terrace, slowly moving upwards to the top of the mountain for their final ascension into Paradise. Therefore, the souls in Purgatory are able to move in order to facilitate their transformation, an option not available to those who will remain in Hell for eternity. The use of movement in Purgatory is quite different in Dante's poem to other models of Purgatory, which are almost always static and focus on the need for prayer by the living for change to occur.[56] Dante's Purgatory poses questions, such as, how to make people ready for Paradise? Therefore, it is not just an inert space where souls suffer until their time there is finished; they make themselves holy through their interaction with the space and their movement through it. This is also linked to the idea discussed in chapter 3 where the cloister was used as a space in which you move through it in order to learn. In Purgatory, it is the combination of movement and learning which leads to spiritual change within the souls.

One example of movement that reflects processions is on the terrace of gluttony where the sinners are heard by Dante-*personaggio* weeping and singing and are compared to pilgrims walking along a road:

> "O dolce padre, che è quel ch'i' odo?"
> comincia' io; ed elli: "Ombre che vanno
> forse di lor dover solvendo il nodo."
> Sì come i peregrin pensosi fanno,
> giugnendo per cammin gente non nota,
> che si volgono ad essa e non restanno:
> così di retro a noi, più tosto mota,
> venendo e trapassando ci ammirava
> d'anime turba tacita e devota. (*Purg.*, XXIII, 13–21)
>
> ["Oh sweet father, what is that I hear?" I began; and he: "Shades who perhaps go untying the knot of their debt." As care-filled pilgrims do, overtaking on the road people they do not know and turning towards them, but not stopping: So from behind us, walking more quickly, a crowd of silent and devout souls, overtaking us and passing on, gazed wonderingly at us.]

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[55] For an argument on Dante's use of movement as innovative to ideas of Purgatory see Treherne, 'Liturgical Personhood: Creation, Penitence, and Praise in the *Commedia*', p. 132.

[56] Alison Morgan, *Dante and the Medieval Other World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 146.

In this explanation, Dante repeatedly calls attention to their movement: 'giungnendo per cammin', 'non restanno', 'più tosto mota', 'venendo e trapassando'. The use of the gerund here emphasises the continuous quality of their movement. Their movement is also linked specifically to their moral progress: their haste emphasises their devoutness. Here the souls are moving so quickly that they pass Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil, very different to the slow procession of *Inferno* XX and to *Inferno* XXIX of course, where the souls are static and Dante and Virgil are moving. Furthermore, the multitude is 'tacita e devota', these characteristics and their movement present them in the process of cleansing themselves in the hopes of a transformation.[57]

Similar to the soothsayers, these souls also move in a circular pattern and their pain is renewed by a fragrant tree that they pass with each circuit, creating a desire for food and drink (ll. 67–71). This circular movement does not lead immediately to the transformation, but progress is promised by each circuit completed. Therefore, the reader is provided with the opportunity to compare the circular movements in Hell and Purgatory to understand what distinguishes these types of movement apart from the area in which they take place. This is very different, not only to Hell, but to Ante-Purgatory as well: later in this canto, it is noted that Ante-Purgatory is the place 'where they repay time for time' [dove tempo per tempo si ristora] (*Purg*., XXIII, 84). Treherne notes that it is this difference between these two spaces, where Ante-Purgatory is static while Purgatory-proper is active and emphasises movement through liturgical practices, that ultimately leads to moral change within each soul.[58] He argues that the repetition of prayer, and I would add, the repetition of circular movement, transforms the habit associated with a vice of the soul into a new virtuous habit.[59]

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[57] See Phillips-Robins for her argument on this canto and its purgative process through prayer and movement as a form of 'imitatio christi', pp. 58–72.

[58] Treherne, 'Liturgical Personhood: Creation, Penitence, and Praise in the *Commedia*', p. 133. For other scholars considering the moral change in the souls of Purgatory see Teodolinda Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy: Detheologizing Dante* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 99–121; Marc Cogan, *The Design in the Wax the Structure of the Divine Comedy and Its Meaning* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp. 77– 147; Manuele Gragnolati, *Experiencing the Afterlife* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), pp. 109– 37.

[59] Treherne, 'Liturgical Personhood: Creation, Penitence, and Praise in the *Commedia*', p. 135.

Another example is on the terrace of gluttony, where circular movement is combined with performative acts that imbue the movement with significance, similar to that of consecration processions. For example, the crowd of sinners is first heard, not seen, 'piangere e cantar […] "Labïa mëa, Domine,"' [weeping and singing "Labia mea, Domine,"] (ll. 10–12). The crowd sings verse 17 of psalm 50 [51]:[60]

> Domine, labia mea
> aperies, et os meum
> annuntiabit laudem tuam.
> [O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.]

Phillips-Robins notes that the 'opening words are reversed so that the relevance of the chant to their particular sin is immediately apparent'.[61] The psalm they recite explicitly references the need to show God praise through song, a performance the sinners on this terrace continually enact. Psalm 50 [51] also references the acknowledgement of sin and the need to be cleansed of sin through the use of hyssop, a plant also used during the consecration procession as a cleansing device (verses 2–8) (Durand, *Rationale*, 1.6.6). Therefore, the gluttons on this terrace acknowledge their error, unlike those in Hell, and the gluttons use performative actions in order to facilitate their transformation. Furthermore, the tree that the gluttons pass with each circuit performs a type of aspersion with the water that sprinkles from it, cleansing the souls (ll. 67–69). Similar performative actions occur on the terrace of avarice when the sinners prostrate themselves, weeping and reciting verse 25 of psalm 118 [119] (*Purg.*, XIX, 70–73).[62] The recitation of psalms, combined with actions, become active agents in moving souls further up the mountain, facilitating their transformation.

If we consider the movement of the souls in this canto in light of the use of consecration processions to create peace amongst the people of the city and promote communal identity, we can further understand the movement of the souls. The souls work together, in a community, to advance their movement and

[60] I use the psalm numbering of the Vulgate with the alternative number given in brackets.
[61] Phillips-Robins, p. 58.
[62] Treherne links this to the detachment needed from earthly goods in order to enact change in 'Liturgical Personhood: Creation, Penitence, and Praise in the *Commedia*', pp. 134–35.

by doing so, they purge themselves of their sins. If a participant during a consecration procession heeded the words of the bishop and turned to charity and peace, their movement within the procession, and the bishop's words could also lead to a transformation of their soul. Furthermore, the transformative effect is similar to those described by Durand, Abbot Suger, and Ivo of Chartres, where the church, along with the soul, is transformed. More specifically, in the case of Mount Purgatory, the souls are morally transformed as they progress upwards.

The importance of movement is made at the end of this canto where Dante-*personaggio* explains his journey with Virgil:

> […] "Costui per la profonda
> notte menato m'ha d'i veri morti
> con questa vera carne che 'l seconda.
> Indi m'han tratto sù li suoi conforti,
> salendo e rigirando la montagna
> che drizza voi che 'l mondo fece torti." (*Purg.*, XXIII, 121–26)
> [He has led me through the deep night of those truly dead with
> this true flesh of mine that follows him. From there his strengthenings have drawn me up, climbing and circling about the mountain that straightens you whom the world twisted.]

The climbing and circling that Dante-*personaggio* performs is also performed by the sinners of the realm of Purgatory and their movement straightens their twisted souls, creating a moral change similarly represented by the straightening of the Florentine streets described in chapter 2, whereas the twisted bodies of the soothsayers will remain the same for eternity. When we compare the processional movements in *Inferno* to those of *Purgatorio*, we see that movement is very different in each, although many of its features are the same. In Purgatory, circular movement is combined with processional actions, such as an acknowledgement of sin, the recitation of psalms, and aspersions through the spray of the tree, and these actions facilitate moral transformations. Therefore, the processional actions and movements in Purgatory help the sinners in their transformation, similar to a consecration procession that transforms its participants and the church into something sacred. In Hell, on the other hand, there is no transformation on the part of the sinners or the space, everything remains unchanged. Therefore, circular movement is employed in both Hell and Purgatory in order to teach the reader the importance of

processional movement but also the necessity of the performer to have the right intention towards their movement and that ritual actions are also required. Anyone could circle a building three times without enacting a transformation, therefore, Dante calls on the necessity for a community of devote individuals to perform repeated movements in combination with other ritual markers and their attention on God, in order to facilitate change. The processional movement within Purgatory is similar to the circuits traced around the church because, though the sinners need to circle the terraces multiple times, they are promised entry into the church eventually, just as those on Earth enter the church after the three circuits and aspersions.

I will now turn to the Earthly Paradise procession and analyse it through the lens of consecration processions.

4.5 Dante's Earthly Paradise Procession (*Purg*., XXIX–XXXIII)

The procession begins in canto XXIX, shortly after Dante-*personaggio* arrives in the Earthly Paradise (XXVIII) and continues until the end of *Purgatorio* (XXXIII). Dante-*personaggio* sees seven lights in the distance, moving toward him, Statius, and Virgil. Following the lights are twenty-four elders and four animals; between these four animals is a triumphal chariot pulled by a gryphon. Near the right wheel of the chariot are three ladies dancing in a circle; near the left wheel are four other ladies singing. The chariot is followed by two old men, four humble men, and at the end is an old man. A peal of thunder is heard when the chariot is in front of Dante and the procession comes to a halt (*Purg.,* XXIX, 61–154). Beatrice appears and rebukes Dante for abandoning her after her death (*Purg*., XXX–XXXI). This rebuke facilitates a confession from Dante and he passes through the river Lethe to join the processional space (*Purg*., XXXI). The chariot is attached to the Tree of Knowledge by the gryphon and transformations of both the Tree and the chariot occur (*Purg.,* XXXII).

As noted previously, movement in Purgatory is linked to moral progression by its combination with other performative actions. Dante's description of the procession in the Earthly Paradise also produces this combination with psalms being recited (*Purg*., XXIX, 3; XXX, 19; 83–84; XXXI, 98; XXXIII, 1), songs being sung (*Purg*., XXX, 11), and the movement of the procession. These acts draw human beings into interaction with architectural

space. Matelda introduces the procession by reciting the first line of psalm 31 [32] (*Purg*., XXIX, 1–3):

> Beati quorum remissae sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt peccata. […] Delictum meum cognitum tibi feci, et injustitiam meam non abscondi. Dixi: Confitebor adversum me injustitiam meam Domino; et tu remisisti impietatem peccati mei. (1–5)
>
> [Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid, I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.]

This psalm recalls the terrace of gluttony in that the movements of Matelda and Dante-*personaggio* are accompanied by a psalm that identifies the acknowledgment of sin — a necessary step to forgiveness. It also foreshadows Dante-*personaggio*'s confession and new baptism, which is accompanied by another reference to psalm 50 [51], which was recited on the terrace of gluttony.[63] I will return to this when I discuss the role of baptism in consecration processions. But as these examples demonstrate, the Earthly Paradise procession combines movement and performative acts, similar to those found earlier in the poem, and to processions generally.

4.5.1 **Community-Building in Dante's Purgatory**

Community building is integral to Dante's Purgatory as a step towards the communal nature of Paradise, some examples being the recitation of the Paternoster of the proud or the lustful moving in unison together (*Purg*., XI 22–24; XXVI, 31–33).[64] Processions, by necessity, are a communal act.[65] Consecration processions go a step beyond this by creating a link between the current church community and all of the Church communities throughout history. This typological understanding was common throughout the medieval period where a relationship is produced by the anti-type and type; the promise and the fulfilment. The most common example is the Old Testament being a prefiguration of the New Testament but, for our purposes, I will consider the link

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[63] See Erminia Ardissino, 'I canti liturgici nel Purgatorio dantesco', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 108, 1990, 39–65 (p. 58) for an explanation of how this psalm is associated with penitence and a return to a state of grace.

[64] Phillips-Robins, p. 29. See also the introduction to *Purgatorio* in Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*, trans. by Robin Kirkpatrick (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2008).

[65] See Phillips-Robins, p. 32 who also notes the communal nature of processions.

between the first church and the Heavenly Jerusalem. For instance, dedication rites included a lesson concerning Solomon's dedication of the first temple (1 Kings 7–8; 2 Chron. 6), as is seen in Durand's *Rationale*: 'Ab utroque vero, scilicet a tabernaculo et a temple, nostra materialis Ecclesia formam sumpsit' [From both of these, namely, from the Tabernacle and the Temple, doth our material church take its form] (1.1.5).[66] This connection of the current church to the first church, brings the current church into the community of all churches throughout time. Furthermore, an anagogical understanding is represented in the concept of the current church that is begun on Earth and is fulfilled in Heaven (1 Cor. 15: 55–57; Revelation 21), indicated by the hymn "Urbs beata Ierusalem":[67]

> Urbs beata Ierusalem dicta pacis visio,
> quae construitur in coelis vivis ex lapidibus,
> et angelis coronata ut sponsata comite.
> […]
> Hoc in templo, summe Deus, exoratus adveni
> et clementi bonitate precum vota suscipe,
> largam benedictionem hic infunde iugiter.
> hic promereantur omnes petita adquirere
> et adepta possidere cum sanctis perenniter,
> paradisum introire translati in requiem.
> [O blessed city of Jerusalem, called a vision of peace
> Which is built in Heaven from living stones
> And crowned by angels like a bride-to-be by her attendant.
> O God on High, come into this temple whither we entreat thee
> And with merciful goodness receive our solemn prayers
> Pour ceaselessly out thy plentiful blessings.
> Here, may all deserve to find what they seek
> And to keep what they have found forever with the saints.
> Let all here earn entry into paradise when they are laid to rest.]

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[66] Works that also connect church consecration with Solomon's temple are Durand, *Rationale*, 1.6.2; Peter Damian's *Sermo* 72.9, *PL* 144:910; Isidore of Seville's *De origine officiorum* 36.1, *PL* 83:771; Ivo of Chartres' *Decretum* 3:24, *PL* 161:204; Hilary of Poitiers' *De dedicatione ecclesiae*, *PL* 10:881–83; Bede, *Homilia* 21,PL 94:247–8; *Homilia* 45, *PL* 94:434.

[67] The *Ritus* indicates this hymn was sung during the office of the dedication of the Baptistery: Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 249.

This hymn, sung during consecration processions, describes the living stones of the church as representations of both the Church Militant on Earth and the Church Triumphant in Heaven.[68] Thus, the current church was connected to the first church, Solomon's Temple, and to the Heavenly Jerusalem at the end of time.[69] The Earthly Paradise itself is also understood traditionally as a 'type' of the Heavenly Jerusalem.[70]

Another symbol of community formed across time occurred when the bishop traced a cross on the floor and wrote within it the letters of the Greek and Latin alphabets (steps 7 and 12 of *Ordo* XL).[71] Durand explains that the symbolism of the alphabet and cross is threefold: 1) it represents the union of the faithful; 2) it represents the pages of the Old and New Testaments, the former being fulfilled in the latter; and 3) it represents the articles of faith (*Rationale*, 1.6.20). Durand's symbolism is important because the letters unite all of the faithful from the beginning of time to the end. Similar connections are found with the tracing of the cross and drawing of the alphabet which recall Revelation 21:6: '[…] ego sum Alpha et Omega initium et finis […]' [I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end]. Further afield, we find Ivo of Chartres making a similar connection in his sermon by referring to the episcopal

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68 Chydenius, p. 73.

69 Stookey, p. 36. See also Chydenius, p. 69 who considers the hymn in relation to the four-fold allegorical interpretation of Dante's *Commedia*. In addition, see Fassler, p. 173 who notes that the church structure was symbolically linked to the temple of Jerusalem during the dedication as well as the anniversary service.

70 Anderson also notes that the circular glade of Earthly Paradise represents Jerusalem as it was represented on maps, arguing that the Earthly Paradise is a type or figure of Jerusalem, pp. 367–68. Chydenius, pp. 109, 75 Also see p. 137 for his typological reading of Beatrice; Stijn Bossuyt, 'The Liturgical Use of Space in Thirteenth-Century Flanders', in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sarah Hamilton and Andrew Spicer (Aldershot: Ashgate Publications, 2006), pp. 187–206 (pp. 3–10). He focuses on processional culture in the Low Countries but his work is informative because he argues that the study of the *Liber Ordinarii* reveal 4 functions of the liturgical use of space: 1] to confirm and reassert the sanctity of sacred space; 2) to sanctify profane space with processions; 3] to assert the pastoral function of space (ie. to strengthen a message for the audience]; 4) to re-enact the past through plays and performances (merging the past, present, and future). These concepts are also present in Dante's procession in Earthly Paradise.

71 *Pontificale Romanum Clementis VIII ac Urbani VIII* (Rome: Typis S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1849), pp. 196–200. See also Bowen, p. 475.

staff used to write the alphabet as a symbol for the end of the world and the writing itself as a symbol for the beginning of time.[72]

As noted in Alessandro Vellutello's 1544 commentary, in Dante, a similar cross pattern is traced by the order of the procession and the way that they move and thus, the procession produces the books of the Bible in a spatial context of a church: the Old Testament figures represent the bottom of the cross (the nave of the church); the New Testament figures represent the top of the cross (the quire); and the gryphon and chariot represent the crossbeam (the transept) (*Purg*. XXIX, 82–154).[73] Though the alphabet is not written, Durand's first and second meaning are still present here as all of salvation history is represented by the Old Testament and New Testament figures represented in human and animal forms. The cross shape is also created spatially with the rivers of the Earthly Paradise where the Ebro and Ganges are 90 degrees from the axis running from Jerusalem to the Earthly Paradise. This spatial cross 'embraces all of earthly space […] but also human time'.[74] Furthermore, Dante's procession evokes the beginning of time by his reference to 'l'ardimento d'Eva' [the boldness of Eve], the procession murmuring the word 'Adam', and the fact that the procession takes place in the Earthly Paradise itself (*Purg*., XXIX, 24; XXXII, 37). Dante represents the end of time with his references to Ezekiel and Revelation as well (*Purg*., XXIX, 100–05). The *Ritus* ordinal from Santa Reparata includes a description of the Mass for the consecration rite. One of the Epistles quotes Revelation 21:1–6 and describes John who sees new Jerusalem and is instructed to write down what he sees.[75] Similar to John, Dante-*personaggio* is instructed to write down the prophecy that Beatrice tells

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[72] Ivo of Chartres, 'Sermo 4', in *PL*, CLXII col. 530–31.

[73] Dante Alighieri, *La Comedia di Dante Aligieri, con la noua espositione di Alessandro Vellutello. [With woodcuts.]* (Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1544) (*Purg*., XXIX, 151-154): 'Hora, se noi habbiamo ben notato, il poeta ha descritto questa nuova chiesa in forma di croce e volta ad occidente, come tutte s'usano costruere, perchè ha posto prima e sette candelabri, che fanno il piede di quella; poi XXIIII seniori a due a due, che fanno il resto del primo legno fino a l'altro che s'incrocia, e qui ha posto in luogo di essa incrociatura il nodo, ciò è, il carro tirato dal grifone in mezo a quattro animali, et in luogo de la parte destra del legno che s'incrocia ha posto le tre; et in luogo de la sinistra le quattro donne in giro; poi in luogo de la parte di sopra ha posto i sette habituati col primaio stuolo. E ciò che tutte queste cose hanno a significare, l'habbiamo veduto di sopra'. See also Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View', p. 231.

[74] Treherne, 'Liturgy, Time, and the Music of Incarnation in the *Commedia*', V, pp. 75–76.

[75] Stookey, p. 35: fol. 97.

him (*Purg.*, XXXII, 103–05; XXXIII, 55–81). These references to the history of the world create a link between Dante's procession and consecration processions. This is important because with the procession in the Earthly Paradise Dante represents the ideal Church, created by the figures of the procession and links it to the Heavenly Jerusalem.[76] In this performative act Dante is describing the Church as it should be, a place of community, and yet he also describes the Church as it is with the transformation of the chariot, which I will return to later. For now, I will focus on the importance of how the community in both consecration processions and Dante's procession form the fabric of the church.

The figures represented in Dante's procession and the cross shape that they create can also be understood through an allegorical interpretation also applied to consecration processions: the community of participants become the living stones of the church (Matthew 16:18).[77] To understand this further, I will turn to two of many episodes within the Bible to explain this strange simile of a person as a stone:

> Ergo jam non estis hospites, et advenae: sed estis cives sanctorum, et domestici Dei,superaedificati super fundamentum apostolorum, et prophetarum, ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Jesu: in quo omnis aedificatio constructa crescit in templum sanctum in Domino, in quo et vos coaedificamini in habitaculum Dei in Spiritu. (Ephesians 2:19–22)[78]
>
> [Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit.]
>
> Ad quem accedentes lapidem vivum, ab hominibus quidem reprobatum, a Deo autem electum, et honorificatum: et ipsi tamquam lapides vivi superaedificamini, domus spiritualis, sacerdotium sanctum, offerre spirituales hostias, acceptabiles Deo per Jesum Christum. (1 Peter 2:4–5)
>
> [Unto whom coming, as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen and made honourable by God: Be you also as living stones built up,

[76] For a similar argument about the procession representing the ideal Church see Ciotti, 'Processione Mistica', in *ED*.

[77] See for example Durand, *Rationale*, 1.1.17; Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 10.3; Hilary of Poitiers, *De dedicatione ecclesiae*, *PL* 10:881; Bede, *Homilia* 21, *PL* 94:248; *Homilia* 45, *PL* 94:434; Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 18.48; Hrabanus Maurus, *De universo* 14.23, *PL* 111:401; Bruno of Segni, *Expositio in Exodum* 26, *PL* 164:318; Hugh of St Victor, *De sacramentis* II.5.1, *PL* 176:439.

[78] For similar references see: Matthew 18:17, Psalm 118:22–23; 1 Corinthians 3:9–12, 17.

> a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.]

These examples demonstrate that it is not only St Peter, but also Christ, the Apostles, and the community of God, that represent the living stones of the church. St Peter is the foundation stone, but other stones are needed to build the church — a community is needed. This connection is also made with the hymn 'Urbs beata Ierusalem', noted earlier, which also refers to the community of the Heavenly Jerusalem as 'built in Heaven out of living stone'.

This allegorical explanation is found in Durand when he compares the different architectural features of the church to the section of the community that they symbolise: the laity are represented in the nave, the clergy in the quire, Christ at the altar, the priest in the sanctuary, hermits in the crypt, the saints form the columns, and the corner posts are the virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance (*Rationale*, 1.1.15–1.1.19). Examples of this type of reading continued throughout the medieval period and circulated widely, appearing in areas unconnected to medieval Italy. For example, a thirteenth-century Norse homily describes the entire church community across time being represented in the architecture of the church: the quire holds those who are already with God and the nave holds those still on Earth. It also describes the altar as Christ and the floorboards as the humble and continues on in like manner for a variety of other architectural features in the church.[79] These examples demonstrate the widespread influence of this allegorical interpretation of the church being built by the people of the community.

One may think it odd that a consecration procession could be a model for Dante's procession since there is no building to speak of in the Earthly Paradise. However, as Durand, the hymn, and the Norse homily demonstrate, while the church was a physical building, it was created by and symbolised the community. Therefore, Dante builds the church structure, similar to these examples, not with bricks and mortar, but with the living stones, where all of the key figures that make up the church are represented. Dante foreshadows this

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[79] Birkedal Bruun and Hamilton, p. 193. Turville-Petre's English translation is published in 'The Old Norse Homily', 206–18, at 215–18.

idea in *Purgatorio* X–XII where the souls of the proud form the corbels of the church, similar to Durand's saints who form the columns. He also recalls this idea in *Paradiso* XXIII, 73–75, according to Vittorio Montemaggi, where the members of the church are depicted as part of Christ's body.[80] The community that Dante-*personaggio* sees in the Earthly Paradise is not an earthly one but a hybrid community of magnificent splendour whose members are 'coronati […] di fiordaliso' [crowned with lilies], and wings with 'le penne piene d'occhi' [feathers full of eyes], followed by a 'trïunfale carro' [triumphal chariot], pulled by a gryphon whose limbs are covered in 'oro' [gold] and 'bianche […] di vermiglio miste' [white mixed with vermillion] (*Purg.,* XXIX, 84, 95, 106–14). Therefore, Dante's procession brings the metaphors of Durand and the others to life, representing the different figures of the community, such as Christ and the virtues, in fantastical human and animal forms. Thus, the procession that happens in the Earthly Paradise is a 'type' of what will occur in the Heavenly Jerusalem.[81] It is an ideal representation of the potential of the Church as an institution. Furthermore, by creating a cross shape with the figures, Dante draws on this allegorical interpretation of the church as a community of living stones and represents them similar to the Norse homily and Durand, where Christ is at the centre — where the altar would be, the Old Testament is in the nave, and the New Testament is in the quire, the four corners are also represented by the virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance who circle the left wheel. Therefore, it is the figures — the community — in the Earthly Paradise that produce the church.

4.5.2 **Movement as Moral Change in the Earthly Paradise Procession**

Movement was also an important aspect of consecration processions and is reflected in Dante's procession. For example, the seven candelabra in Dante's procession refer to Revelation 1:12 and represent the seven gifts of the Holy

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[80] Vittorio Montemaggi, '"La rosa in che il verbo divino carne si fece": Human Bodies and Truth in the Poetic Narrative of the *Commedia*', in *Dante and the Human Body Eight Essays*, ed. by John C. Barnes and Jennifer Petrie (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp. 159–94 (pp. 183–84).

[81] Chydenius, p. 146.

Spirit.[82] In consecration processions, it was not only the church's exterior that was circled but also the altar which was circled seven times by the bishop and seven candelabra were lit to signify these gifts (*Rationale*, 1.1.41; step 10 of *Ordo* XL).[83]

The Earthly Paradise procession also plays with movement in its emphasis on a contrast of static and active, similar to that found in *Inferno*, where in some circles the sinners move as a form of torture and in others, they are frozen or stuck as punishment (*Inf.,* XXXIV), and also similar to *Purgatorio* where movement, combined with other performative acts, produces moral change. In the Earthly Paradise Dante emphasises the dynamic nature of his procession in contrast to the static nature of John's vision in Revelation 21.

In canto XXIX, Dante begins his *terzine* with adverbs such as 'indi' [thence], 'poi' [then], and 'poscia' [after], as well as phrases including 'dinanzi a noi' [ahead of us], 'poco più oltre' [a little further on], 'di sopra' [overhead], and 'dal sinistro fianco' [on the left] (ll. 58, 142, 88, 34, 43, 52, 67 and 130). The use of these adverbs of time and phrases of place, combined with the other indications of movement listed above, create a sequence of events very different from John's static representation of the Heavenly Jerusalem in Revelation 21. Although John's vision descends from Heaven to the top of Mount Purgatory, Christ sits on a throne with a crowd placed around him such as in a stadium,[84] very similar to Dante's Empyrean in *Paradiso* where the souls of the Elect sit in the tiers of an amphitheatre, an example of the perfect stasis of contemplation achieved in the Empyrean but not yet achievable in the Earthly Paradise (*Par.*, XXX, 111–17). In contrast, Dante's procession emphasises its dynamic movement through its contrast of static and active moments in order to provide Dante-*personaggio* and the reader with a lesson about morality.

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[82] See note on lines 43–81 for the candelabra as representation of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and referencing Revelation in Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 2: Purgatorio*, trans. by Robert M. Durling Robert M. Durling with notes by Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 505.

[83] Bowen, pp. 476, 479.

[84] Revelation 4:2–5.

Canto XXX has a focus on stasis, opening with the entire procession stopping in the cruciform pattern and turning towards the chariot (ll. 7–9). This halt, followed by a turn towards the centre, increases anticipation. It is emphasised by the empty chariot and the fact that Beatrice does not appear until line 31, the moment the reader and Dante-*personaggio* have been waiting for since canto XXVIII when Dante-*personaggio* enters the Earthly Paradise (if not since *Inferno* III). But this stasis contrasted with the movement of the procession also has a moral lesson. For example, when the angels sing the second to the ninth verse lines of psalm 30 [31]: "*In te, Domine, speravi*," | ma oltre "*pedes meos*" *non passaro* (*Purg*., XXX, 83-–84).[85] The fact that the angels stop singing even though there are sixteen more verses and stop with the mention of 'static feet', emphasises the static quality of the procession as a whole at this moment. When we consider the pause in the singing of psalm 30 [31] with Beatrice's rebuke to Dante, we begin to see how movement or lack thereof is connected to morality. Beatrice states:

> 'Alcun tempo il sostenni col mio volto:
> mostrando li occhi giovanetti a lui,
> meco il menava in dritta parte vòlto. […]' (*Purg*., XXX, 121–23)
> [For a time I sustained him with my countenance: showing him my youthful eyes, I led him with me, turned in the right direction.]

Beatrice explains, through spatial terms that focus on movement, Dante-*personaggio*'s moral journey through life. When she was alive, he followed her but after she died 'volse i passi suoi per via non vera, […] [he turned his steps along a way not true] (*Purg*., XXX, 130). This is an example of many references to movement having the ability to play a part in moral change — the very lesson Dante-*personaggio* learned through the movement of souls on Mount Purgatory before he entered the Earthly Paradise, and of course represented at the very beginning of Dante's journey when 'la diritta via era smarrita' [the straight way was lost] (*Inf*., I, 3). The angels stop singing psalm 30 [31] at the point in the psalm where David begins to ask for God's help because he has erred in his ways. This is similar to Dante who turned from the right way (the direction of

[85] See Phillips-Robins, pp. 90–93 for a reading of this psalm in the context of intercessory prayer and ideas of community.

Beatrice) to 'a way not true' and he, similar to David, needs to ask for God's assistance through his confession. When Dante-*personaggio* is finally able to speak, and thus confess, he returns to the language of movement that Beatrice used in canto XXX:

> […] "Le presenti cose
> col falso lor piacer volser miei passi
> tosto che 'l vostro viso si nascose." (*Purg*., XXXI, 34–36)
> ["Present things with their false pleasure turned my steps as soon as your face was hidden."]

Dante-*personaggio* here repeats the spatial and dynamic qualities of his moral turn away from Beatrice and thus the right path. Therefore, Dante, similar to the movement in Hell and Purgatory discussed above, emphasises that though movement can facilitate moral change, it can also lead one in the wrong direction, movement in and of itself is not a guarantee of salvation. Dante-*personaggio* needs to move in the correct way in order to produce a transformation. The contrast of static and active emphasises the liminal nature of the Earthly Paradise. Dante-*personaggio* is still able to change, whereas the static representation found in Revelation 21, as in the Empyrean, occurs at the end of time, when there is no opportunity to change. Here, for Dante-*personaggio* and the reader, the laws of nature still apply and therefore both have the ability to change.

Movement in consecration processions also produced a boundary between the sacred inner space of the church and the outer profane space of the city. In Dante's procession, a similar marking is created to differentiate the space of the procession and the space that Dante-*personaggio* occupies. At this point Dante-*personaggio* is divided from Matelda and the procession by the river Lethe:

> Quand' io da la mia riva ebbi tal posta
> che solo il fiume mi facea distante, […] (*Purg*., XXIX, 70–71)
> [When I was so placed on my bank that only the river separated me from them,]

This calls attention to the fact that Dante-*personaggio* is not able to enter the space, similar to the laity's restrictions in the church where they cannot enter the sanctuary. However, he is able to observe and move along with the procession from the outer profane space (*Purg*., XXIX, 7–9). He also tells the

reader the direction he is facing — the east (*Purg.*, XXIX, 12) — the ideal direction for a church to face and the direction in which worshippers and the priest would face during the Mass. By referencing the river, Dante evokes the earthly consecration procession and its ability to mark the boundaries between the sacred and profane.

Dante-*personaggio*'s position on the threshold of the river is another example of the moral transformation that is needed to cross the boundary. Canto XXXI opens with Beatrice saying:

> "O tu che se' di là dal fiume sacro, […]
> Dì, dì se questo è vero: a tanta accusa
> tua confession conviene esser congiunta." (*Purg.*, XXXI, 1–6)
>
> ["O you who are beyond the sacred river say, say if this is true: to so great an accusation your confession must be joined]

Dante-*personaggio* must confess before he can cross the river and enter the sacred space of the procession. The moral boundaries are emphasised when Beatrice asks:

> […] "quai fossi attraversati o quai catene
> trovasti, per che del passare innanzi
> dovessiti così spogliar la spene?" (*Purg.*, XXXI, 25–27)
>
> ["what ditches across your way, or what chains did you find, that you should so strip yourself of the hope of passing beyond them?"]

The repetition of boundaries signals Dante-*personaggio*'s position within the poem and builds anticipation towards his transformation. Therefore, by placing his procession at the top of Mount Purgatory, Dante locates it at the threshold of Heaven and Earth, the threshold of the immaterial and material. This is emphasised by the repetition of thresholds — one when Beatrice is describing her death (*Purg.*, XXX, 124), one when she crosses into the threshold of the dead to summon Virgil in Limbo (*Purg.*, XXX, 139), and finally we are reminded twice of the threshold that is dividing Dante-*personaggio* from the procession, the river (*Purg.*, XXX, 66 and *Purg.*, XXXI, 1).

This threshold indicates that the space of the Earthly Paradise is liminal in its divinity and earthly nature. In contrast, in the Empyrean the laws of nature

do not apply to the elect who reside there.[86] This liminality is important because it signifies Dante-*personaggio*'s position within the poem. Abbot Suger recalls this liminality when he meditates on the sanctification of the church:

> Unde, cum ex dilectione decoris domus Dei aliqunado multicolor, gemmarum speciositas ab extinsecis me curis devocaret, sanctarum etiam diversitatem virtutum, de materialibus ad immaterialia transferendo, honesta meditatio insistere persuaderet, videor videre me quasi sub aliqua extranea orbis terrarum plaga, quae nec tota sit in terrarum faece nec tota in coeli puritate, demorari, ab hac etiam inferiori ad illam superiorem angogico more Deo donante posse transferri. [87]
>
> [Thus, when — out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God — the loveliness of the many-colored gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy meditation has induced me to reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial, on the diversity of the sacred virtues: then it seems to me that I see myself dwelling, as it were, in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven.]

Abbot Suger hoped that St Denis would become a vessel for movement from the earthly life to spiritual life, a vessel that takes him to a place very similar to the Earthly Paradise in that it is not Heaven or Earth but a liminal place between the two. This is fitting in the context of Dante-*personaggio* since once the procession has passed and he has understood and prepared himself for the vision of God, he is able to cross both the threshold of Lethe and then the river Eunöe, into Paradise (*Purg.*, XXXIII, 127–45); the very hope that Abbot Suger and all Christians have. It also provides an example of how space and place is important to Dante; how the same activity's meaning changes depending on where Dante-*personaggio* is within the afterlife. In other words, the space that Dante-*personaggio* inhabits shapes his experience of the activity.

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[86] Armour, *Dante's Griffin*, p. 4 also calls attention to the fact that John's vision takes place in Heaven and Dante's procession is in an earthly setting; however, he does not draw a relationship between John's vision and Dante's Empyrean or to the liminality represented in the Earthly Paradise and its function.

[87] Gerda Panofsky-Soergel, 'Liber de rebus in administratione sua gestis', in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and Its Art Treasures*, ed. by Erwin Panofsky, Second Edition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 40–81 (pp. 62–65) <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvs32rrm.8> [accessed 9 June 2020].

4.5.3 **Baptismal Resonances in the Earthly Paradise**

Dante-*personaggio*'s passage through the rivers Lethe and Eunöe recollects the ritual act of baptism (*Purg.*, XXXI, 91–105; XXXIII, 127–45).[88] This is an important event within the Earthly Paradise because in order for Dante-*personaggio* to move forward in his journey and move from the profane space to the sacred space, he must undergo a confession and purification through the river Lethe. As noted earlier, the aspersions performed during consecration processions were connected to the immersions performed during baptism, in that they both produce a transformation. Durand explains the significance of the three aspersions of the interior and exterior:

> Primo, propter daemonum expulsionem; […] Secundo, propter ipsius Ecclesiae purgationem, et expiationem, omnia namque terrena propter peccatum corrupta sunt, et foedata; […] Tertio, propter removendam omnem maledictionem, et introducendam benedictionem; terra enim abinitio cum fructu suo maledictionem accepit, eo quod ex ejus fructo deceptio facta fuit; […] (*Rationale*, 1.6.11)
>
> [First, to drive away evil spirits. Secondly, for the cleansing and expiation of the church itself. For all earthly things be corrupted and defiled by reason of sin. Thirdly, to remove all malediction, and to bring in a blessing instead. For the earth from the beginning received the curse with all its fruits, because that the great deceit was made out of its fruit.]

We can see echoes of Durand's explanation in Dante's procession since the cleansing of the church is compared to a baptism, which Dante-*personaggio* undergoes when he confesses and passes through the river Lethe (*Purg.*, XXXI, 91–105). Secondly, Durand references the fact that all earthly things are sinful and therefore must be purified, and explicitly references Eden when he discusses the beginning of time and the fruit. This is a particularly appropriate connection with Dante's procession since we are in Eden, where the first sin was committed; Dante calls attention to this with his references to Eve and Adam as well as the Tree of Knowledge (*Purg.*, XXIX, 24; XXXII, 37–39).

Similar to the demarcation of sacred space from profane space, created by the aspersions, once Dante confesses, he is able to cross through the river with the aid of Matelda. Just before he is cleansed in the river Lethe, he hears

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[88] For the baptismal resonances when Dante passes through Lethe see Dunstan J. Tucker, 'In exitu Isräel de Aegypto': The Divine Comedy in the Light of the Easter Liturgy', *The American Benedictine Review*, 11 (1960), 43–61 (pp. 59–61).

the words “Asperges me” from psalm 50 [51], which was also referenced on the terrace of gluttony (*Purg.*, XXIII, 11):

> Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.
> Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam; et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.
> Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.
> Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.
> [Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed;
> Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.
> Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy. And according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity.
> Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
> Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.]

According to Phillips-Robins ‘in the Aspersion liturgy the *Asperges* was sung as the priest sprinkled the penitent with holy water (recalling his baptism) and absolved him from his sins and so is particularly consonant to Dante’s immersion and purification in the Lethe’.[89] She also notes Durand’s interpretation of this liturgy as:

> altare, ecclesiam et populum aqua benedicta conspergit, ut omnis spirituum immundorum spurcitia, tam de habitaculo quam de cordibus fidelium, propellatur. (*Rationale*, 4.4.1)
>
> [the priest sprinkles the altar, the church and the people with holy water so that all the filth of unclean spirits will be expelled from that place just as it is from the hearts of the faithful.]

Durand connects the cleansing of the space of the church with the people. Just as the aspersions of the people recall their purification during the baptismal rite, this Aspersion liturgy recalls the consecration procession that purified the church structure. This psalm was also recited during consecration processions

[89] Phillips-Robins, pp. 111–12. L’Ottimo commento, gloss on *Purg.*, XXXI. 97-99 also notes this liturgical connection.

before the three circuits were traced around the church, accompanied by aspersions.[90] Since there are parallels between baptism and the consecration of churches, Dante blurs this distinction, just as consecration processions do, with the purification of Dante-*personaggio*. The procession recalls a consecration procession, but at its climax there is not a consecration of a building, as one would expect (because there is no building in the Earthly Paradise), but a purification. Once Dante-*personaggio* is purified, he can join the procession (*Purg*., XXXI, 94–114). The combination of the confession and purification recalling baptism transforms Dante-*personaggio,* emphasised by the term 'trasumanar' [transhumanizing] (*Par*. I, 70). Therefore, Dante's purification reminds the reader of the parallels between baptism and consecration processions which transform both the building and the individual, similar to the transformation called for by Durand when he states: 'Domus igitur dedicanda est, anima sanctificanda' [the house, therefore, must be dedicated, the soul sanctified] (*Rationale*, 1.6.7). This parallel between baptism and consecration processions is important for interpreting the other transformations within the Earthly Paradise.

4.5.4 De-consecration and the Corruption of the Church Reflected in the Earthly Paradise

It is not only Dante that is transformed within the Earthly Paradise but also the Tree of Knowledge and the chariot. Both of these transformations are prompted by a tracing of a circle, similar to a consecration procession. The Tree of Knowledge begins completely bare, but after the procession murmurs the word 'Adam', encircles the tree, and the gryphon tethers the chariot to the tree, it begins to miraculously bloom (*Purg*., XXXII, 37–60). This combination of a speech act, movement in the shape of a circle, and other ritual actions, enables the transformation to occur — similar to the movement, speech acts, and actions of consecration processions.

The chariot is also transformed in this canto after the gryphon and the majority of the procession depart. Most scholars agree that the chariot

[90] Bowen, p. 471.

represents the Church[91] and this idea is in harmony with Dante's letter to the Italian Cardinals, where 'he calls the visible institutions of the Church, which are being neglected by them, "the chariot of the Bride"':[92]

> Vos equidem, Ecclesie militantis veluti primi prepositi pili, per manifestam orbitam Crucifixi currum Sponse regere negligenties, non aliter quam falsus auriga Pheton exorbitastis; et quorum sequentem gregem per saltus peregrinationis huius illustrare intererat, ipsum una vobiscum ad precipitium traduxistis.
>
> ['Indeed, you, who lead the Church Militant as its highest-ranking soldiers, have gone off course, just like the false charioteer Phaeton, neglecting to steer the chariot of the Bride of Christ along the path revealed to you. You whose duty it was to light the way of your faithful flock through the wood of this earthly pilgrimage, have led your followers and yourselves to the very edge of the precipice.][93]

But what can the lens of a consecration tell us about this transformation of the chariot? Consecration processions provide an interesting model here in understanding the symbolism of the chariot because these transformations become a kind of anti-consecration or de-consecration and point to the Church's corruption in Dante's time. This corruption is referenced by Dante throughout the *Commedia* (*Inf.*, XXIX; *Par.*, XI, 124–26; XXI, 106–42; XXII, 25–99).[94] As a result, the original procession represents the Church Militant as it should be, but the transformation of the chariot represents the Church as it is, a corrupt institution.

The transformation begins when the seven virtues encircle Beatrice, the tree, and the chariot (*Purg.*, XXXII, 97–99). This transformation, however, is not a positive one such as Dante-*personaggio*'s or that of the Tree of Knowledge, instead an eagle attacks the chariot, followed by a dragon (*Purg.*, XXXII, 109–41). These attacks prompt the chariot to transform into a four-headed monster with a whore sitting on top of it who is accompanied by a giant; the giant and whore kiss but when the giant sees that the whore is eying Dante, he drags the

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[91] For example see Singleton, p. 48; Peter Dronke, '*Purgatorio*, XXIX', in *Cambridge Reading in Dante's Comedy*, ed. by Kenelm Foster and Patrick Boyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 114–37 (p. 120); and Ciotti, 'Processione Mistica', in *ED*.

[92] Chydenius, p. 141.

[93] Dante, 'Epistola', XI.4, in Claire E. Honess, *Dante Alighieri: Four Political Letters*, MHRA Critical Texts (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2007).

[94] For an analysis of Dante's references to the Church's corruption see Corbett, 'Dante's Other-Worldly Surprises and This-Worldly Polemic'.

whore and chariot away into the forest, ending the canto (*Purg.*, XXXII, 142–60).[95] Canto XXXIII begins with the virtues singing psalm 78 [79], "*Deus, venerunt gentes*", a lament for the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.[96] The psalm ends with the promise of the restoration of the temple and this restoration is echoed by Beatrice saying "Modicum, et non videbitis me; et iterum, sorelle mie dilette, modicum, et vos videbitis me" (*Purg.*, XXXIII, 10–12); a quote from John 16:16–19, in relation to Jesus himself, not the Temple. The psalm and Beatrice's response hold the promise that although the Church has been corrupted by the giant who transforms it into a whore, there is a chance for restoration.[97]

As noted earlier, dedication rites were often used to reinforce ideas of community and charity within the city, to turn the wicked to the right path. This lesson was not directed only at the laity of the city but at the religious as well. Peter Damian, whom Dante meets in the Heaven of Saturn in *Paradiso* XXI, provides an example of how the dedication rite was used as a means to confront the corruption of the Church. In his *Liber gratissimus* (1052) he describes the abusive use of dedication ceremonies for profit as a form of simony.[98] Another example is the Bull of Innocent IV (1244–1246) which provided an indulgence of forty days if a donation was made to a church. Similar Papal Bulls were created in 1281, 1285, 1286, 1290.[99] Furthermore, the lay lord and builder responsible for the church were addressed directly within the ceremony, and tithes were requested as well (step 25 of *Ordo* XL).[100] It is easy to see how these 'built-in' features of the rite could be taken advantage of.

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[95] The eagle's attack is commonly interpreted as the persecution of the Roman Emperors, the fox's attack as heresy, the eagle's feathers which descend onto the chariot as Constantine's donation, the dragon as Satan, the whore as the corrupt papacy, and the giant as the French Monarch. For a more thorough explanation see Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy*, p. 19; See also Ciotti, 'Processione Mistica', in *ED*.

[96] Ardissino, p. 60.

[97] Anderson, pp. 368–69.

[98] Peter Damian, *Die Briefe*, n 40, 437, 4-9. He makes a similar argument in his *De sacramentis per improbos administratio* (1067).

[99] Brown, p. 56.

[100] Hamilton, pp. 103–04.

Durand, for example, also considers the complicated nature of the endowment. He stipulates that an endowment must be made during the rite but that this endowment must be from lawful goods, devoid of usury and pillaging; furthermore, the church cannot be consecrated if it has been erected from the profit of avarice (*Rationale*, 1.6.3-4). Church endowments are also a concern of Dante's, albeit not explicitly in the Earthly Paradise, although Kleinhenz and Charles Till Davis argue that the eagle's feathers symbolise Constantine's donation, the first endowment ever given to a church at its dedication:[101] in the canto before Dante-*personaggio* meets Peter Damian, Dante describes Constantine's donation:

> ora conosce come il mal dedutto
> al suo bene operar non li è nocivo,
> avvegna che sia 'l mondo indi distrutto. (*Par*. XX, 58–60)
> [now he knows how the evil resulting from his good act does not harm him, though the world be destroyed thereby.]

Dante alludes to how an endowment must be given for the right reasons and through lawful acts, similar to Peter Damian and Durand, and how Constantine's endowment unintentionally led to the corruption of the Church.

In Peter Damian's *Sermo* 72 we can see how he uses the rite to comment on the current corruption of the Italian elite classes and the greater theme of the tension between secular and religious authority.[102] After the congregation has circled the church three times and has sung '*Tollites portas'*, Peter Damian uses this time to comment on the difference between a profane space and a sacred space by comparing the proud towers of the elite to the church.[103] Peter Damian uses the motif of the people being the living stones of the church but he stipulates that the mortar of secular buildings, including towers and castles, is only mortar. In contrast, the mortar of the church is charity, perhaps linking it to step 15 of *Ordo* XL where the mortar was prepared in front of the congregation, imbuing it with symbolic significance. Peter Damian

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[101] Kleinhenz, *Movement and Meaning in the Divine Comedy*, p. 19; Charles Till Davis, p. 30.
[102] Hamilton, p. 101.
[103] Similar language is used by Dante in Letter VI, 2–4. See Honess, VI, pp. 60–64.

warns the congregation that the charity of the community is necessary to prevent the destruction of the church (PL, 72.9, 909-910c).

In Dante's procession, the fact that the gryphon and most of the procession leave the chariot before it is attacked is important. If the gryphon represents Christ, as most scholars agree,[104] and the majority of the figures represent the component parts of the Church, then Christ and the majority of the figures have left the Church and the Church has no one to defend her against the eagle and dragon. The chariot is just a structure, it does not have Christ or the other structural components, such as the columns represented by the saints, to protect it. It is left only with the virtues, which are important but not enough to stop the attack by the eagle and dragon.

When Dante refers to the corruption of the Church, he is often doing so in light of the riches that the Church has acquired, advocating for a more ascetic lifestyle instead (*Inf.*, XXIX; *Par.*, XI, 124–26; XXI, 106–42; XXII, 25–99).[105] Criticism of the Church's obsession with material wealth is widespread in the poem and also throughout the culture of Dante's time; therefore, we cannot understand Dante's transformation of the chariot only through the lens of de-consecration; however, we can see that a layer of meaning is added if we think of this de-consecration and the corruption of the Church with the focus of consecration rites on the unity of the community. We can also link the de-consecration of the Church in Dante's Earthly Paradise to the greater argument within the poem. When the Church is corrupt, it has an impact on society in general. Processions are a good frame in which to describe this corruption of both the civic and religious communities because processions were performed by both institutions and lines between them were blurred, represented explicitly in the *carroccio* [wagon] whose banners were civic but whose altar was religious.

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[104] See footnote 10 of this chapter for scholarship references.
[105] Ciotti, 'Processione Mistica', in *ED*.

4.6 Conclusion

Consecration processions offer a helpful model for understanding processional movement in the *Commedia* because it is not just the architectural space that becomes sacred but the people who inhabit that space and take part in the processional movement that are transformed. In Dante's Earthly Paradise, transformations occur through similar acts of movement and performance in Dante-*personaggio*, the Tree of Knowledge, and the chariot. This spatial encapsulation is exemplified in the *Commedia* as a whole when the souls in Purgatory are told to make themselves sacred again (*Purg*., XXIII, 66). Dante, thus, ends *Purgatorio* with a violent set of images, linked to Revelation, and explicit about the corruption of the Church. The transformation of the chariot becomes a reversal of the consecration procession that has just occurred in the Earthly Paradise.[106] By interpreting the procession and transformation of the chariot through the lens of consecration processions, we can better understand Dante's condemnation of the Church and corrupt society. This becomes an important moment in the poem because, although Dante has gone through Lethe and has confessed, he must continue to write the rest of the journey because of the corruption of the Church and the world which, similar to him, still has the opportunity to change — it is not just his own corruption, which he has purged through his purification in the river, but that of the entire society that needs to become purified.[107] The procession is a physical manifestation of what the poem is doing and this lens provides an example of how Dante uses architectural space in the afterlife to shape and transform both individual and communal identity by the act of movement through space.

The next chapter considers some of the same themes, such as community, baptism, and transformation, providing another lens with which to understand the Church's corruption through material wealth with the example of the rising demand for tomb decoration. It examines the constructed space of

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[106] Anderson refers to the Earthly Paradise procession as an example of Dante employing a type of 'rite of reconsecration of symbols', especially for Beatrice. See p. 366.

[107] See *Purgatorio* XVI, 94–129 for the necessity of the Church and State to work together in order for human beings to act morally. For the relationship of Church and State and its connections to *Monarchia*, see Paolo Nasti, 'Dante and Ecclesiology', in *Reviewing Dante's Theology*, ed. by Claire E. Honess and Matthew Treherne, 2 vols (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013), ii, 53–88.

tombs in the context of late medieval burial practices, enabling us to understand through constructed, sculpted forms, how Florentines were developing ways of self-fashioning as well as how the church space was modified by these changes.

Chapter 5 **Self-fashioning Through Tomb Decoration: Identity, Corruption, and Rebirth in the City of Dis and the Terrace of Pride**

5.1 Introduction

In the last chapter I analysed the medieval practice of processions and how interpreting Dante's procession in Earthly Paradise as a consecration procession and a de-consecration with the transformation of the chariot opens up new readings of the poem in terms of understanding community-building, moral change through movement, and sacredness, as well as another facet of Dante's condemnation of the Church.

This chapter considers some of the same themes such as how the church space was used and how its physical make-up became a catalyst for arguments against the Church's accruing of material wealth. It argues that Dante's references to tombs and their descriptions reflect the material culture of the time with the growth of the purchase of tombs inside and around church structures. I consider tombs as part of the architectural structure of the church because they are fixed in space and are integrated into the wall or flooring; since they are made of stone they also symbolise permanence, especially since they are graves that cannot or should not be moved. I will consider many themes already present within Dante scholarship, such as identity, selfhood, and self-fashioning and their connection to baptism, burial, and resurrection, but through a new lens, in the form of the architecture of tombs. An understanding of the rising demand for sculpted tombs during this time can provide a way to understand the episodes I discuss and adds an additional layer to ideas of identity throughout the poem. Tomb sculpture was a means of presenting oneself through art, forging a flattering identity; Dante uses these connotations to relate to and understand the lives of the deceased.

References to tombs occur throughout all three cantiche of the poem.[1] Dante also refers to the physical areas of burial such as the 'cimitero' (*Inf*., X, 13; *Par*., IX, 139–42). The range of terms used to describe tombs is mirrored in Dante's context: indeed, thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Florence witnessed a rising demand for sculpted tombs in a variety of different styles. Kleinhenz is one scholar who considers the idea of tombs within the poem and argues that each soul becomes a type of funerary monument.[2] He focuses on words related to death such as *morire*, *morte*, *ancidere*, *sepolto*, *tomba* and ideas such as the ability to expedite a soul's time in Purgatory through prayer.[3] I apply a similar methodology to this chapter but focus on more synonyms for a tomb and how an understanding of the material culture of the time, specifically the rise in tomb decoration and the different styles, can inform our understanding of the references to tombs within the poem. This chapter will begin by examining this trend. It will then analyse Dante's use of tombs and how they relate to this phenomenon.

5.2 The Rising Demand for Funeral Monuments in Medieval Florence

This section will focus on three main themes: how funeral monuments reshaped the visual landscape of the church; how funeral monuments rapidly increased in popularity during Dante's lifetime; and how they are tied to ideas of identity. Funeral monuments reshaped the visual landscape of Dante's Florence because before the thirteenth century, burial in the space of a church in Florence was usually restricted to saints and key religious figures.[4] However,

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[1] Tomba/e (*Inf*., VI, 97–99; IX, 124–27; X, 40–42; XIX, 7–9; XXXIV, 127–29; *Purg*., XII, 16–21; Avello/i (*Inf*., IX, 118; XI, 7); Arca/arche (*Inf*., IX, 127–31; X, 28–30; Sepolcro (*Inf*., X, 7–9; ; Sepulcro/i (*Inf*., VII, 56; IX, 115–118; *Par*., XXIV, 124–26) ; sepultura/e (*Inf*., X, 37–39; *Purg*., V, 93; VIII, 79–81; *Par*., XV, 118–120).

[2] Kleinhenz, 'The Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead', p. 49.

[3] Kleinhenz, 'The Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead', p. 52. He notes that these terms appear 65 times in *Inferno*, 55 times in *Purgatorio* and 34 times in *Paradiso*.

[4] For example, Santa Reparata held the tomb of Pope Stephen IX (d. 1058) and Pope Nicholas II (1061) as well as holding the relics of ten saints, with their own dedicated altars. See Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 77. Stephen IX died in Florence while Nicholas II was bishop of Florence at the time of his election to the papacy. The saints are St Reparata, St Zenobius, St Stephen, the four evangelists, St Sylvester, St Thomas of Canterbury, and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

the thirteenth and fourteenth century saw a boom in tomb production and lay burial within the church precinct became increasingly common.[5] The monuments themselves became more detailed in Dante's time; however, the elaborate chapels and tombs that we associate with the late medieval period and Renaissance were still a rarity in Dante's Florence.[6] Villani documents what may be the first lay burial in Santa Reparata with his description of the tomb of Aldobrandino Ottobuoni (d. 1258).[7] Similarly, in Santa Maria Novella lay patrons began requesting burial in and around the church in the 1230s.[8] For example, Giorgio Vasari describes a fresco cycle from the latter half of the thirteenth century on the east wall of Santa Maria Novella as a private burial vault.[9] This marks a substantial shift because the east end was considered the 'holiest' place of the church and therefore, one would normally find only saints' relics here. Burial locations within the church of Santa Maria Novella were sought throughout the precinct, such as the chapel that adjoins St Anne's chapel on the north wall which was the burial place of the Alberti family from the late thirteenth century.[10] It was not only wealthy laymen and laywomen who were buried in churches. In fact, chapels and elaborate burials in Florence were purchased by the middle ranks such as artisans or even spouses of notaries, amongst

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[5] Anne Leader, 'The Sepulchralization of Renaissance Florence', in *Memorializing the Middle Classes in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, ed. by Anne Leader, Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Culture, LX (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 2018), pp. 62–81 (p. 125). Many of the tombs no longer exist from this period but testaments, church records, and tomb registries from the seventeenth century provide evidence.

[6] These were common, however, in Northern Europe: see Kurt Bauch, *Das Mittelalterliche Grabbild. Figürliche Grabmäler Des 11. Bis 15. Jahrhunderts in Europa* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976).

[7] Villani, *Nuova cronica*, VII. 62.

[8] Caroline Astrid Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying: Friars in the Medieval City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 34.

[9] Brown, pp. 99–100. In its place now is a fresco of the crucifixion.

[10] Brown, p. 100.

others.[11] These are just a sample of the shift in tomb practices, allowing lay burial within the church precinct.[12]

The exterior spaces of churches were also used for burial, though very little evidence of these burials survives. For example, Santa Maria Novella's upper and eastern cemeteries were expanded in the thirteenth century to make room for more interments and the cloisters (originally only for the religious living there) were used for private burial as well.[13] The upper cemetery was made to accommodate tombs from Santa Reparata's cemetery which were relocated in order to enlarge the Piazza San Giovanni in 1296.[14] In addition, the pavement along the front of Santa Maria Novella once held 150 tomb slabs (Figure 21).[15]

The development of tombs in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Florence was a primary driver of the building boom. Many of the church expansions or new church developments were funded by the purchase of burial spaces. For example, Santa Maria Novella's new nave was funded by the purchase of *avelli* (sarcophagi set in niches under canopies) which were embedded in the east and south façades of the church.[16] Santa Croce, on the other hand, auctioned off its burial chapels before the construction on the church began.[17] Caroline Bruzelius argues:

> By the last quarter of the thirteenth century, […] tomb construction in the form of 'avelli', and, later, floor slabs in the interior, were integral to the planning and execution of architectural space. Often the timing of

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[11] Samuel K. Cohn Jr., 'The Place of the Dead in Flanders and Tuscany: Towards a Comparative History of the Black Death', in *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Peter Marshall and Bruce Gordon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 27.

[12] This was not specific to the churches of Florence as there is evidence in the 1250s of lateral chapels being built within mendicant church naves generally: see Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying*, p. 37. See also Caroline Astrid Bruzelius, 'The Architecture of the Mendicant Orders in the Middle Ages: An Overview of Recent Literature', *Perspective. Actualité En Histoire de l'art*, 2, 2012, 365–86 (pp. 376–77) <https://doi.org/10.4000/perspective.195> [accessed 22 February 2021].

[13] Brown, p. 101.

[14] Brown and Toker state this happened in 1293: Brown, pp. 118–21; Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 83. Many other scholars such as Pampaloni, however, date it to 1296: see his document of the guild's decision on 6 June 1296 describing the tombs being removed in order to make room for the piazza on pp. 57–58. Dean and Areli are in agreement with Pampaloni: Dean, p. 35; Areli also notes that this was a decision Dante voted for during Dante's time on the Council of One Hundred on p. 428.

[15] Leader, p. 123.

[16] Bourdua notes that these types of tombs were very popular in Rome and Arnolfi di Cambio dominated this trade. See Bourdua, pp. 413–14.

[17] Toker, *On Holy Ground*, p. 49.

> construction was contingent on an adequate number of such burials and/or associated legacies in order to support the work.[18]

As a result, the growth of tombs and burial chapels directly impacted the architectural fabric and visual landscape of the churches of medieval Florence. This was especially true in the case of mendicant churches, since the Constitutions of Tuscany (1292) granted mendicants the ability to be counsellors for the dying, enabling them to play a part in deciding where the dying would be buried.[19] Furthermore, Purgatory was understood as a place where a repentant sinner could complete their temporal penance. When preparing for one's death, 'testamentary legacies for post-mortem masses, recitations of the divine office, and charitable giving' were prioritised in order to reduce one's time in Purgatory.[20] This, combined with Purgatory being doctrinally accepted in 1274, led to more space being needed within the church and its cemetery in order to enact these rituals.[21]

Another factor effecting the transformation of the church space was due to a number of papal bulls from 1244–1290 which provided an indulgence of 40 days for a donation to church building works.[22] These bulls made it strategic to combine funeral preparations with building works to take advantage of the indulgence while also securing one's resting place. Finally, outdoor preaching, facilitated by portable altars placed near the *avelli* on the exterior of churches, such as at Santa Maria Novella, provided subject matter for sermons where those in attendance were reminded of the need for penitence before death (Figure 21).[23]

However, in Florence, and throughout Italy, this new control of church space through the purchase of burial places was also thought to be in conflict

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[18] Bruzelius, 'The Architecture of the Mendicant Orders in the Middle Ages', p. 376.

[19] Bruzelius, Preaching, Building, and Burying, pp. 6–9; 46.

[20] George W. Dameron, Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante, p. 6.

[21] Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (London: British Museum Press, 1996), p. 115.

[22] Brown, p. 56. The bulls were issued in 1244, 1281, 1285, 1286, 1290.

[23] Bruzelius, Preaching, Building, and Burying, p. 128; Frithjof Schwartz, Il bel cimitero: Santa Maria Novella in Florenz 1279-1348: Grabmäler, Architektur und Gesellschaft (Berlin; München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009); Bruzelius, 'The Architecture of the Mendicant Orders in the Middle Ages', p. 377.

with the rule of poverty.[24] In the early 1240s, for instance, the Dominicans began to legislate against interior decorations and sculpted monuments; in the 1240s and 1250s the secular clergy were hostile towards the mendicants because more people were deciding to be buried in mendicant churches and therefore, the parish churches were not receiving burial fees; a letter (1257) written by Bonaventure (1221–1274) describes the moral decline of the Church as a result of the extravagant building projects taking place, including the new burial practices;[25] and similarly, Peter John Olivi (1248–1298), who resided at Santa Croce in 1287–1289 described lay burial as a symbol of corruption rather than poverty.[26] Although this link and condemnation existed between the new burial practices and moral decline, this did not stop those responsible for the building works of Santa Croce from designing a unique plan for a crypt and external galleries flanking the nave for more burial places in 1292.[27] These cautions were not restricted to the use of church space but extended to the presentation of the deceased during their funeral procession as well. For example, the banners of the deceased's confraternity and guild would follow the cross during the procession accompanied by their members, creating a bond between the deceased and the living.[28] Sumptuary laws in Florence required the deceased to be buried in white robes rather than ostentatious clothing and also set limits on the number of candles and their size.[29] There were exceptions to this, such as knights, judges, and doctors who were buried in their robes of office or bishops, abbots, and priests buried in official regalia (*Statuto del Capitano* 1322–5, I, 222–26).[30]

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[24] Bruzelius, Preaching, Building, and Burying, p. 24.

[25] Bruzelius, Preaching, Building, and Burying, pp. 36–37.

[26] *Littera septem sigillarum*, 52, *Responsio* II, 378–80. David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty: The Origins of the Usus Pauper Controversy* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv4t82k4> [accessed 19 July 2021]; Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying*, p. 47.

[27] Bruzelius, Preaching, Building, and Burying, p. 47.

[28] Davidsohn, VII, p. 760.

[29] John Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 160. A record of these restrictions can be found in ASF statutici del comune di firenze I3, capitano 1355, iii, ch. lxxv, iii, fol. 218, 158–60.

[30] An example of this, further afield, is found in Notre Dame where it was believed that one was less likely to get into Heaven if one had an elaborate tomb. See Binski, pp. 114–15.

As the above-mentioned law and the funerary practices indicate, one's identity was denoted through the clothing and the objects carried during the funeral procession and this led to a change in representational practices on the tomb effigy and inscription. In the early medieval period, burials were marked with a simple wooden cross and no distinguishing features of the deceased were present.[31] However, the use of objects and clothing to denote one's identity during funerary processions and the necessity for prayer to reduce one's time in Purgatory, a concept Dante refers to in *Purgatorio*, VI, 25–48, altered this practice. The deceased now needed to be identifiable to ensure they were remembered.[32] Therefore, effigies, inscriptions, and coats of arms became a dominant feature of tomb decoration. Tombs were thus transactional as well as memorial, and bonds of kinship were integral to the idea of Purgatory.[33] It is no coincidence that it is Dante who offers 'the first extensive representation of Purgatory' which also provides examples of tomb decoration and that the 'productive pain' undergone by each soul is used 'to secure one's identity'.[34] In addition, donor portraits became popular at this time as well, either on the tomb itself or on adjacent decoration within the chapel or space. Some examples being Giotto's Last Judgement in the Arena chapel in Padua (completed in 1305) which features a donor portrait, and another example is a donor portrait is found the Holy Confessor Chapel in Santa Croce (*c*. 1340).

The dying also had to decide where they would be buried. As noted above, many people chose to be buried in the church associated with their confessor rather than their parish church. One advantage of this was the long funeral procession from the deceased's home to the church. One such example is Gherardino di Giano (d. 1334) who lived in the parish of San Niccolò yet he purchased a tomb for himself and his children across the river in Santa Croce. This allowed his body to travel further during his funerary procession, being recognised by more people and gaining greater intercessory power.[35] In

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[31] Erwin Panofsky, Tomb Sculpture: 4 Lectures on Its Changing Aspects from Egypt to Bernini (New York, NY: Abrams, 1964), p. 47.

[32] Bruzelius, Preaching, Building, and Burying, p. 8.

[33] Binski, pp. 71; 106.

[34] Gragnolati, pp. 110, 92.

[35] Leader, p. 134.

Florence, an indication in wills of where one would be buried became increasingly frequent, rising from less than one quarter of wills before 1275, to three quarters by the Black Death.[36] It was not only the church that was specified, but often the location within the church complex as well. Therefore, the dying could decide on whether they would be buried in the church proper, crypt, cemetery, cloister, or piazza. For example, a document from Santa Maria Novella of 1344 describes the specific location for the tomb of Nardus of the Genti family within the church as well as the purchase of additional masses.[37]

This phenomenon reshaped the city's architecture in a dramatic way. Anne Leader describes this period as 'the citizens of Florence transforming the city by filling churches inside and out with personal monuments to self, ancestors, and descendants.'[38] As the above examples indicate, the mendicant churches of Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce provide examples of the majority of tomb art in Florence in the medieval and Renaissance period. Santa Croce is referred to as 'the pantheon' of Florence because there are over one thousand burials from these periods. Furthermore, the tombs of these two churches are described as 'some of the most elaborate sepulchres encountered in Renaissance Italy.'[39] These tombs came in a variety of styles: tombs could be bas-reliefs within the floor, raised sarcophagi above the floor, or a monument on the wall of the church. In all of the examples, the material itself, stone, was used because of its durable quality, symbolising permanence and facilitating prayer long after the person had died. This type of reshaping of the material space is different from the examples cited in my chapters on processions and cloisters because it was a change produced by many different people in a variety of

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[36] Marshall and Gordon, p. 27.

[37] The testament by his son, Albizius, states that Nardus should be buried 'opposite the chapel of All Saints, situated in the bell tower of this church' and specifies that his body was to rest outside the portal in a 'beautiful sepulchre' with ornamentation. A stipend was also provided to celebrate masses. See the Archivo di Stato, Florence Diplomatico, S. M. Novella, 1344.iv.6. Cited in Marshall and Gordon, p. 27.

[38] Leader, p. 136.

[39] Cassandra Ellen Getty, 'Gender Representation in Tuscan Tombs of the Trecento and Quattrocento' (unpublished M.A., University of Windsor, 1997), p. 93 <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/ftp01/MQ34485.pdf> [accessed 24 February 2021]. Leader makes a similar statement when she describes Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce as the most popular sites of burial, p. 132.

ways, giving individuals the opportunity to shape particular spaces of the church and mark their identity. This shift in the material fabric of the city through the construction and re-construction of churches is reflected in Dante's poem through the symbolic meaning of the different types of funerary monuments.

5.3 Funeral monuments in the *Commedia*

The episodes from the *Commedia* which I consider below are widely discussed in scholarship but my analysis will demonstrate how established readings can be enriched by an understanding of the ways in which the material culture associated with funeral monuments was familiar to Dante and his contemporaries.

Dante's most explicit references to tombs occur in the circle of heretics (*Inf.*, IX–XI) and on the terrace of pride (*Purg.*, XII). In the cemetery of the City of Dis, where the heretics are found, Dante describes tombs above the ground whereas on the terrace of pride he describes tomb slabs. Dante also uses multiple synonyms to describe the tombs, similar to the variety of styles available. I will now consider some of these synonyms and compare them to the styles and practices of Dante's time.

5.3.1 ***Avelli* and The Proud Heretics (*Inf.,* IX–XI)**

The most explicit and detailed account of tombs is found in the cemetery of the City of Dis. In this episode Dante uses five synonyms for a tomb (*tomba*, *avello*, *arca*, *sepulcro*, *sepultura*) as well as the term *cimitero* [cemetery] (*Inf.*, IX, 124–27, X, 40–42; IX, 118; IX, 127–31, X, 28–30; X, 7–9; IX, 115–118; X, 37–39; *Inf.*, X, 13). The repetition of these terms emphasises the architectural features of the new space Dante is encountering, as he has just passed through the gates of the city into its interior. In this section I will consider the first circle within the interior of the City of Dis as a whole, based on Dante's description of it as a *cimitero* and its comparison to the Roman cemeteries of Arles in France and Pola in Istria (*Inf.*, IX, 112–113). I will then analyse the particular style of raised tomb that Dante describes, in order to explore what resonances this description might have provoked for his readers. Finally, I will consider medieval understandings of the relationship between the body and soul and how they relate to the Last Judgement and ideas of Resurrection to understand how

Dante uses these ideas to comment on the souls of the heretics and their punishment.

Before Dante enters the City of Dis, he describes it in terms which a medieval reader would have associated with a city, as noted in chapter 2: with an 'alta torre' [high tower], 'l'alte fosse' [deep moats], 'le mura' [walls], and 'la porta' [gate] (*Inf.*, VIII, 2; IX, 36; VIII, 76; 77; 82; IX, 89). Therefore, the reader expects the inside of the city to have the architectural features of a 'normal' city as well, such as houses, streets, piazze, etc. However, Dante immediately subverts the reader's expectations when Dante-*personaggio* enters the city and finds a cemetery filled with tombs which he compares to Arles and Pola, cemeteries placed outside of the city walls rather than within:

> Sì come ad Arli, ove Rodano stagna,
> sì com' a Pola, presso del Carnaro
> ch'Italia chiude e suoi termini bagna,
> fanno i sepulcri tutt' il loco varo,
> così facevan quivi d'ogne parte, […] (*Inf.*, IX, 112–115)
>
> [As at Arl (Arles), where the Rhone makes its delta, as at Pola, near the Camaro that encloses Italy and bathes its boundaries, tombs variegate the place, so they did here on every side]

This is an example of how Dante subverts and plays with the reader's expectations of architectural models. So what can an understanding of this physical space reveal about this episode? The Roman and early medieval practice was to bury the dead outside of the city walls for hygienic purposes. But cemeteries within the city, attached to a particular church including the cemeteries at Santa Reparata and Santa Maria Novella, provide evidence of a move from the outside of the city inwards. Dante implicitly makes reference here to the growing desire to be buried closer and closer to the saints' relics within churches that reside within the city walls.[40] This subversion of what one would typically find in a city continues with the presence of infernal versions of natural landscapes, such as the river of blood (XII), wood of suicides (XIII), and burning plain of sand (XIV).[41] It invites the reader to create comparisons and

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[40] Panofsky, pp. 46–47.

[41] For a detailed analysis of the City of Dis see Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City* chapter 4 especially; See also Pequigney and Dreyfus, Vol. 3, 64.

analyse the encountered space, along with the pilgrim. So what can an analysis of the cemetery reveal and what do the tombs within this cemetery look like?

The reference to the cemeteries of Arles and Pola provides us with key information regarding some of the burial practices discussed above. Firstly, the tombs at Arles and Pola were above the ground rather than within it, they were not floor slabs, plots, or mounds.[42] The tombs in the City of Dis are also above the ground, which is confirmed when Dante refers to them as *sepulcri*[43], *avelli*, and *arche*.[44] These terms refer to canopied sepulchres found most often on the exterior of churches and therefore very few are still in existence from the fourteenth century. As noted earlier, there are a few still extant in Florence from Santa Maria Novella and also Santa Trinità (Figure 22). There is also a surviving example from the interior of the church of Santa Croce in the Holy Confessors Chapel (Figure 23).

5.3.1.1 Tomb Sculpture and Identity

The choice to place the heretics in raised *avelli* also helps the reader understand the nature of this sin.[45] Elevated tombs were a symbol of prestige and wealth in contrast to floor slabs which conveyed a sense of humility since the living would walk on top of them (Durand, *Rationale*, 1.1.28). It was common for *avelli* to be elaborately decorated as well. The sarcophagus of an *avello* often had an effigy of the deceased, an inscription, and their coat of arms, conveying the community they belonged to and their status. The wall behind the sarcophagus was often decorated as well with scenes of the Last Judgement and the Resurrection of Christ.

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[42] Giacomo Poletto (1894), gloss to *Inf.*, IX, 112–17 and Robert Hollander (2000–2007), gloss to *Inf.*, X, 12–115 (*DDP*).

[43] Note that there is sometimes a lexical variation: 'sepolcri' and 'sepulture'. See Mirella Sabbatini, 'Sepolcro', in *ED,* who notes that the meaning always refers to a grave and often has scriptural meaning.

[44] Arca was a synonym for 'avelli': see Leader, p. 112. Also see Marisa Cimino, 'Tomba', in *ED*, where the term *arca* is said to denote the particular shape of a tomb. For a less convincing explanation see also Lucia Onder, 'Arca', in *ED*, who notes that Boccaccio explains the term is used because 'being made of stone and marble, they have the shape of the wooden ark, in which many keep their grain and their belongings'.

[45] See Andrea Mariani, 'Avello', in *ED*, who notes *avello* was synonymous with ark, tomb, monument, and sepulchre and was a term of popular Florentine language (cf. Schiaffini, Testi 56).

Dante's description of the tombs in the City of Dis adheres to these features. He explains that the appearance of the tombs is 'piú amar[a]' [more bitter] because they are surrounded by flames which are so hot 'che ferro piú non chiede verun' arte' [that no art asks for iron that is hotter] and we also learn that the lids of the tombs are 'sospesi' [suspended] (*Inf.* IX, 112–23). Although we are not told that the tomb lids are decorated, this description draws attention to the lids and the heat of the flames which would allow artisans to carve them. Furthermore, Dante explicitly refers to the act of inscription, later in this episode, when he encounters the tomb of pope Anastasius:

> […] "Anastasio papa guardo,
> lo qual trasse Fotin de la via dritta." (*Inf.*, XI, 8–9)
> ["I hold Pope Anastasius, whom Photinus drew from the straight way."]

Although he only reads one tomb lid, we can draw the conclusion that other tombs within the cemetery also have inscriptions or other identifying features such as a coat of arms or effigy. Dante also implicitly refers to the practice of inscription with the reference to Arles. During Dante's time it was believed that a great battle between Charlemagne and the Saracens took place there and that a miracle occurred where all the dead Christians had their names inscribed on their foreheads by birds, so that they could be buried and known to the world.[46] Therefore, the tombs within the City of Dis reflect the practice of inscription in late medieval Florence.

The effigy on top of an *avello* is also alluded to in the episode of the circle of heretics. Effigial tombs developed in the last quarter of the thirteenth century as either tomb slabs or free standing tombs and they could be both individual or family tombs.[47] For example, the tomb of Cangrande I della Scala (1329), a patron of Dante's, is an elaborate *avello* attached to the exterior of Santa Maria Antiqua in Verona and includes a statue of the deceased atop it (Figure 24 and Figure 25).[48] Cangrande I died laying siege to Treviso in the

[46] See, for example, the gloss to *Inf.*, IX, 112–113 (*DDP*) of Francesco da Buti (1385–1395). Modern glosses follow Buti such as Hermann Oelsner (1899), Francesco Torraca (1905), C. H. Grandgent (1909–1913), Tommaso Casini and SA Barbi (1921), Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi (1991–1997).

[47] Getty, pp. 22–23. This development occurred much later in Tuscany than in Northern Europe.

[48] Bourdua notes a similar tomb monument to Guglielmo da Castelbarco, a friend of Cangrande I: see p. 419.

spring of 1329. The representations of Cangrande I are consistent with the trend that the deceased be depicted at his finest as well as denoting his profession since he is represented three times: as a prestigious knight in tournament gear who protects his people on the top, in a modest robe, smiling, on the sarcophagus, and also in prayer to the Man of Sorrows on the tomb itself.[49] This multifaceted personality is represented again on the tomb which is decorated with military as well as religious themes. It also depicts two dogs holding up his coat of arms, referencing his name's meaning. All of these different components clearly identify who the deceased was, his profession, and his piety.

Dante employs the practice of representing the deceased 'at their best' implicitly and ironically when Virgil describes the posture of Farinata:

> "Vedi là Farinata che s'è dritto:
> da la cintola in sù tutto 'l vedrai."
> […] ed el s'ergea col petto e con la fronte
> com' avesse l'inferno a gran dispitto. (*Inf.*, X, 32–36)
>
> ["See there Farinata who has stood erect: from the waist up you will see all of him." and he was rising up with his breast and forehead as if he had Hell in great disdain.]

Farinata represents himself as what he considers his best: a proud, stiff-necked (*Inf.*, X, 73–75), commanding presence that holds Hell in disdain; a presence that according to Auerbach, is 'larger than life' because all of his characteristics are amplified.[50] Similarly, Bill Friesen describes Farinata as:

> the essential self he prefigured in earthly life; the representation, the sign, the metaphor for himself that he wrote in life has become his own true self, under his own mighty ambition.[51]

If we consider this in light of tomb decoration, the tomb and sarcophagus are a sign of one's former self, thus Farinata becomes that sign in his posture. The

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[49] Santa Maria Novella provides another example of a wall tomb, this time of a more elaborate funerary monument for Aldobrandino Cavalcanti who died in 1279. The date and the fact that Dante was friends with and knew many of the Cavalcanti family indicates that Dante likely saw this monument.

[50] Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Philadelphia, PA: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 387–88.

[51] Bill Friesen, 'A Heaven out of Hell: The Inversion of Incarnational Dynamics in Canto X of Dante's Inferno', *Neohelicon*, 41.1 (2014), 111–27 (p. 119) <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11059-013-0211-z> [accessed 17 August 2020].

effigy, in a sense, comes to life; or more appropriately, Farinata becomes a type of statue, similar to the one atop the tomb of Cangrande I, since he ' […] non mutò aspetto, né mosse collo, né piegò sua costa;' [did not change his expression, nor move his neck, nor bend his side] (*Inf.*, X, 73–75).[52] Furthermore, the type of tomb is also important here, Dante chooses the prestigious *avello* type in opposition to the humbler floor slab. Since Dante-*personaggio* and the reader know that this pride, disdain, and immutability that characterise Farinata lead only to his downfall, this is another inversion of expectations. Dante plays with the funerary practice of representing the deceased 'at their best' by inverting this idea, where the worst aspect of the sinner, their main sin, is what allows Dante to recognise Farinata (this occurs with Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti (d. 1280) as well (*Inf.*, X, 64–66)).

5.3.1.2 The Relationship Between the Body and Soul and its Connection to the Last Judgement and Resurrection

Another important factor that contributed to the rise in tomb decoration and the necessity of having one's burial place inside a church was the thirteenth-century scholastic debate regarding the relationship between the body and soul in the afterlife. How could the soul feel pain in Hell and Purgatory if the body remained on Earth, buried in a tomb? When was the body reunited with the soul? If the body decays in its tomb, how was it resurrected on Judgement Day and what did that look like? Was it the soul or the body that was responsible for sin? Due to these debates, the thirteenth century saw a shift in the appreciation of the body, linking it to the soul, as joint facilitator of gaining salvation or being damned. The body was 'cherished as an essential component of the person' and essential to the Resurrection.[53]

One of the main passages that scholars focus on regarding Dante's understanding of the relationship between the body and soul is Statius' reply to

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[52] Umberto Bosco and Giovanni Reggio (1979), gloss to *Inf.*, X, 73–75 (*DDP*) describe him as a 'gigantic statue'.

[53] Gragnolati, p. 13. For examples of didactic texts on these issues see Uguccione da Lodi's *Libro*, *Istoria*, and *Contemplazione della morte*; Giacomino da Verona's *De Jerusalem celesti* and *De Babilonia civitate*; and Bonvesin da la Riva's *Book of Three Scriptures*, *De die Iudicii* and *De anima cum corpore*. For a full analysis of these texts see ch. 1 of the same book.

Dante-*personaggio* about how a soul can become thin if it does not require food in *Purgatorio* XXV (ll. 20–21; 37–109). Statius explains that the soul produces an aerial body in the afterlife, not a fleshly body, which is why it can feel pain and suffer but that this aerial body is different from the physical body which remains on Earth. This aerial body also has the features of the body on Earth, which is why Dante-*personaggio* can often identify particular people. Manuele Gragnolati offers a full interpretation of Dante's eschatological theory, combining the debates of previous scholars:

> We shall see, in fact, not only that Dante plays with the ambiguity within unicity of form's understanding of the soul, but also that he vacillates between the principles of unicity and plurality, arriving at his own original position on personhood, which allows for the perseverance of identity in the afterlife and at the same time maintains the significance of the body's materiality.[54]

The ideas of personhood, the perseverance of identity, and the body's materiality are all important to the understanding of funerary practices in late medieval Florence. Even when the soul is separated from the body in the afterlife, such as in Dante's portrayals, there is still a focus on bodily pain in both Hell and Purgatory and Gragnolati argues that the 'body continue[d] to play a fundamental role in the late thirteenth-century spirituality and conceptions of the person'.[55] My analysis broadens Gragnolati's argument about the importance of body and soul by adding an understanding of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century funerary practices. As Gragnolati has shown, Dante believed that the soul's fate was sealed at the moment of the body's death. This, as well as the fact that the body could be identified in the afterlife and could feel physical pain, are important to understanding the focus on funerary practices.

Dante's aerial bodies also do not cast shadows because they are made of air rather than flesh. Virgil calls attention to this when he does not cast a shadow because he lacks his body:

> […] Vespero è già colà dov' è sepolto
> lo corpo dentro al quale io facea ombra.
> Napoli l'ha, e da Brandizio è tolto.

[54] Gragnolati, p. 87.
[55] Gragnolati, p. 34.

Ora, se innanzi a me nulla s'aombra,
non ti maravigliar più che d'i cieli,
che l'uno a l'altro raggio non ingombra. (*Purg.*, III, 25–30)

[It is already vespers there at the tomb of the body within which I cast a shadow; Naples has it, from Brindisi it has been taken. Now in front of me no shadow falls, do not marvel more than at the heavens, which give no obstacle to each other's rays.]

Gragnolati and others have argued that this lack of body and Dante's calling attention to it implies that the body itself is 'dear and important' to the soul.[56] In *Paradiso* XXVII, St Peter describes his burial place as now being similar to a 'cloaca' [sewer]:

"Quelli ch' usurpa in terra il luogo mio,
il luogo mio, il luogo mio, che vaca
ne la presenza del Figliuol do Dio,
fatt' ha del cimitero mio cloaca
del sangue e de la puzza onde 'l pervaso
che cadde di qua sù, là giù si placa." (*Par.*, XXVII, 22–27)

[He who on earth usurps my place, my place, my place, which is vacant in the presence of the Son of God, has made my burial place a sewer of the blood and stench that placate the perverted one down there, who fell from up here.]

The repetition of 'il luogo mio' emphasises the importance of a safe burial space (referenced in *Par.*, XV, 118–119). It also calls attention to the fact that, even though St Peter is in Heaven, his earthly burial place is still important to him and is tied to his identity. Manfred also expresses the importance of his body which was left unburied on Earth:

"l'ossa del corpo mio sarieno ancora
in co del ponte presso a Benevento,
sotto la guardia de la grave mora.
Or le bagna la pioggia e move il vento
di fuor dal Regno, quasi lungo 'l Verde,
dov' e' le trasmutò a lume spento." (*Purg.*, III, 127–32)

[56] Gragnolati, p. 150. See also Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, '"Le Bianche Stole": Il tema della resurrezione nel Paradiso', in *Dante e la Bibbia: atti del convegno internazionale : Firenze, 26-27-28 settembre 1986*, ed. by Giovanni Barblan (Florence: Olschki, 1988), pp. 256–60; Rachel Jacoff, '"Our Bodies, Our Selves": The Body in the Commedia', in *Sparks and Seeds: Medieval Literature and Its Afterlife*, ed. by Alison Cornish and Dana E. Stewart (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2000), II, 119–37 <https://doi.org/10.1484/M.LMEMS-EB.3.1789> [accessed 11 October 2021].

[The bones of my body would still be at the head of the bridge near Benevento, under the protection of heavy cairn. Now the rain bathes and the wind drives them outside the Kingdom, near the Verde, where he transferred them with candles extinguished]

Manfred is concerned for his earthly body which is not protected in a tomb but is being driven away by wind and rain. He expresses anxieties about the body that were prevalent in Dante's time about what happens if the body is not buried in a safe place.[57] Gragnolati points out that although Manfred's aerial body carries all the qualities and features of the earthly body — Dante describes him as blond, beautiful, noble and with a scar on his eyebrow — he still longs for his earthly body (*Purg.*, III, 107–08).[58] He also notes that this desire for the body does not just occur in Ante-Purgatory, as some scholars argue, but also in Heaven (*Par.*, 28, 106–13).[59] Solomon explains:

> "La sua chiarezza séguita l'ardore,
> l'ardor la visïone, e quella è tanta,
> quant' ha di grazia sovra suo valore.
> Come la carne glorïosa e santa
> fia rivestita, la nostra persona
> più grata fia per esser tutta quanta,
> per che s'accrescerà ciò che ne dona
> di gratuïto lume il sommeo bene,
> lume ch' a lui veder ne condiziona;
> onde la visïon crecer convene,
> crecer l'ardor che di quella s'accende,
> crescer lo raggio che da esso vene." (*Par.*, XIV, 40–51)

[Its brightness results from our ardor, our ardor from our vision, and our vision is as great as the grace that receives beyond its worth. When we are once again clothed with our glorious and holy flesh, our person will be more pleasing by being whole, therefore what the highest Good gives us of gratuitous light will be increased, light that enables us to see him, thus vision must increase, the ardor must increase that is kindled by it, the radiance must increase that comes from this love.]

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[57] Kleinhenz, 'The Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead', also notes the importance of a proper burial place in the Manfred episode as well as in the Buonconte episode, p. 52.

[58] Gragnolati, p. 151.

[59] Gragnolati, p. 157. For an example of those arguing that the soul's desire for the body occurs in Ante-Purgatory as a sign of their need for purgation, see Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, pp. 99–121.

This passage focuses on the idea of wholeness, going back to Aquinas' idea of the incomplete quality of the soul if the body is not present.[60] After Judgement Day, the souls of Heaven will feel more blessedness and glory because they will be reunited with their bodies and the souls of Hell will feel more pain and suffering for the same reason.[61] This longing for the body also points to ideas of identity and how one is known to the world and remembered. The individual thinking about their mortality wants their body to be taken care of because it is a part of their identity and is tied to the soul. They will need it at the Resurrection and therefore they need it to be looked after until that day.

In *Inferno* VI Dante expresses his understanding of what happens on Judgement Day through the voice of Virgil:

> "ciascun rivederà la Trista tomba,
> ripiglierà sua carne e sua figura,
> udirà quel ch'in etterno rimbomba." (*Inf.*, VI, 97–99)
>
> [each will see again his sad tomb, will take again his flesh and his shape, will hear what resounds eternally.]

Dante believed that the soul's body on Earth, buried in its tomb, would be the same body that was reunited with the soul during the Last Judgement. This adheres to Aquinas, who argued that the soul was imperfect unless it was reunited with the body. And Dante calls attention to the necessity of the body when it is only the souls in the wood of suicides who will not regain their bodies at the Last Judgement (*Inf.* 13, 94–108).[62] This is important with reference to funerary practices because the body was essential to the Resurrection. Therefore, each individual wanted to ensure their body was buried in a safe place and would be looked after until Judgement Day. Instead of being buried in an unmarked grave, outside of the city walls, the practice shifts, bringing the bodies of the dead into the safe and sacred space of the church where they could not only ensure a safe place but also could ensure prayers were said on their behalf.

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[60] Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* q. 90, a. 4.
[61] Gragnolati, p. 155.
[62] For an analysis of these two passages with reference to the unicity and plurality debate see Gragnolati, pp. 143–46.

Appropriately, the main theme that scholarship associates with the Farinata episode is an inverted resurrection, also termed a false or incomplete resurrection.[63] For example, Cassell argues that the opened tomb lids refer to Christ's descent into Hell and his resurrection (Matt: 27: 51–53); the tomb lids representing eternal life for Christians.[64] An analysis of tomb decoration adds an additional layer to the idea of false resurrection. For example, the iconography of Farinata's posture aligns with a common motif found on tomb decorations: the Man of Sorrows, which is a representation of Jesus standing from the waist-up in his tomb (Figure 24; Figure 26; Figure 27) Although this connection between the false resurrection and Christ's resurrection has been noted by scholars previously, expanding on this by considering its connection to tomb sculpture and decoration, provides new insights into Dante's immersion in Florentine funerary practices.

As the tomb of Cangrande I shows (Figure 24), the Man of Sorrows represents the victory of Christ over death, but its placement on a tomb also indicates the hoped-for resurrection of the deceased who, in this example of Cangrande I, is represented in prayer to the Man of Sorrows on his tomb. This hoped-for resurrection on tomb decoration mocks the false resurrection of Farinata, who will never rise again.

This idea is carried further when we consider the other features of tomb decoration. Many tomb sculptures or their surrounding decoration at this time depicted both Christ's resurrection, symbolising the promise of Salvation as well as the Last Judgement, where Salvation was fulfilled, often represented by people rising from their tombs.[65] Examples of this are found in a small number of interior *avelli* that still exist, such as the *avello* found in the Holy Confessors Chapel in Santa Croce (Figure 23) (c. 1340). This chapel was likely commissioned by Gualtiero di Jacopo de' Bardi and his son Andrea in the

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[63] Kleinhenz, 'The Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead', p. 57; Cassell, p. 24. Cavalcante's movement, rising only so that his head can be seen, also exemplifies this idea of false resurrection, as he cannot even raise himself up as high as Farinata (*Inf.*, X, 52–54).

[64] Cassell, pp. 23–24; Heilbronn notes that Filippo Argenti's posture when he rises up from the river of Styx before Dante enters the City of Dis is also linked to the Last Judgement and a false resurection, pp. 187–88.

[65] Binski, pp. 8–9; 54.

1330s. The larger tomb displays a sarcophagus decorated with prophets, the Bardi coat of arms, and a Man of Sorrows. Its fresco decoration represents the Last Judgement, with angels blowing the trumpets announcing the judgement and the raising of the dead from the tombs, while other angels carry the instruments of the crucifixion. An image of the patron shown in three-quarters view with his hands in prayer appears, from the viewers perspective, to rise from the sculpted tomb (Figure 23), with the implication that the deceased within the tomb is amongst those saved (Pope Boniface VIII (*c.* 1230–1303) had a tomb with this iconography as well).[66] Jane C. Long notes in her analysis of this *avello* that scenes from the Last Judgement where the deceased rise from their graves were common in fourteenth-century Italian art, other examples being the Scrovegni chapel in Padua or the Baptistery of Florence (Figure 28 and Figure 29).[67] The implication of the deceased being one of the saved at the end of time, their wish fulfilled in imagery, once again mocks Farinata, Cavalcante, and the other heretics' position since they will never be saved. The existing readings of this episode align with my own in terms of the interpretation of the text but this analysis of the architecture of tombs reinforces the bigger argument that architecture plays an important role in the imagination of Dante and his readers. Therefore, by interpreting Farinata's false resurrection through the lens of tomb decoration, the reader is provided with a visual that Dante and his contemporaries would understand, suggesting another way in which readers may have engaged with the text through their understanding of material culture and how tomb sculpture was talked about in terms of the Last Judgement and the relationship of the body and soul.

The Baptistery of Florence – so central to Florentine identity, and a fundamental reference point for Dante himself – exemplifies the cultural practices discussed here.[68] The mosaic representing the Last Judgement

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[66] Jane C. Long, 'Salvation through Meditation: The Tomb Frescoes in the Holy Confessors Chapel at Santa Croce in Florence', *Gesta*, 34.1 (1995), 77–88 (p. 77) <https://doi.org/10.2307/767126>.

[67] Long, pp. 79–80.

[68] Ernest Hatch Wilkins, 'Dante and the Mosaics of His Bel San Giovanni', *Speculum*, 2.1 (1927), 1–10 (p. 3) <https://doi.org/10.2307/2849593> [accessed 8 March 2021]. His article argues that many of the visual images Dante produces are inspired by the mosaics; some examples being, the Rose of the Empyrean from the apse mosaic where the saints appear in petal shapes, or the caryatids on the same mosaic being the inspiration for Dante's proud souls in Purgatory.

shows Christ in a mandorla as Judge, directing the souls of the dead to Heaven and Hell with his hands. He is represented with the wounds of the Crucifixion on his hands and feet. Above him are angels with the symbols of the Crucifixion and attributes of the Last Judgement such as the trumpets, merge the Crucifixion and the Last Judgement themes. To the left of his feet we find six tombs with raised lids at various angles, as well as people rising from the tombs in various poses. The Baptistery fresco is a useful point of comparison because it was an image Dante saw and which has clear links to the portrayal of the heretics.[69]

This adds to our understanding of why Dante chooses to place the heretics in a cemetery and why, in his most explicit example of tombs, he refers to the Resurrection and the Last Judgement. This is ironic because the tombs of the heretics are open now, but during the Last Judgement they will be sealed forever:

> […] 'Tutti saran serrati
> quando di Iosofat qui torneranno
> coi corpi che là sù hanno lasciati.' (*Inf.*, X, 10–12)
> [All will be closed when from Jehoshaphat they return with the bodies they left up there.]

This calls direct attention to the Epicurean disbelief in the resurrection of the body.[70] The tomb of Farinata is further linked to ideas of the fleshly resurrection at the Last Judgement earlier in the poem, in the circle of gluttons, when Dante-*personaggio* speaks with Ciacco, a fellow Florentine. Ciacco explains that Dante will find Farinata further down in Hell (ll. 85–87) and then refers to the Last Judgement:

> […] "ciascun rivederà la trista tomba,
> ripiglierà sua carne e sua figura,
> udirà quel ch'in etterno rimbomba." (*Inf.*, VI, 97–99)

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[69] Wilkins, p. 5 links the mosaic with Dante's heretics.

[70] For a thorough investigation of the Epicureans, see George Corbett, *Dante and Epicurus: A Dualistic Vision of Secular and Spiritual Fulfilment*, (Oxford: Legenda, 2015) <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1647003> [accessed 19 September 2019].

> [each will see again his sad tomb, will take again his flesh and his shape, will hear what resounds eternally.]

Although all of the souls in Hell will receive their bodies on Judgement Day,[71] the fact that the Epicureans will be sealed in their tombs is deeply ironic because they believed the tomb was the end of the story and for them it will be: they will remain in their tombs, sealed for eternity.

By analysing the tomb practices during Dante's time, the reader is provided with a further layer of meaning to interpret the episode of the heretics implicit in the symbolism of the *avelli* being connected to pride and representing oneself 'at one's best'; the use of *avelli* as communal burial places; and the iconography of *avelli* linking both Christ's death and resurrection as well as the deceased hoped for resurrection; and finally, the sin of the Epicureans specifically.

5.3.2 **Community in Hell and Purgatory**

The importance of the body to the soul is also emphasised throughout Purgatory. Aquinas' argument that the soul is imperfect without the body is once again called upon when Dante-*personaggio* cannot embrace the shade of Casella (*Purg.*, II, 89–90) or in Statius' failed embrace of Virgil (*Purg.*, XXI, 131–32). This, according to Gragnolati, is an example of 'the aerial body point[ing'] back nostalgically to the earthly body.'[72] Dante thus gives the souls in the afterlife the ability to maintain the bonds they had on Earth, not only with their bodies which they yearn for, but also with the bodies of other individuals; their friends and family. This is an important distinction in Dante's theology because it allows for a sense of community that began on Earth but will continue in Heaven. Gragnolati argues that 'most theologians reject the idea of friendship or affection on a personal level in heaven', noting Bonaventure who said 'all saints are equally close'.[73] But Dante's depiction offers an alternative where the souls of Heaven can find their friends and family after the Resurrection (*Par.*, XIV, 61–66).[74] Thus, when the soul is reunited with its body it will also be reunited with

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[71] With the exception of the suicides.

[72] Gragnolati, p. 148.

[73] Gragnolati, p. 159.

[74] Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 138.

its loved ones. This idea is connected to the loss one feels at death, offering a ‘solution to the failed embrace of purgatory’ but also a ‘victory over death and loss’.[75]

As we know from chapter 4, ideas of community are expressed throughout Purgatory through shared movement, prayers, and other rituals acts (4.5). This is in stark contrast to Hell where the souls, even when heaped together, are unable to help each other (*Inf.*, XXIX). With reference to the circle of heretics, Dante-*personaggio* speaks to two sinners: Farinata, the leader of the Ghibellines from 1239–1264 and Cavalcante, a member of the Guelph faction. Tomb practices can inform our understanding of why Dante places both Farinata and Cavalcante in the same tomb (*Inf.*, X, 52–54). In late medieval Florence, the dying decided who they would be buried with: one could be buried by oneself or communally. Communal burial could be based on family ties, profession or on social, political or religious groups such as a confraternity or guild.[76] Family tombs were often purchased for the husband and wife as well as their children. Confraternity burial sites were also common and usually located in the floor, crypt, or cloister of the church in which the confraternity met, and these were marked by large round marble slabs with the confraternity’s symbol.[77] One of the advantages of burial with one’s confraternity was the guarantee of regular commemorative masses, reducing one’s time in Purgatory, an example of which is found in Santa Maria Novella with its tomb of the *Laudesi*.[78]

Dante’s choice of *avelli* for the circle of heretics is consistent with this practice since they were used for individual or communal burial. Dante’s main pair of souls buried together are Farinata and Cavalcante. Although Farinata and Cavalcante are related through the marriage of their children, this is very different from the funerary practices where a person was buried with his or her

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[75] Gragnolati, p. 160.
[76] Leader, pp. 129–30; Binski, p. 103.
[77] Henderson, p. 161.
[78] Henderson, p. 163.

kin or his or her religious group.[79] This practice identifies and strengthens familial, religious, or civic bonds and love between the deceased. Farinata and Cavalcante do exemplify this symbolism but not for each other; Farinata expresses love for his faction, so much so that their demise is worse than the tortures of Hell, while Cavalcante can only focus on his son, with whom he should be buried on earth (*Inf.*, X, 76–78; 67–72).[80] Therefore, their placement together is ironic given their position in Hell. Virgil describes the inhabitants of the tombs earlier on saying that 'simile qui con simile è sepolto' [like with like is buried here] (*Inf.*, IX, 130). But this is based on the heretical groups each subscribed to rather than their actual familial bonds or friendships. Thus, Dante plays with this practice since these souls are stuck with those whom they hated rather than loved. This hatred and alienation of the Guelphs and Ghibellines is emphasised by the fact that even though Cavalcante and Farinata occupy the same tomb, they do not interact with one another. In fact, it is unclear whether Farinata even notices Cavalcante's presence (*Inf.*, X, 73–76).

Another example of communal burial takes place in *Inferno* XIX, discussed in more detail below. Similar to the tombs in the circle of heretics, this canto's sinners, the simonists, are punished by being jammed into holes in the ground, where multiple occupants inhabit the same space (*Inf.*, XIX, 73–75). Here, the common bond between these souls is based on their profession as popes, rather than any familial ties. Dante-*personaggio* meets Nicholas III (*c.* 1225–1280) awaiting Boniface VIII who will push him further down into the hole (*Inf.*, XIX, 73–78). These souls are literally piled one on top of the other yet they do not speak to one another or help each other, similar to the heretics. This is made more explicit here, because Virgil picks Dante-*personaggio* up and brings him to the hole to speak to Nicholas III, and after the conversation ceases, Virgil once again picks Dante-*personaggio* up and carries him (*Inf.*, XIX, 34–45; 124–30). The community produced between Virgil and Dante contrasts sharply with

[79] See for example Emilio Pasquini and Antonio Quaglio (1982), gloss to *Inf.*, X, 52–53 (*DDP*). See also Robert M. Durling, 'Canto X: Farinata and Cavalcanti', in *Lectura Dantis*, ed. by Allen Mandelbaum, Anthony Oldcorn, and Charles Ross (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 136–49 (p. 137).

[80] See for example, Robert Hollander, gloss to *Inf.*, X, 52–54 (2000–2007) (*DDP*).

the souls piled on top of each other, yet they do not interact or help one another.

In contrast, community building is expressed on the terrace of pride with the recitation of the Paternoster by the proud (*Purg.*, XI, 22–24). But on the terrace of pride, we do not find communal burial tombs in the form of *avelli*; instead we find individual tombs of the famous proud on tomb slabs, marking the difference between the sin of pride and the communal purgation taking place with the souls who are learning pride’s opposing virtue, humility, together.

5.3.3 Tomb Slabs and Lesson of Humility (*Purg.,* XII)

Tomb slabs were the most common type of burial in the thirteenth and early fourteenth century.[81] *Purgatorio* XII takes place on the terrace of pride, the first of the seven terraces. On this terrace, Dante-*personaggio* is provided with examples of humility found on the walls of the mountain and he speaks to souls carrying large stones on their backs, encircling the terrace. After this encounter, Virgil instructs him to cast his eyes downwards, in the same posture as the souls, and Dante-*personaggio* finds tomb slabs carved into the pavement. Virgil says:

> […] “Volgi li occhi in giùe:
> buon ti sarà, per tranquillar la via,
> veder lo letto de le piante tue.”
> Come, perché di lor memoria sia,
> sovra i sepolti le tombe terragne
> portan segnato quel ch’elli eran pria,
> onde lì molte volte si ripiagne
> per la puntura de la rimembranza,
> che solo a’ pïi dà de le calcagne:
> sì vid’ io lì […] (*Purg.*, XII, 13–22)
>
> [“Turn your eyes downward: it will be good for you, to smooth your path, to see the bed where the soles of your feet are resting.” As, over the buried dead, to preserve their memory, the tombs in a pavement are signed with what they were in life, so that often we weep again because of the pricking of memory, which drives its spurs only into the devoted: so I saw carvings there.]

81 Getty, p. 22.

This is an explicit description of tomb slabs found in churches with inscriptions and representations of the deceased, examples of which are found in Santa Maria Novella (Figure 30), Santa Reparata (Figure 31) (where over twenty are still extant, only one of which is later than Dante's death), and Santa Croce (Figure 32), where 140 tomb slabs still exist.[82]

Tomb slabs were often chosen as a means to combat the argument that tomb decoration went against the vow of poverty because of their simple style.[83] Virgil's instructions also recall the fact that tomb slabs were chosen because people would walk on top of them, symbolising the humility of the deceased. Durand describes this symbolism:

> Pavimentum Ecclesiae est fidei nostrae fundamentum. In Ecclesia vero spirituali pavimentum sunt pauperes Christi, scillicet pauperes spiritu, qui se in omnibus humiliant, quarepropter humilitatem pavimento assimilantur. Rursus pavimentum, quod pedibus calcatur, vulgus est, cujus laboribus Ecclesia sustentatur. (*Rationale*, 1.1.28)
>
> [The pavement of the church is the foundation of our faith. But in the spiritual Church the pavement is the poor of Christ : the poor in spirit, who humble themselves in all things : wherefore on account of their humility they are likened to the pavement. Again, the pavement, which is trodden under foot, represents the multitude, by whose labours the Church is sustained.]

It is likely not a coincidence that Dante chose this particular type of tomb sculpture for the terrace of pride since humility is such an important part of this terrace: Dante-*personaggio* has just seen the friezes of humility, the virtue the souls need to embrace in order to move beyond this terrace. Durand makes an explicit reference to the pavement as a symbol for humility which is learned by being trodden on, just as Dante's pavement is trodden on for the souls of the proud to learn humility through the representations of pride depicted (*Purg*., XII, 13–15). This is strengthened a few lines before Dante's description of the tomb slabs, when he says that although he stands erect to walk, his thoughts remain humbled [*scemi*] (*Purg*., XII, 9) and after he has walked over and seen all the tomb slabs he says he 'trod upon them, while [he] walked bent over' [quant' io

[82] Cimino, *ED*, also notes the adjective 'terragne' denotes the type of tomb.
[83] Binski, p. 91.

calcai, fin che chinato givi], once again exemplifying the humility necessary to escape this terrace (*Purg.*, XII, 69).

Dante's choice of funerary monument is informative because it plays with the symbolic meaning of tomb slabs on this terrace: instead of finding carvings of souls resting in peace and aspiring to humility by being walked upon, Dante-*personaggio* finds examples of pride: he sees Satan falling from Heaven to his place in Hell (ll.25–27), the giant Briareus and the other giants (ll. 28–33), Nimrod at the foot of his tower (ll. 34–6), Niobe (ll. 37–9) Saul (ll. 40–42), Arachne (ll. 43–45), Rehoboam (ll. 46–48), Eriphyle (ll. 49–51), Sennacherib (ll. 52–54), Cyrus (ll. 55–57), Holofernes (ll. 58–60), and finally the battle of Troy (ll. 61–63). These carvings do not symbolise humility but instead the opposing sin of pride and these souls are shown at the moment of their death which came about because of their pride. Therefore, Dante-*personaggio* and the souls who tread on the tomb slabs are enacting the virtue that these examples of pride should have chosen. The choice of tomb slabs for this terrace strengthens our understanding of the ironic twist Dante is employing to teach the souls to turn away from pride.

The new practices of depicting the deceased by name in an inscription or by representing them in bodily form on tomb slabs within the pavement is also referenced here (*Purg.*, XII, 16–22). An example of this is a tomb slab in Santa Reparata's crypt, designed for Jacopo Cavalcanti (d. 1302) (Figure 31). Although it has been repositioned and now sits vertically, it originally rested on the pavement. It presents a full-length depiction of Jacopo with an inscription: 'Hic Iacet sepultus Dominus Jacopus de Cavalcantibus canonicus et […] huius ecclesie plebanus plebis Sancti Martini de Rimaggio requiescat in pace' [Here lies buried Master Jacopo Cavalcanti, canon and the priest of the parish church of St Martin Rimeggio. Rest in peace]. Although Dante did not see this particular bas-relief since Jacopo was buried in 1302, it is a good example of the type of imagery common within the churches of Florence and shows that these reliefs were painted and included distinguishing characteristics and inscriptions to discern who is buried and who they were in life.

Santa Maria Novella's tomb slabs are examples of less elaborate styles from the fourteenth century. Although the precise dating on many of them is not known and their positions on the floor have been altered, they are examples of

a simpler style where only the heraldic symbols of the deceased are engraved. There are also examples found in Santa Croce, one example, dating to slightly after Dante's lifetime, depicts the name and date of death, as well as a coat of arms (Figure 32).These examples provide evidence of the different kinds of funerary monuments available to people during or shortly after Dante's lifetime and show the variety available to accommodate different classes since these floor slabs were purchased by commercial and professional classes as well as lower ranking workers such as tavern-owners.[84]

Dante's tomb slabs are also carved with defining characteristics of the dead. But in another subversion of the reader's expectations, these carvings are described as 'low and vile', in opposition to the normal practice of depicting the deceased at their finest (*Purg.* XII, 62). The carvings that Dante-*personaggio* and the souls of the proud walk over do not show the souls 'at their best', instead they are depicted in the moment of their death, produced through their sin of pride. Dante does this in order to teach the viewer to avoid pride but he also calls attention to the function of funerary monuments:

> Come, perchè di lor memoria sia,
> sovra i sepolti le tombe terragne
> portan segnato quel ch'elli eran pria,
> onde lì molte volte si ripiagne
> per la puntura de la rimembranza,
> che solo a' pïì dà de la calcagne:
> sì vid' io lì […] (*Purg.* XII, 16–22)
>
> [As, over the buried dead, to preserve their memory, the tombs in a pavement are signed with what they were in life, so that often we weep again because of the pricking of memory, which drives its spurs only into the devoted: so I saw carvings there]

These carvings function as reminders of the dead and also produce an affective response in the reader — weeping, as Dante explains. The idea of affect was prevalent in the didactic literature about the connection of body and soul in the afterlife. For example, Bonvesin da la Riva's *Black Scripture* states: 'ki la lezesse col cor e co la mente, | E sospirar e planze devrav amaramente' [anyone who reads it with heart and mind should sigh and weep bitterly] (ll. 23–

[84] Leader, p. 113.

24).[85] This idea is carried into the tomb sculpture and inscriptions of the deceased, and here in Dante's description of the tomb lids. This affective response is also important because the art of the tomb is what distinguishes who the person is and therefore produces the emotive response. In an ironic twist, in Hell and Purgatory, instead of invoking sadness and mourning for the deceased by depicting their resemblance, heraldic symbols, or their names, the viewer is reminded of the error of the sinner's life and a didactic rather than mourning response is produced in the reader. A less explicit example of this occurs when Dante-*personaggio* reads the inscription on the lid of pope Anastasius' tomb, mentioned above (*Inf.*, XI, 8–9). This inscription, rather than honouring the dead, provides information on why the soul is in Hell, he was corrupted: drawn from the straight way. Therefore, tombs in medieval Florence are about self-fashioning and forging a flattering identity; whereas, for Dante, these references show a different way for us to relate to and understand the lives of the deceased, where we are learning richer lessons. On the terrace of pride, we find a more explicit example where the sins of pride are represented on the tombs carved into the pavement (*Purg.*, XII, 13–69).

Although scholarship has paid particular attention to the repeated acrostic of VOM [man] as representing the necessity of seeing man's downfall in lines 25–58, the fact that Dante is describing the act of seeing tomb slabs can strengthen this interpretation and its relationship to themes of identity. Dante repeats the term 'vedea' [I saw] four times at the beginning of the first four *terzine*, calling attention to the act of seeing needed to understand who the person depicted on the tomb is, in order to produce affect and thus, prayer for their soul (*Purg.*, XII, 25, 28, 31, 34). He also describes the art on the tomb slabs as so masterful that the 'dead seemed dead, and the living living' [Morti li morti e i vivi parean vivi] (*Purg.*, XII, 67). This once again recalls the idea of affect that is necessary to gain prayers. For these examples, the torment and downfall are so realistic that rather than produce empathy and prayer for the dead, as the tombs of Florence did, they produce contempt and aversion

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[85] Bonvesin de la Riva, *Il libro delle tre scritture e volgari delle false scuse e delle vanità*, ed. by Vincenzo de Bartholomaeis (Rome: Società Filologica Romana, 1901).

through their realistic depiction. Furthermore, the reader and Dante-*personaggio* consider how the artist renders the difference of life and death, emphasising the community between them and the reliance the dead have on the living by the prayers they perform to expedite the dead's time in Purgatory.[86] Therefore, an understanding of the popular practice of tomb slabs informs our understanding of Dante's choice on this terrace and how he subverts the reader's expectations by playing with the symbolism inherent in tomb slabs for conveying the identity of the deceased, the necessity of humility, invoking prayer for the dead, and producing affect in the viewer.

There is also a parallel here with baptism whereby the souls in Purgatory have to 'die to sin', by observing the images on the tomb slabs on this terrace, in order to rise (literally, to eventually stand up straight) to new life, represented in the need to look at the wall friezes with the images of humility on them. A further rebirth or resurrection occurs when Statius rises in a similar manner to Christ later on (*Purg.*, XXI, 7–13).

5.3.4 **Death and Baptism as a link between the Simonists and Heretics (*Inf.*, XIX)**

This connection between death and baptism is also found in *Inferno* XIX, in the circle of the simonists, where Dante makes another direct reference to tombs. Upon entering this new space, Dante states:

> Già eravamo, a la seguente tomba,
> montati de lo scoglio in quelle parte,
> ch'a punto sovra mezzo 'l fosso piomba. (*Inf.*, XIX, 7–9)
> [We had already climbed to the part of the ridge that is exactly above the centre of the next tomb.]

Dante uses the phrase 'le seguente tomba' metonymically to mean the *bolge*, as 'the places where the dead people are'.[87] It is important to compare this

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[86] See the note by Durling and Martinez, The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 2: Purgatorio, p. 200.

[87] Cimino, *ED*, notes Benvenuto's gloss: 'ad tertiam bulgiam, quam Auctor bene vocat tumbam, quia in ea sunt sepulti simoniaci.' Cimino also notes the difficulty of this passage and the different interpretations, such as Buti's interpretation of it as 'summit' or 'height'. The Casini-Barbi, *ED*, commentary states that 'these are interpretations that cannot be reached without effort'.

circle to the other areas that refer to tombs since Dante chooses to describe this particular circle explicitly as a tomb whereas it is only implicit for the other *bolge*, but also because of the architectural nature of this *bolgia* as well as the relationship found here between baptism and death.

Dante describes the architectural structure of the space of the *bolgia* at the beginning of the canto:

> Io vidi per le coste e per lo fondo
> piena la pietra livida di fóri,
> d'un largo tutti e ciascun era tondo.
> Non mi parean men ampi né maggiori
> che que' che son nel mio bel San Giovanni,
> fatti per loco d'l battezzatori; (*Inf.*, XIX, 13–18)[88]
>
> [I saw, along the sides and the bottom, the livid rock perforated with holes, all the same size, and each was round. They seemed no less ample, nor greater, than those in my lovely San Giovanni, made as places for the baptizers.]

The architecture of the space is described as round holes directly in the *bolgia*'s rock floor. Dante also offers a comparison with the fonts of the Baptistery of Florence to indicate their size and shape. Later in the canto the constricting nature and shape of the holes are also described where each hole is filled with other simonists, one on top of the other, like a chain, squeezed into the cracks in the rock (*Inf.*, XIX, 73–75). The sinners are planted within these holes with their feet up, and this, combined with the reference to San Giovanni, implies that these sinners are punished with an inverted baptism (*Inf.*, XIX, 22–24).

The reference to the baptismal fonts in the Baptistery connect the beginning of one's life with the end (*Inf.*, XIX, 13–18); baptism itself symbolising both death and resurrection, dying to sin and being born to life in Christ and the immersion in water mimicking burial in a tomb (Romans 6:4).[89] Durand offers an explicit connection between baptism and resurrection in the ritual's context:

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[88] For a summary of the debate as to whether Dante is referring to the font itself or the stall in which the priest stood, see Musa, pp. 40–43.

[89] Consepulti enim sumus cum illo per baptismum in mortem: ut quomodo Christus surrexit a mortuis per gloriam Patris, ita et nos in novitate vitae ambulemus. [For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.]

> Ideo enim fit hac die baptismus, quia in eo consepulti sumus Christo, et propter hoc baptizandus ter immergitur, prout infra dicetur. Secundo, ideo quia baptismus partim a passione, et partim a resurrection vim suam accipit: a passione ablutionem a peccatis, a resurrection gratiae innovatiunem. (*Rationale*, 4.82.1)
>
> [We celebrate baptism on this day because it is on this day that we were buried with Christ. This is why we immerse those we want to baptize three times into the water, as we will say below. Second, because baptism receives its virtue partly from the Passion and partly from the Resurrection. From the Passion it receives the purification of sins and from the Resurrection it draws the renewal of grace.]

The 'day' Durand speaks of is the ritual of the baptism of the catechumens, performed on Easter Saturday. This day was selected to baptise because it is associated with Christ's death, the Harrowing of Hell while Christ's body lay in his tomb, and resurrection — connecting the ideas of baptism, death, tombs, and resurrection further.

Durand also notes the use of flames, in the form of candles, and their role within the ritual of baptism. After the candles are lit, the priest: 'asks God the Father to implore, through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit to descend on the font' [ut per Jesum Christum imploret Spiritum sanctum, ut in fontes descenda] (*Rationale*, 4.82.3). The candles in the ritual signify the Holy Spirit, similar to the Pentecostal flames. Candles also played an important role, in that they indicated the transformation of the soul being baptised: 'The candles that are lit immediately after baptism indicate that the light of grace accompanies turmoil […]' [cerei qui statim post baptismum accenduntur, significant quod per turbationem peccatorum comitatur illuminatio gratiarum] (*Rationale*, 4.82.10). Dante plays with the notion of candles, when the feet of the popes, punished in this circle, are set aflame:

> Le piante erano a tuti accese intrambe,
> per che sì forte guizzavan le giunte
> che spezzate averien ritorte e strambe.
> Qual suole il fiammeggiar de le cose unte
> muoversi pur su per la strema buccia:
> tal era lì dai calcagni a le punte. (*Inf.*, XIX, 25–30)
>
> [All of them had both soles aflame; therefore they wriggled their joints so violently that they would have broken twisted withes or braided ropes. As the flaming of oily things moves over just the outer rind: so did it there from heels to toes.]

Scholars have noted that the fire licking their feet refers to an inverted Pentecost, where the fire of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost flamed like tongues

on the heads of the Apostles, now it licks the feet of the popes.[90] But the fact that these sinners are stuck in baptismal fonts can add to this reading. Firstly, aside from Easter Saturday, baptism could also be performed during Pentecost (*Rationale*, 4.83.3). The other key component to the baptismal ritual was water. The person being baptised is immersed three times and the priest makes the sign of the cross to indicate the power of Christ in saving the soul, to defend the soul from the devil, and to signify the Holy Trinity (*Rationale*, 4.82.4–6). For the souls in the circle of the simonists, no water is provided and therefore, this lack of water, not only contributes to their punishment, as they cannot receive any remedy or respite for their burning feet, but it also symbolises a lack; the baptismal fonts become the containers in which they are stuck and will never be resurrected, rather than their original role of symbolising the ability to be resurrected with Christ after death. In addition, the idea that John baptises with water, but the one who comes after him will baptise with fire and the Holy Spirit, are also present within Dante's description (Luke 3:16).[91]

As noted earlier, the Last Judgement scene in the Baptistery is of particular importance, as it relates to the postures and visual imagery of the heretics. The Last Judgement is also important in the context of this canto, as it embeds these cultural practices revealed in Scripture and liturgy in its material form. It connects the ideas of resurrection and baptism because the mosaic is located within the Baptistery and, likely, above the location of the font. There are further connections to Dante's depiction of the simonists and their connection to baptism in the narrative scenes from Genesis where Noah's Ark and its events are represented on four panels rather than one, and a double scene expands one of the mosaics, emphasising its importance.

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[90] Kenelm Foster, 'The Canto of the Damned Popes: Inferno XIX', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 87, 1969, 47–68 (p. 55); Ronald B. Herzman and William A. Stephany, '"O Miseri Seguaci": Sacramental Inversion in Inferno XIX', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 96, 1978, 39–65 (p. 40).

[91] Respondit Ioannes dicens omnibus: "Ego quidem aqua baptizo vos. Venit autem fortior me, cuius non sum dignus solvere corrigiam calceamentorum eius: ipse vos baptizabit in Spiritu Sancto et igni" [John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.]

Turning back for a moment to *Inferno* X, the term *arche* is used by Dante twice in the circle of the heretics to describe the tombs (*Inf.*, IX, 124–29; X, 28–30). As noted earlier, *arche* was a synonym for *avelli* and Dante also uses them interchangeably. But *arche* also have baptismal connotations and this is an area I wish to explore here as was the case in chapter 4, with the procession in Earthly Paradise. Robert M. Durling argues that the posture of Farinata, from the waist up, not only mimics the Man of Sorrows posture of Christ's resurrection, but also the iconography of Christ's baptism. Durling also connects the use of *arche* to Noah's Ark, which is considered the first figure of baptism since those who did not die, were in a sense reborn — again connecting baptism and death (*Rationale*, 4.83.1).[92] Though these examples linking death and baptism are less explicit in the circle of heretics, the text leads the reader to link the circle of heretics with the more explicit themes of death and baptism in the circle of simonists, especially since Dante describes this *bolgia* as a tomb. The fact that Dante explicitly refers to the Baptistery of Florence in *canto* XIX and that the image of the heretics found in the Baptistery resemble Farinata's posture, link these two canti further.

It is not just the scene of Noah's ark in the Last Judgement mosaics in the Baptistery that links baptism and death.[93] There are also scenes of tombs found in the Life of Christ mosaics, with the Crucifixion as well as the women at the tomb, where the empty tomb takes the form of a sarcophagus. Lastly, the scenes from the life of John the Baptist depict two scenes of baptism, one in which he baptises the crowds, and the other with him baptising Jesus. This story sequence ends with the burial of John the Baptist, in an *avello* style sarcophagus. The burial of John the Baptist sits beneath the resurrection of Christ, which is also in line with the scene of the Flood and all three are right beside the resurrected and saved in the Heavenly Jerusalem of the Last Judgement panel — thus connecting baptism and resurrection even further. Though the connection of the fourth story, that of the Life of Joseph, is less explicit, as it depicts Joseph meeting Jacob, it is a type of resurrection since

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[92] Durling, p. 148.

[93] Kleinhenz also notes this vertical type of reading of the baptistery mosaics in Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View', p. 226.

Jacob thought his son had been killed before this meeting. Therefore, Dante’s reference to the Baptistery and its mosaic programme, as well as his description of this *bolgia* as a tomb, connect ideas of baptism and resurrection, linking the heretics and simonists.

The posture of the simonists also connects them to the heretics:

> Fuor de la bocca a ciascun soperchiava
> d’un peccator li piedi e de la gambe
> infino al grosso e l’altro dentro stava. (*Inf.*, XIX, 22–24)
> [From the mouth of each protruded the feet and legs of a sinner, as far as the thighs, and the rest was inside.]

They are buried face down in the holes, with their feet in the air. Their position is the exact opposite of Farinata’s: where he was shown from the waist up, here the simonists are shown from the waist down. If we consider this posture in reference to St Peter, we find an inverted crucifixion. St Peter was crucified upside-down because he did not feel worthy to be crucified in the same way as Christ. This seems to be the only adherence the souls have to St Peter, and instead they follow his opposite, Simon Magus (*Inf.*, XIX, 1–6). They do not follow the correct path of the saints and therefore they are planted like poles (*Inf.*, XIX, 47). This configuration is similar to the saints represented by columns, found in chapter 4 in connection to the features of the church as represented by the church community; however, this is a mock reversal, where the souls are not solid and durable like the saints, but rather are flailing their feet because of the flames, becoming completely unstable (*Inf.*, XIX, 25–27). Therefore, this inversion in the ground is a parody of St Peter’s martyrdom, and mocks the popes’ focus on worldly goods, in opposition to St Peter’s poverty as well as demonstrating the sinners’ instability and inverted character.[94] Again, we find a connection between the heretics, who focused only on earthly life since they did not believe in the afterlife, and the simonists, who were so focused on earthly gold and silver — emphasised by the repetition of ‘oro’ and ‘argento’ three times — that they are now implanted in the rock of the Earth, face down (*Inf.*, XIX, 4,

[94] Herzman and Stephany, p. 44; Dabney G. Park, ‘Dante and the Donation of Constantine’, p. 81 <https://www.academia.edu/12010990/Dante_and_the_Donation_of_Constantine> [accessed 23 August 2020]. For the focus on earthly things rather than celestial, see Jacopo della Lana (1324–1328), gloss to *Inf.*, XIX, 13–15 (*DDP*).

95. 112–17). Therefore, the sin of selling the sacraments has led to their posture and false crucifixion, creating an example of the corrupt Church in connection to profits in this circle, a theme I will return to when discussing the souls whom Dante meets in this canto, the popes.

5.3.4.1 Material Wealth as a Form of Church Corruption

Popes were the first to have elaborate tombs in Italy, exemplified by the tomb of Clement IV (1190– 1268) which is raised on a plinth in a canopy with an effigy on top of the sepulchre (Figure 33).[95] The popes Dante meets in *Inferno* XIX had *avello* style tombs. Pope Nicholas III's tomb was located in Old St Peter's in an oratory that he founded and consecrated (Figure 34). Unfortunately, only the sarcophagus still remains but one of the relief narratives shows St Peter washing the feet of Jesus, a gesture of humility, that Dante does not associate with Nicholas III.[96] The design of the tomb of Pope Boniface VIII, the pope that Nicholas III awaits in Hell, is attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio (the architect of Santa Maria del Fiore and the tomb of Pope Adrian V (*c*. 1210–1276), the other pope we will meet in *Purgatorio* XIX) (Figure 35). Pope Boniface VIII was also buried on the façade wall of Old St Peter's, but his funerary chapel was demolished in the seventeenth century; however, watercolours and recorded inscriptions of it exist. Again, only the sarcophagus exists, now in the Grotto Vaticane, which shows the pope resting in peace in an effigy. There was a mosaic above the sarcophagus representing St Peter presenting a genuflecting Boniface.[97]

Dante meets another pope in *Purgatorio* XIX, Adrian V, who forms a reversal of tomb slabs or effigies that should cover a grave since he, and the other avaricious sinners, lie prostrate, facing down and sing psalm 118 [119]: *Adhaesit pavimento anima mea*!". Adrian V's tomb at Viterbo is an elaborate *avello* with two plinths below his sarcophagus, raising him even higher than Clement IV, buried a few years before in the same church (Figure 36). Social

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95 Binski, p. 83.

96 Interestingly, this example of humility is linked to the terrace of pride and its examples of humility, linking all of the references to tombs to common features in the poem.

97 Binski, p. 74; Bourdua, p. 415.

prestige was inscribed on tombs that were elevated above the ground; therefore Adrian's height speaks to his placement above his predecessor.[98]

Vertical readings have been produced on the XIX canti[99] but what is significant for my argument is the fact that St Peter is referenced in both canti in connection to tombs. As noted earlier, in *Inferno* XIX, he is implicitly referenced as the opposite of Simon Magus and also through the inverted burial in the ground which mocks St Peter's martyrdom. Whereas, in *Purgatorio* XIX, the first words that Adrian V utters are: 'scias quod ego fui successor Petri' [know that I was a successor of Peter] (*Purg*., XIX, 99). Furthermore, the fact that Dante-*personaggio* speaks to yet another corrupt pope provides the reader and Dante-*personaggio* with St Peter as the positive example, and Adrian V as the example of repentance, who still needs to renew himself in order to reach Heaven, an option not available to the negative example of popes Nicholas III and Boniface VIII in *Inferno*. The lessons learned in *Inferno* XIX are also to be learned here where the sinners were obsessed in their life with earthly goods rather than turning their attention to God, demonstrated in their posture and location.

All of the popes have effigies representing them on top of sarcophagi and they are all robed in papal vestments. This may be connected to the fact that both Nicholas III and Boniface VIII of *Inferno* XIX were buried in the same space as St Peter, producing a bond between them that Peter does not agree with in *Paradiso* XXVII when he describes his burial place as now being similar to a 'cloaca' [sewer] (*Par*., XXVII, 22–27). St Peter becomes a symbol of the correct way to act whereas the other tombs described above, demonstrate the material wealth of the Church and its corruption.

The sewer that St Peter refers to in *Paradiso* XXVII for his burial place can also be interpreted as a corruption of the baptismal fonts mentioned as models in *Inferno* XIX, further connecting the canti. St Peter was the foundation

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[98] Binski, p. 77.

[99] John A. Scott, 'The Rock of Peter and "Inferno", XIX', *Romance Philology*, 23.4 (1970), 462–79 (pp. 463–68); Ambrogio Camozzi Pistoja, 'Inside Out', in *Vertical Readings in Dante's Comedy*, ed. by Heather Webb and George Corbett (Open Book Publishers, 2016), II, 173–92 <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0100> [accessed 10 December 2020].

stone of his basilica since the basilica was built over his grave. Therefore, the examples of Boniface VIII and Nicholas III both in life and their ostentatious tombs, have made a sewer of his final resting place. The reference to tombs in relation to the sin of simony is a perfect exemplification of what Dante hates: paying the church for goods with a view to achieving salvation and bolstering one's image.

The popes of Dante's afterlife thus can be understood as a symbol of the Church's obsession with material wealth, an obsession that was encapsulated by the elaborate tombs selected for each pope but also, and more generally, the rise in tomb decoration which changed the material structure of so many churches. As noted earlier, one of the main arguments against the Church was that it was supposed to adhere to a life of poverty, yet it was constantly provided with money to renovate its churches and build funerary monuments that became more and more elaborate over time, especially those of high ranking religious and civic leaders. Therefore, Dante's references to tombs could offer an implicit commentary by using ideas familiar to him and his readers of these new practices and linking them to the expansion of churches as a form of the corruption he saw within the Church. This money-making endeavour of the Church is used by Dante to critique greed and pride. Therefore, Dante chose particular episodes where there is a strong association of self-fashioning to use them as a critique of corruption.

5.4 Conclusion

The shift in tomb practices was integral to the building boom which reshaped Florence. The purchase of tombs led to the expansion or creation of many churches within Florence, especially Santa Croce and Santa Maria Novella. This shift in the material fabric of Florence is reflected in Dante's poem through the symbolic meaning of the different types of funerary monuments. Dante engages with the material culture of his time and the debates present with the rise of tomb decoration. He makes specific choices about the style of tomb decoration that he describes in the afterlife to comment on and reflect the sin being depicted. An understanding of this engagement with tomb sculpture enhances the scholarship that exists, but also, provides insight into Dante's audience and how they engaged with the episodes through their knowledge of material culture and practices. By considering the architecture of tombs we are

provided with an entry point the audience would have felt, lived, experienced, and read about. This analysis links new canti through the connection of tombs and ideas of death and baptism. By engaging with the material culture of Dante’s time, we can provide material evidence of understanding the symbolism imbued in each style of tomb decoration, furthering our understanding of Dante’s reversal or play with the symbolism as punishment for the souls.

The next chapter combines the religious and spatial practices discussed in the cloister, church, and tomb chapters in a case study of Dante’s terrace of pride, a terrace filled with architectural motifs. It considers the practices of meditation, consecration, and self-fashioning.

Chapter 6 **Building the Foundations of the Church: A Case Study of Religious Architectural Practices on the Terrace of Pride**

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed Dante's engagement with the material culture of his time and the rise of tomb decoration. It interpreted well-known episodes, such as Farinata rising from his tomb and the tomb slabs on the terrace of pride, through this new lens where, by understanding Dante's choice of tomb decoration, we enrich our interpretations of these episodes in terms of ideas of identity, corruption, community, and baptism.

This chapter brings together the analysis of the religious practices related to the cloister, procession, and tombs, in a case study that analyses the episode of the terrace of pride through the descriptions of architectural motifs, specifically the frieze, corbels, and the tombs carved in the pavement. As even a brief summary of the canti demonstrates, architectural motifs are prevalent in this part of *Purgatorio*: Dante-*personaggio* enters the first terrace through an elaborate gate above three steps, guarded by an angel standing on a diamond threshold (*Purg.*, IX, 76–78). Once inside, Dante-*personaggio* sees three sculpted images on the frieze on the wall depicting examples of humility (*Purg.*, IX, 73–145; X, 28–96). Dante-*personaggio*'s first sight of the souls of this terrace makes him think of corbels, the architectural feature used to support a ceiling because of the heavy rocks they carry on their backs (*Purg.*, X, 100–39). Due to this burden, the proud souls look down at the floor and find artistic carvings depicting examples of pride that remind Dante-*personaggio* of tomb slabs found on church floors (*Purg.*, XII, 13-69).

In this chapter, I argue that a part of the penitential process of the poem is encountering the spaces that Dante describes as a tool for making sense of God's judgement. The architectural features inform Dante's rubric of how purgation occurs on the terraces of the mountain: first the souls are provided with an example of their sin, in the case of the first terrace, the sin is pride. They

move around the mountain and are slowly relieved of their burden as they learn their lesson and are finally able to stand up straight and view the frieze images of humility, the virtue which is a counter-example. These architectural features form part of the purgative process on this first terrace and also help to set up a rubric which Dante will follow on the following six terraces, albeit only drawing occasionally on architectural devices but drawing on allusions to the architectural practices of meditation. The physical architecture that Dante creates here, on this first terrace, provides the moral architecture that he will draw on later. This guides the reader to understand how the architecture shapes the experiences of the souls in the afterlife, in a similar way to how spaces shape experience on Earth.

Since Dante creates a clear link between architecture and the purgative process on this terrace, I will examine this episode in detail to demonstrate how new interpretations of the text are revealed by analysing these canti through the lenses of the religious practices discussed previously in this thesis. Architectural space has not been a dominant theme in research on these canti; instead, aspects of the episode which have been a particular focus include the description of the frieze, Oderisi's account of the brevity of artistic glory, and questions about artistic representation, including verbal versus visual representations, as well as human art versus God's art.[1] Therefore, when the architectural features are discussed, they are either peripheral or are analysed in isolation.[2] With this in mind, I will argue that by focusing on the spatial relationship of the architectural elements together (the gate of Purgatory, found

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[1] Treherne, 'Ekphrasis and Eucharist'; Treherne, *Liturgical Imagination*, pp. 113–44; Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, pp. 122–42; Nancy J. Vickers, 'Seeing Is Believing: Gregory, Trajan, and Dante's Art', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 101, 1983, 67–85; Gloria K. Fiero, 'Dante's Ledge of Pride: Literary Pictorialism and the Visual Arts', *Journal of European Studies*, 5.1 (1975), 1–17 <https://doi.org/10.1177/004724417500500101> [accessed 10 August 2020].

[2] An exception to this is Corbett who calls on scholars to read the poem not by unit but by moral regions, incorporating a series of canti. This allows Corbett to see a correlation between the exempla of humility, the souls Dante encounters, and the exempla of pride, creating a triptych. By considering them as a whole, Corbett sees a parallel mapping where the souls Dante-*personaggio* encounters represent artistry (Oderisi), politics (Salvani), and ancestry (Omberto). By reading the episode in this way, Corbett offers a solution to the particular hermeneutic *cruces* found in individual canti and also helps us to better understand the virtuous models in relation to their sin. See George Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics: Purgatory and Its Moral Contexts* (Cambridge University Press, 2020) (especially part III).

at the entrance to the terrace of pride, combined with the terrace of pride's frieze, floor carvings, and the comparison of the souls to corbels) and their connection to the living stones motif (discussed in chapter 4), we can understand the terrace as architectural elements of a sacred space (the entryway, walls, floor, and roof).[3] Once I have established this argument I will consider its implications, specifically, why does Dante describe this sacred architectural space at the beginning of Purgatory-proper? What can this tell us about how to read the rest of *Purgatorio*? Through this exploration, I will argue that on the terrace of pride, Dante provides Dante-*personaggio* and the reader with the foundations on which to build a church within their mind as well as the practices that must take place within it — an understanding of both the vices and virtues, in order to reject the former and embrace the latter — through prayer, postures, and movement. These religious practices found in the church are repeated throughout Dante-*personaggio*'s ascent of Mount Purgatory, sometimes but not always in conjunction with architectural features, reminding the reader of the foundations of the church and the meditational practices associated with it. This then culminates in the Earthly Paradise procession, where the space is complete and thus can be consecrated. Therefore, *Purgatorio* can be understood as a model for Dante-*personaggio* and the reader of how to renew the church, as we shall see below.

6.2 The Connection between the Entrance to Purgatory and St Peter

My first argument analyses the architectural elements of the entrance to Purgatory-proper (including the steps, gatekeeper, and diamond threshold) and how Dante sets up a series of architectural metaphors mixed with religious rituals that continue throughout *Purgatorio*: first, most systematically, on the terrace of pride and then referenced throughout. I will argue that the entrance

[3] Scholars have noted peripherally that Purgatory-proper represents a church. For example, George Corbett argues that the architecture described on the terrace of pride evokes connections to medieval sermon practices and church rites of public penance, see Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics*, p. 107. See also Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, pp. 40, 51 who argues that Purgatory-proper represents the Church Suffering.

represents the doorway to a church.[4] One way to understand this is by considering the religious penitential practices associated with church steps in relation to the three steps of Dante's gateway to Purgatory-proper.[5] During Dante's lifetime there were three types of penitential works and people completing them were sometimes refused access to a church until they were absolved, such as for acts of infanticide or sins which caused public scandal.[6] This refused access often took place during Lent and the penitents would return to the church steps on Holy Thursday after serving their penance.[7] If the steps into Purgatory-proper represent the steps to the entrance of a church, than the penitential practice adheres well to this interpretation since the souls in Ante-Purgatory are guilty of some kind of negligence and therefore must wait until their allotted time to enter Purgatory-proper. It also aligns with Dante-*personaggio*'s performance before the angel gatekeeper on the steps where he kneels in contrition and strikes his breast three times, as one would in front of

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[4] A similar argument is made in Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics*, pp. 110–11.

[5] For some examples of how the steps have been interpreted, see Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, pp. 16–21; 32–34; 98; 148. He argues that the steps represent repentance of sin. See also Giovanni Fallani who argues that the steps represent the steps leading up to the apse of the church, which misses the fact that the steps lead not to an altar but a doorway: 'Il canto IX del Purgatorio', in *Lectura Dantis Scaligera*, Le Monnier vols (Florence, 1967), pp. 293–312 (pp. 301–2). See also C. H. Grandgent who argues that the steps represent the founding of the Church in *La divina commedia*, trans. by C. H. Grandgent (Boston, MA: Heath, 1933). The element present in most of these interpretations is the idea of a ritual act of penance similar to the medieval glosses such as Jacopo della Lana (1324–1328), Chiose Cagliaritane (1370), Francesco da Buti (1385–1395), Anonimo Fiorentino (1400), Alessandro Vellutello (1544), Luigi Bennassuti (1864–1868), gloss to Purg., IX, 76–77 (*DDP*).

[6] The three types were: prayer for sins against God, mortification of flesh for sins against oneself, and almsgiving for sins against others. For a thorough explanation see Mihow McKenny, 'The Art of Salvation: Sacramental Penance in Dante's Commedia', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, pp. 77–140 (p. 119). See also Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, pp. 33–34.

[7] Karen Wagner, '"Cum aliquis venerit ad sacerdotem": Penitential Experience in the Central Middle Ages', in *A New History of Penance*, ed. by Abigail Firey (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 201–18 (pp. 205–06) <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004122123.i-464> [accessed 10 March 2022]: 'penitents, clothed in distinctive garments, were met at the door of the church, where they lay prostrate while they bishop prayed over them. The Penitents then disappear from the liturgical documents until Holy Thursday, when they once again prostrated themselves before the church doors as the bishop prayed over them; they were given absolution and were admonished not to return to their sinful ways'; Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, p. 98. See also Valerie I. J. Flint, 'Space and Discipline in Early Medieval Europe', in *Medieval Practices of Space*, ed. by Barbara Hanawalt and Michal Kobialka, Medieval Cultures (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), XXIII, 149–66 (pp. 150–51) who argues that 'the idea of pilgrimage as punishment […] may have developed as a result of sophisticated thought about the uses of space'. She considers various degrees of sin and their respective punishments and argues that 'all of them were performed in public spaces'.

the priest to confess (*Purg*., IX, 109–11). This also works on a metaphorical level where excommunication is a 'banishment' from the church (not just from the building, but also from the institution) and this can be understood for the souls in Ante-Purgatory, not just the excommunicate.

If we can interpret the steps as those outside of a church structure, how might we interpret the other elements of the entryway? When interpreting the gateway, the allusions to St Peter are important. Allusions to St Peter occur throughout this episode, as one would assume, since St Peter possesses the keys to the kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 16:13–19). Although, in the poem, St Peter occupies his seat in Heaven, he has passed on his principal attributes, the sword and keys to an angel gatekeeper outside of Purgatory, who 'guards a door which has a dual function: it is the door "where Purgatory really begins" [dove Purgatorio ha dritto inizio] (*Purg*., VII, 39), and it is St Peter's Gate to heaven […]'.[8] This is made explicit in canto XXI when Statius refers back to the gate of Purgatory, explaining that weather does not affect anything beyond 'i tre gradi […] | dov' ha 'l vicario di Pietro le piante' [the three steps where Peter's vicar sets his feet] (ll. 53–54). Therefore, the interpretation of the angel as a symbol of St Peter is clear but the connection can also inform our reading of the diamond threshold on which the angel stands (*Purg*., IX, 100–06).[9] This can be understood by the Biblical verse immediately before Jesus gives St Peter the keys, when Peter is referred to as the foundation stone. The episode begins when Simon Peter identifies Jesus as the Son of God:

> "Tu es Christus, Filius Dei vivi." Respondens autem Jesus, dixit ei: "Beatus es Simon Bar Jona: quia caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi, sed Pater meus, qui in caelis est. Et ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praevalebunt adversus eam. Et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum." (Matthew 16:16–20)
>
> ["Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answering, said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of

[8] Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, pp. 39–40.

[9] Armour argues that the threshold that the angel stands on is an allusion to St Peter because the threshold, made of a 'pietra di diamante', [stone of diamond] (ll. 103–05) represents 'the Rock of Christ and of St Peter upon which the Church is built', see *The Door of Purgatory*, p. 53.

> hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."]

The renaming of Simon to 'Petrus', meaning 'rock' [petra] and Jesus stating 'upon this rock I will build my church' led medieval theologians to interpret St Peter as the foundation stone of the Church.[10] Dante's choice of a diamond for the threshold's stone, has led many commentators to argue that the endurance and strength of a diamond connects it to St Peter as the foundation stone.[11] I will add to this by analysing St Peter and his role as the foundation stone of the church through the lens of the living stones motif, discussed in my Earthly Paradise chapter, because Matthew 16 positions St Peter in a similar way to the figures of the consecration procession, by combining a living person with an inert object. As previously discussed in chapter 4 with 1 Peter 2:4–5, St Peter himself instructs the persecuted Christians: 'ipsi tamquam lapides vivi superaedificamini' [Be you also as living stones built up, a spiritual house].[12] This motif of living stones connected the church communities on Earth and in Heaven. Durand explains this when he begins his *Rationale* by stating:

> Prius est, ut de Ecclesia, et ejus partibus videamus. Notandum est ergo, quod Ecclesiarum alia est corporalis, in qua videlicet divina officia celebrantur; alia spiritualis, quae est fidelium collectio, sive populus per ministros convocatus […] Siquidem Ecclesia materialis, in qua populus ad laudandum Deum convenit, sanctum significat Ecclesiam, quae in coaelis vivis ex lapidibus construitur. (1.1.1–1.1.9)

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[10] For examples see Petrus Blesensis, 'Petri Blesensis Sermones: Sero XXVIII. De SS. Petro et Paulo', in *PL*, CCVII, COLS. 0644B-0644E 'Petrus tanquam petra fidei' [Peter as the rock of faith]; Bruno Astensis, '', in *PL*, CLXV, COLS. 0895C-0896B; Richard of St Victor, 'De exterminatione mali et promotione boni: Caput X. De charitatis integritate', in *PL*, CXCVI, COLS. 1108B-1108D ; Alan of Lille, 'Liber sententiarum ac dictorum memorabilium Magistri Alani de insulis concionatoribus ac in universum Theophiliae studiosis omnibus utilissimus: De Sancto Petro Apostolo', in *PL*, CCX, COLS. 0245A-0245C; Innocent III, 'Innocentii III Romani Pontificis regestorum sive epistolarum', in *PL*, CCXIV, COLS. 0625A-0625C; 0759A-0759D.

[11] Armour, *The Door of Purgatory*, pp. 53–54. See also the glosses to *Purg*., IX, 94–96 (*DDP*) of Baldassare Lombardi (1791–1792) and Giuseppe Campi (1888–1893), who relate the diamond threshold to the foundation of the church. Also see Niccolò Tommaseo (1837 [ed. of 1865]), Raffaello Andreoli (1856), GA Scartazzini (1872–1882 [2nd ed. 1900]), The Rev. H.F. Tozer (1901), John S. Carroll (1904), Tommaso Casini and S.A. Barbi (1921), G.A. Scartazzini and G. Vandelli (1929), Luigi Pietrobono (1949 [1924–1930]), Natalino Sapegno (1955–1957), Daniele Mattalia (1960), Charles S. Singleton (1970–1975), Umberto Bosco and Giovanni Reggio (1979), Robert Hollander (2000–2007), and Nicola Fosca (2003–2015) who suggest the diamond is connected to Matt 16:18 and St Peter as the foundation stone.

[12] Although the authorship of the letters attributed to St Peter is under debate, Dante would have believed that Peter himself was the author, providing greater weight to the connection between the living stones motif and St Peter.

> [First of all, let us consider a church and its parts. The word church has two meanings: the one, a material building, wherein the Divine Offices are celebrated: the other, a spiritual fabric, which is the Collection of the Faithful. For the material church, wherein the people assemble to set forth God's holy praise, symbolises that Holy Church which is built in Heaven of living stones.]

This combination of material and symbolic, earthly and heavenly community is implicitly referenced in the hymn Dante-*personaggio* hears upon entering Purgatory-proper, the 'Te Deum laudamus' [You, God, we praise] (*Purg.*, IX, 139–45), which begins with the praise of God, then provides a roll call of the Church community in Heaven and on Earth. The fact that Dante describes this singing as one would hear it when entering a church, accompanied by an organ, strengthens the idea of the entrance to Purgatory-proper as a church door (*Purg.*, IX, 142–45). Furthermore, this combination of material and symbolic was often translated into the material church structure, linking the architectural features (the material stones) to the different communities of the church (the living, or those who once lived who are now in Heaven), as we saw in chapter 3 with examples such as Christ represented by the altar or the saints who hold up the church as columns (*Rationale*, 1.1.9–10).[13] Although the souls whom Dante compares to corbels on the terrace of pride are not saints, he is alluding to the tradition of the community becoming the material fabric of the church in a similar way. In chapter 4, I argued that the figures of the procession represented the church structure — the living figures symbolise stones. Here, at the entrance to Purgatory-proper, the reverse occurs with the allusion to St Peter as the foundation stone — the stone symbolises the living figure. In fact, it is even more complex than this: the real Peter in the biblical account represents the foundation stone, so that Dante can then turn this around and make the stone point to the real St Peter (now in Heaven). Interpreting the entryway of Purgatory-proper through the lens of St Peter as the foundation stone, allows the reader to expand this idea further as they advance through the first terrace. In other words, the living stones motif does not just apply to St Peter and the

[13] See Birkedal Bruun and Hamilton, p. 193. Turville-Petre's English translation is published in 'The Old Norse Homily', 206–18, at 215–18.

threshold but also to the other stones needed to build the church, the community, some of which are found on the first terrace of Purgatory.

6.3 The Living Stones Motif on the Terrace of Pride

In this section I will consider how Dante employs the motif of living stones by bringing stones to life on the terrace of pride. The most explicit example of this occurs when the souls are mistaken for corbels. But a more implicit example is found in the representations on the frieze and pavement where the artistic creations seem to come to life by their ability to call on the aural and olfactory senses. This confusion between senses blurs the boundaries between life and art, representation and reality, and inanimate and human.

Stones are the main architectural feature on the threshold to Purgatory-proper as well as the terrace of pride: the description begins with the entrance which includes the stone steps, the diamond threshold, and the door, which is first seen as a crack in the mountain. Then, when the reader passes through the gateway, the representations on the frieze and pavement are carved into stone and the souls carry heavy stones on their backs (*Purg.*, IX, 76; 104–05; 73-76; X, 28–102; XII, 13–66; X, 112–20, 130–39). But what is interesting in the context of the idea of St Peter as the foundation stone and thus the combination of human and inanimate object, is how Dante describes these stones.

One example of the combination of human and inanimate object occurs when Dante-*personaggio* has finished describing the events carved into the pavement and exclaims:

> Qual di pennel fu maestro o di stile
> che ritraesse l'ombre e ' tratti ch'ivi
> mirar farieno uno ingegno sottile?
> Morti li morti e i vivi parean vivi:
> non vide mei di me chi vide il vero
> quant' io calcai, fin che chinato givi. (*Purg.*, XII, 64–69)
>
> [What master of the brush or stylus could portray the shadings and the outlines there, which would cause subtle wit to marvel? Dead seemed the dead, and the living living: one who saw the true event did not see better than I all that I trod upon, while I walked bent over.]

Dante marvels at the appearance of the carvings which he compares to the actual event and claims that a spectator could not have seen it better than the carvings depict it. This claim is, of course, due to the fact that God is the creator

of these carvings and thus the relationship between the lived event and its representation carved in stone is blurred, emphasised by the repetition of 'morti' and 'vivi'. Although the biblical references use the living stones motif metaphorically, the blurring of two things, an inert rock with a living being and the representation with reality, is similar.

This is better understood when we turn back within the episode to when Dante sees the three images on the frieze.[14] In this episode a blurring of life and art also occurs — the sculptures really do appear living through a synaesthetic experience. In the first frieze, Dante-*personaggio*'s senses are confused because the silent, carved image seems to speak: he seems to hear Gabriel saying "Ave!" and Mary saying "Ecce ancilla Dei". Similarly, in the second carving Dante-*personaggio* thinks that he can smell incense burning (*Purg.*, X, 41, 44, 61).[15] Although scholars have devoted much attention to these carvings as synaesthetic and ekphrastic events,[16] I would instead like to consider them along with the other architectural feature of the carved pavement from a spatial perspective and through the motif of living stones in order to yield new insights that might otherwise remain unexplored. The carvings on the frieze and pavement are instances where artistic representations seem to come to life — in other words, the stone appears to live.

The opposite of this concept of the stone carvings coming to life occurs on this terrace with the souls who circle it. Dante-*personaggio* interprets the souls, not as living but as inert objects made of stone:

> Come per sostentar solaio o tetto
> per mensola talvolta una figura
> si vede giugner le ginocchia al petto,
> la qual fa del non ver vera rancura

---

[14] The carvings depict the Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38), David dancing before the holy Ark (2 Kings 6:1–23), and the charitable act of emperor Trajan and the widow (the *Golden Legend* and John of Salisbury's *Policraticus)*.

[15] Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 123.

[16] Treherne, 'Ekphrasis and Eucharist'; Teodolinda Barolini, 'Re-Presenting What God Presented: The Arachnean Art of Dante's Terrace of Pride', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 105, 1987, 43–62; Vickers; Christopher Kleinhenz, 'Dante's Artistry in Purgatorio', *MLN*, 134.S (2019), S-40-S-55 <https://doi.org/10.1353/mln.2019.0056> [accessed 10 August 2020]; Fiero.

> nascere ’n chi la vede: così fatti
>
> vid’ io color, quando puosi ben cura. (*Purg.*, X, 130–35)
>
> [As to support a ceiling or a roof we sometimes see for corbel a figure that touches knees to breast, so that what is not real causes real discomfort to be born in whoever sees it: so I saw them to be, when I looked carefully.]

Dante seems to see architectural corbels instead of living souls because the souls carry such heavy stones on their backs, that they are bent over in a similar posture. Corbels were often depicted as men holding up a roof and found in churches, such as the Baptistery of Florence (Figure 37).[17] Dante brings the static representation of corbels to life with the souls carrying the stones on their backs. The souls as corbels are the reverse of the frieze and pavement that seem to speak and engage the other senses, but all of them confuse reality and art, or more appropriately to my argument, they all confuse a living, moving thing with an inert object — just as the motif of the living stones conflates these two ideas.[18]

To conclude this section, I would like to analyse Durand’s interpretation of the church structure in relation to Dante’s use of corbels, frieze, and pavement on this terrace. Durand states:

> Haec est domus Domini, firmiter aedificata, cujus fundamentum est angularis lapis Christus, super quo fundamento positum est fundamentum Apostolrum et Prophetarum, sicut scriptum est: Fundamenta ejus in montibus sanctis. Superaedificati parietes Judaei sunt, et gentiles de quatuor mundi partibus ad Christum venientes, et qui in imsum crediderint, seu credunt, et credent. […] Fideles autem ad vitam praedestinati, sunt lapides in structura hujus muri, qui semper usque in finem hujus mundi aedificabatur. Lapis vero super lapidem ponitur, quando magistri Ecclesiae minores in proprium studium assumunt ad docendum, et ad corrigendum. Et stabiliendum. In sancta vero Ecclesia habet lapides super se ad ferendum pro aedificio quicumque laborem fraternum portat. Grossiores vero lapides, et politi, seu quadrati, qui ponuntur foris extrinsecus, in quorum medio minores lapides jacent, sunt viri perfectiores, qui suis meritis, et orationibus continent infirmiores in sancta Ecclesia. (*Rationale*, 1.1.9)
>
> [This is that House of the Lord, built with all strength, upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. Her foundations are in the Holy mountains. The walls built

[17] Corbels are also known as telamones (telamon in the singular) and their female equivalent are caryatids.

[18] Connections to the living stones motif can also be seen in the analysis of the images on the frieze and their relationship to the Eucharist where the senses are confused ‘when faced with works of God’: Treherne, ‘Ekphrasis and Eucharist’, pp. 182–83.

> upon these are the Jews and Gentiles; who come from the four parts of the world unto Christ, and who have believed, believe, or shall believe in Him. The Faithful predestined to eternal life, are the stones in the structure of this wall which shall continually be built up unto the world's end. And one stone is added to another, when masters in the Church teach and confirm and strengthen those who are put under them: and whosoever in Holy Church undertakes painful labours from brotherly love, he as it were bears up the weight of stones which have been placed above him.]

This explanation of the church has striking similarities to Dante's terrace of pride. Durand's foundation stones are the apostles and prophets — similar to the stone of St Peter represented by the diamond threshold and the other allusions to St Peter as the foundation stone within the episode. Furthermore, the foundations of Durand's church are in the holy mountains, the foundations of Dante's Purgatory are also on a holy mountain, Mount Purgatory, positioned on a single axis with Jerusalem that Durand is referring to. Durand's walls of the church represent the Old and New Testaments, while Dante's walls also represent Old and New Testament scenes.[19] Durand's faithful who are predestined for eternal life are represented as stones in the structure of the wall, while Dante's stone corbels that hold up the roof are also predestined for eternal life since they are in Purgatory-proper and therefore are promised salvation.

So, if we can interpret the architectural elements of the frieze, corbels, and pavement through the lens of the idea of living stones, what does this tell us about the terrace of pride? I argue that the allusion to St Peter as the foundation stone with the architectural elements of the steps, gate, and diamond threshold of the entrance to Purgatory-proper, in combination with the living stones references on the terrace of pride, namely the frieze, corbels, and carved pavement, produce the architectural elements of the foundations of a church — or at least some of its constituent parts: the door to the church, the walls, the floor, and the corbels supporting the roof. How can understanding the terrace of pride as the foundations of a church produce new readings of the text?

[19] Although Dante also represents a secular scene with Trajan, this does not diminish the argument because Trajan is in Heaven. Also, I do not think Dante builds an exact church but alludes to various architectural features of a church throughout the canticle.

This interpretation provides new understandings within the episode itself but can also be applied to analysis of the other terraces as well as the Earthly Paradise. In other words, the spatial qualities of the terrace of pride do not work in isolation but instead add to the vibrant imagery and liturgical examples working within the terrace to produce the idea of a church. This is then carried throughout *Purgatorio,* as a constituent part of the liturgical and architectural references. To understand this, I will consider how interpreting the architectural features as elements of a church structure can inform our reading of the rest of *Purgatorio.*

6.4 Church Architecture as a Memory Tool

God (in the fiction of the poem) creates Purgatory according to a single, repeated, purgative model including punishment, instruction, and prayer.[20] On the first terrace, instruction is carried out by the art represented in the form of the sculptural pavement and frieze. In this section I will analyse how this purgative model is connected to the architectural mnemonic practices discussed in chapter 3.

As you will recall, the cloister was just one of the areas of the church used as a mnemonic device. The entire church structure could be used for memory training and was a popular model beginning in the twelfth century.[21] One of the reasons that the church was a popular mnemonic device is because of the many artistic representations found within the church buildings of the late medieval period — including sculptures, frescoes, mosaics, and other media. During sermons, these architectural and artistic features were pointed to or referenced to help explain the lesson to the laity. Aquinas, for example, argued that artistic representations functioned didactically to lead one on his or her journey toward God.[22] Karl Patrick Kinsella references this practice when he describes the 'building as a partner in the learning context' and explains that the church structure and its parts are associated with symbols that are 'mutable,

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[20] McKenny, p. 123.

[21] Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, p. 49.

[22] Fiero, p. 6. It is important to remember that there were also those who argued art, especially in the cloister, was a distraction; Bernard of Clairvaux's *Apologia* offers a famous example.

dynamic and flexible'.[23] An example of this, seen in chapter 3, is the cloister which could symbolise the contemplative life, the Heavenly Jerusalem, a prison, hell, and a safe fort. This section will focus on the use of a church structure where the church's architectural features were employed for didactic purposes and as mnemonic devices.[24] Honorius provides a good example of this in his *Gemma animae* which begins with the altar of the church in the east end and moves throughout the church, reflecting on different architectural objects and spaces, moving outwards to end with the cemetery and cloister. The objects and spaces that Honorius refers to have typological significances. For example, the altar is typologically linked with the 'Holy of Holies' but it also represents 'Christ, the saints, priests and cantors'.[25] Therefore, similar to the section on the cloister, the meanings of the objects within the church shift and change depending on their context. With this example of the meanings of the altar, we once again find an instance of how inert objects represent humans and communities. Turning to memory practices, these mnemonics also require the active participation of the reader to decide which meaning is applicable and to fill in the lesson. Similarly, when Dante describes both images on the frieze and pavement on the terrace of pride, they depict a single moment, just as artistic representation does. For the frieze images, these are of humility, and for the floor it is the moment of each character's downfall by their pride. These single moments require one to become an active participant by filling in the other parts of the story, in order for it to be understood.[26] Dante employs a similar practice when, at times, he only provides a single line or section of a psalm, which then requires the reader to recall the remaining lines of the psalm, as well as its use in liturgical practices, to understand its meaning. This makes the reader an

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[23] Karl Patrick Kinsella, 'Teaching through Architecture: Honorius Augustodunensis and the Medieval Church', in *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages*, ed. by Micol Long, Tjamke Snijders, and Steven Vanderputten, Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Transfer in Religious Communities (Amsterdam University Press, 2019), pp. 141–62 (p. 142) <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvnb7nbt.10> [accessed 22 April 2020].

[24] Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, p. 50.

[25] Honorius Augustodunesis, 'Gemma animae', in *PL*, CLXXII, CHAP. 215, COL. 585A. See also Kinsella, p. 149.

[26] Fiero, p. 6.

active participant, not only in the story, but the penitential process of the poem.[27]

This use of architecture as didactic is important because the medieval viewer of the church would consider both the whole structure and its individual components including the altar, windows, and floor. Since the viewer would use the familiar church structure itself, they were constantly reminded of the whole rather than just its parts. I would like to keep this in mind when considering the different architectural parts of the terrace of pride and then, just as one would in a church, also remember that they are parts of a whole.

For example, there were often didactic scenes that were painted or sculpted onto the walls of churches that were often in dialogue with each other, such as the stations of the cross painted on different columns, culminating in a rood screen or crucifix at an altar — these separate images had to be understood in their entire context to understand their importance. Another common pairing was Old and New Testament figures on opposing walls, in order to communicate their connection and the fulfilment of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

Dante's frieze images also represent Old and New Testament figures, albeit along with a classical scene, in order to communicate the value of the virtue of humility across time and space. Of course, Dante's images are more fantastic than the ones found in a church since they seem to speak and move, but they function in a similar manner as didactic because they represent lessons of humility and also because it is only after the souls have understood the error of pride that they can lift their heads and contemplate these images. Therefore, the souls are provided with a negative example of sin, then a positive example of virtue, in order to persuade Dante-*personaggio* and the reader to act appropriately. This framework of a vice paired with a virtue is repeated on each

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[27] See for example, *Purg*. II, 46; IX, 140; XVI, 19; XXV, 121. This idea of active participation by the reader in reference to *Purgatorio* X is also noted by Vickers, p. 67; For a thorough explanation of this argument see Phillips-Robins, pp. 78–81. It is important to note that at other times Dante specifies that the whole psalm is not sung (e.g. in the Earthly Paradise when they stop at 'pedes meos' or when the Beatitude is said ['blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness'] but is split into two).

terrace. For example, on the terrace of anger Dante-*personaggio* experiences a vision of three examples of gentleness, this is then paired with visions of examples of anger (*Purg.*, XV, 82–114; XVII 1–37).

As mentioned in chapter 3, an architectural space, such as a church, is used as a mnemonic device to order and place different concepts. Therefore, one would use the church as a whole structure and then each architectural feature, such as the pavement, walls, tower, bell, cloister, and altar was used to order and frame particular ideas. Scholars such as Carruthers and Yates argue that the entire *Commedia* is a mnemonic device, with each canto being one of the spaces or rooms where an idea or image is placed.[28] I would conclude that the terrace of pride is one of the most explicit examples of this because of its use of artistic representations to produce affect and the fact that images are architectural features. Therefore, the church foundations of the door, walls, pavement, and corbels (or in mnemonic practices terms: the frame) are provided to the reader on the terrace of pride, and with each terrace, a new set of images of the vice paired with the virtue can be placed within the church structure.

An example used by Carruthers explains this idea further: in *Inferno* Virgil uses locational memory throughout the cantica. An example of this is found when Virgil describes the divisions of Hell:

> Tutti son pien di spirti maladetti;
> ma perché poi ti basti pur la vista,
> intendi come e perché son costretti. (*Inf.*, XI, 19–21)
> [All are full of cursed spirits; but so that later the mere sight of them may suffice, hear how they are constricted and why]

[28] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, pp. 99; 257; 239–41; 175–76; 239; 250; Yates, pp. 104–05 states: 'Dante's "Inferno" could be regarded as a kind of memory system for memorizing Hell and its punishments, with striking images on orders of places, will come as a great shock, and I must leave it as a shock […] If one thinks of the poem as based on orders of places in Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, and as a cosmic order of places in which the spheres of Hell are spheres of Heaven in reverse, it begins to appear as a summa of similitudes and exempla, ranged in order and set out upon the universe. And if one discovers that Prudence, under many diverse similitudes, is a leading symbolic theme of the poem, its three parts can be seen as "memoria", remembering vices and their punishments in Hell, "intelligentia", the use of the present for penitence and acquisition of virtue, and "providentia", the looking forward to Heaven.'

Dante-*personaggio* must first understand the divisions of lower Hell so that later he can understand why the souls are placed within these divisions. This need to fully understand the divisions becomes clear following Virgil's explanation because he rebukes Dante-*personaggio* for not understanding these divisions properly and not looking in the right 'places':

> […]'Perché tanto delira,'
> disse, 'lo 'ngegno tuo da quel che sòle?
> o ver la mente dove altrove mira?
> Non ti rimembra di quelle parole
> con le quai la tua Etica pertratta
> le tre disposizion che 'l ciel non vole, […]
> Se tu riguardi ben questa sentenza
> e rechiti a la mente chi son quelli
> che sù di fuor sostegnon penitenza,
> tu vedrai ben perché da questi felli
> sien dipartiti, […]' (*Inf.*, XI, 76–89)
>
> ["Why does your wit," he said, "so wander from its usual course? Or where does your mind gaze mistaken? Do you not remember the words with which your Ethics treats so fully the three dispositions that Heaven refuses, If you consider this judgement well and bring to mind who those are that undergo their penitence higher up and outside, you will see clearly why they are separated from these wicked ones,]

In relation to this passage, Carruthers states:

> It is not enough for Dante to be just a spectator; he must also use the sights he sees for further meditation. Indeed 'plain looking' (la pur vista) is useless in itself. The image needs contextualizing, Virgil says – which Dante must supply from his own memory store. The sights of hell are each a moral test for Dante (and for us), not in an informational sense but as a test of character and an opportunity for moral growth.[29]

She goes on to argue that Virgil rebukes Dante-*personaggio* and tells him the 'place' where he should have been able to locate the meaning (*sentenza*) of what he sees in Aristotle's *Ethics*. Dante-*personaggio* should have had this *sentenza* ready to pick from his memory '(if his memory is properly inventoried and he looks in the right place) to be recalled and gathered into understanding a

[29] Mary J. Carruthers, 'The Poet as Master Builder: Composition and Locational Memory in the Middle Ages', *New Literary History*, 24.4 (1993), 881–904 (p. 884).

new '"sight"'.[30] Therefore, Dante-*personaggio* must use the images he sees in order to understand their moral lesson and then store them in the right places — a mnemonic method he has yet to master, according to Virgil's rebuke.

6.4.1 The Sculptural Frieze

Interestingly, a similar rebuke occurs when Dante-*personaggio* is viewing the sculptural images on the terrace of pride's frieze and Virgil rebukes him for marvelling so much at the first image that he does not even notice the second one:

> "Non tener pur ad un loco la mente," (*Purg.*, X, 46)
> ["Do not fix your mind on one place alone,"]

This reference to fixing the mind on a particular place recalls the mnemonic practices analysed in chapter 3 and the first rule for places: the rooms of the architectural place must form a series to produce an order which allows one to move backward or forward from any point in the sequence.[31] Dante-*personaggio* must understand all three images (as well as the pavement carvings), in connection to each other, before he can understand their didactic function through their sequential layout. This is emphasised by the fact that the reader and Dante-*personaggio* see the wall carvings first but that the souls must study the pavement carvings in detail before they can look up at the walls. Virgil's rebuke thus becomes a lesson and an instance of practice for Dante-*personaggio* and the reader to ensure they have taken in the whole terrace of pride before interpreting its didactic function. After the rebuke, Dante-*personaggio* performs this process by moving beyond Virgil so that the second image is 'wholly before [his] eyes' (*Purg.*, X, 54). This moment is linked further to mnemonic practices as the image succeeds in following the rules since the image is striking — this could mean novel, marvellous, or beautiful – in the fact that it appears to come to life. As discussed in chapter 3, the striking character of the image is used to produce affect in the viewer because 'ordinary things easily slip from the memory while the striking and novel stay longer in mind'.[32]

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[30] Carruthers, 'The Poet as Master Builder', p. 884.
[31] Yates, pp. 24–32; Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 13; Cicero III, XVI-XIX.
[32] Yates, pp. 24–32; Cicero, pp. 220–21; 218-19 (III, XXII).

Dante repeatedly describes his moving from one image to another in order to take in the whole image and understand it (*Purg.*, X, 70–72). Just as Dante-*personaggio* is rebuked for not taking in the whole scene, it is important for us, as readers, not to make the same mistake and to see how the different artistic representations interact with one another, and to consider them as a whole.

Dante reminds the reader of this lesson throughout Dante-*personaggio*'s ascent of Mount Purgatory. For example, Virgil admonishes Dante-*personaggio* on the terrace of envy, saying:

> "Chiamavi 'l cielo e 'ntorno vi si gira,
> mostrandovi le sue bellezze etterne,
> e l'occhio vostro pur a terra mira:
> onde vi batte chi tutto discerne." (*Purg.*, XIV, 148–51)
>
> [The heavens call and wheel about you, showing you their eternal beauties, and your eye still gazes on the earth: therefore he beats you who discerns all things."]

A similar rebuke occurs when Dante is on the fifth terrace:

> "Che hai che pur inver' la terra guati?
> […]
> Bastiti, e batti a terra le calcagne;
> li occhi rivolgi al logoro che gira
> lo rege etterno con le rote magne." (*Purg.*, XIX, 52–63)
>
> [What is the matter, that you are staring at the ground? Let it be enough for you, and strike the earth with your heels; turn your eyes to the lure that the eternal King keeps turning with the great wheels."]

In both cases Dante-*personaggio* must remember both lessons he learned on the terrace of pride where he must look down at the pavement to understand the sin of pride but must also look up to the walls for the virtue of humility — it is only once he understands both pieces that he can ascend the mountain, and this is also true for each of the souls being purged there. An example of the reminder of the sequence occurs when Dante-*personaggio* sees another set of three images on the terrace of anger, where he has a vision of three examples of gentleness — this move from a physical image on the wall to a vision, shows Dante-*personaggio*'s progress in his development but also serves as a reminder of the mnemonic practice of moving from the physical into the mind's eye. These are some examples of how Dante-*personaggio*'s postures, Virgil's rebukes, and the repetition of three images, remind the reader of the first rule

for places where the architectural space forms a series to produce order, allowing the viewer to move backwards and forwards in a sequence. This is not only employed on the first terrace but throughout the journey through Purgatory.

6.4.2 **The Corbels**

Once Dante-*personaggio* has viewed all of the images of humility, Virgil tells him to turn his eyes to the figures coming towards them, another moment when Virgil is training Dante-*personaggio* in memory techniques (*Purg*., X, 100–02). Dante-*personaggio* replies:

> […] "Maestro, quel ch'io veggio
> muovere a noi, non mi sembian persone,
> e non so che, sì nel veder vaneggio."
> Ed elli a me: "La grave condizione
> di lor tormento a terra li rannicchia,
> sì che ' miei occhi pria n'ebber tencione.
> Ma guarda fiso là, e disviticchia
> col viso quel che vien sotto a quei sassi:
> già scorger puoi come ciascun si picchia." (*Purg*., X, 112–20)
>
> ["Master, what I see moving toward us do not seem to be persons, and I know not what, my sight is so confused." And he to me: "The heavy condition of their torment buckles them toward the earth, so that my eyes at first had to struggle. But gaze fixedly there, and disentangle with your eyes what comes under those stones: already you can make out how each is beating his breast."]

Dante-*personaggio* is confused by what he sees, this is explicit with the fact that he must ask Virgil to clarify what he is seeing and the use of the term 'sembian' [seem], denoting that he knows what he is seeing cannot be possible. Virgil explains that the reason for this confusion is due to the torment that the souls suffer.

This is also one of many examples of Dante referring to the necessity of eyesight in order to comprehend what is being shown to him. Sight is a standard metaphor of understanding throughout the *Commedia*, but the memory techniques make use of this in a specific way, where seeing something in one's mind's eye calls to mind the thing that it represents. It also becomes a tool for storing images in order to facilitate recall in the future, thus learning from their placement. Dante-*personaggio* must comprehend the image to understand the sin being punished and he needs to understand it in order to avoid it now

and in the future and also to ensure his readers do the same. Other examples of the importance of sight occur throughout Purgatory-proper, some examples being when Virgil instructs Dante-*personaggio* on the terrace of envy to 'ficca[r] li occhi per l'aere ben fisco' [probe the air fixedly with your eyes], a contrast to the souls who have their eyes sewn shut (*Purg.*, XIII, 43); the lack of sight due to smoke on the terrace of anger (*Purg.*, XVI, 1–27); or when Dante describes his knowledge growing with the phrase 'Poi che di riguardar pasciuto fui' [when I had fed myself with gazing] on the terrace of the lustful (*Purg.*, XXVI, 103).

The image of the souls as corbels is also important because Dante describes the affect that one can have from viewing art, that in this case, when one sees these corbels in a church, one is caused to feel empathy and experiences 'vera rancura' [real discomfort] for them because of their life-like pain (*Purg.*, X, 130–35).[33] Dante once again follows the rules of memory training as he creates affect in Dante-*personaggio* where he feels sorry for the souls in pain. In addition, this is a striking image because Dante-*personaggio* realises that these corbels are not architectural features but souls, and that they are not made of stone but are carrying stones as part of their purgative process, understood to be real by the souls carrying the stones on their backs. But the stones they carry on their backs serve as a reminder of what Dante-*personaggio* originally thought they were, corbels in a church. Not only does Dante refer specifically to an architectural feature found in churches but he also calls attention to the ability of images to evoke affect — an important aspect in memory training which allows one to remain diligent in avoiding the same fate. The mnemonic technique of affect is invoked, not just on the terrace of pride, but throughout Dante-*personaggio*'s journey up the mountain, such as during Dante-*personaggio*'s encounter with the souls on the terrace of envy. Firstly, the purgation of the souls, with their eyes sewn shut produces affect in Dante-*personaggio* who is moved to pity them similar to how on Earth, we are moved to pity when we see and hear blind people (*Purg.*, XIII, 55–66). This idea of affect is repeated later in this canto with Sapia, when Sapia describes Pier Pettinaio who is moved by affect to pray for her and expedites her time in

[33] Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 125.

Purgatory. This example recalls the use of affect on tomb decoration described on the terrace of pride (*Purg.*, XIII, 124–29).[34] Another example of affect occurs when Dante-*personaggio* enters the terrace of avarice and finds weeping souls lying face down on the ground, reciting a prayer with deep sighs, once again recalling the act of prayer for the dead being stimulated by viewing the tomb of the deceased (*Purg.*, XIX, 70–75).

6.4.3 The Carved Pavement

This last example leads me into another example of the didactic and mnemonic use of architecture which is found with the carved pavement on the terrace of pride and will also be relevant to the analysis of the souls on the terrace of avarice. This can be understood by comparing Dante's depiction of the terrace of pride's carved pavement with Durand's description of the church pavement in his *Rationale*. Durand refers to the didactic function of the pavement:

> Pavimentum Ecclesiae est fidei nostrae fundamentum. In Ecclesia vero spirituali pavimentum sunt pauperes Christi, scillicet pauperes spiritu, qui se in omnibus humiliant, quarepropter humilitatem pavimento assimilantur. Rursus pavimentum, quod pedibus calcatur, vulgus est, cujus laboribus Ecclesia sustentatur. (*Rationale*, 1.1.28)
>
> [The pavement of the church is the foundation of our faith. But in the spiritual Church the pavement is the poor of Christ: the poor in spirit, who humble themselves in all things: wherefore on account of their humility they are likened to the pavement. Again, the pavement, which is trodden under foot, represents the multitude, by whose labours the Church is sustained.]

Once again we have a link to ideas of foundation, in this case, that which is necessary to faith — a very important thing to build on for the souls in order to correct their sinful inclinations and rise up to heaven. Given that we are on the first terrace of Purgatory, we need to understand the foundation in order to progress upwards. This is further strengthened by the idea that humility (what the souls have to learn after they have overcome pride) is the foundation of all virtues, just as pride is the root of all other sins. Durand makes an explicit reference to the pavement as a symbol for humility which is learned by being

[34] Other allusions to the architectural space and the mnemonic practices enacted on the terrace of pride are prevalent throughout the third terrace, such as the description of the architectural layout of this terrace, the cloaks the envious wear being compared to the colour of rock, the souls crying out Peter and Mary, among other saints' names, and the phrase 'la mente il fiume' [the river of the mind] (*Purg.*, XIII, 4–6, 79–81; 46–78; 49–51; 89).

trodden on, just as Dante's pavement is trodden on for the souls of pride to learn humility through the representations of pride depicted.

Virgil again instructs Dante-*personaggio* to follow the mnemonic rule of taking in the whole scene:

> […] "Volgi li occhi in giùe:
> buon ti sarà, per tranquillar la via,
> veder lo letto de le piante tue." (*Purg.*, XII, 13–15)
>
> ["turn your eyes downward: it will be good for you, to smooth your path, to see the bed where the soles of your feet are resting]

Virgil instructs Dante-*personaggio* to view all of the images so that he can learn from them and the phrasing of 'buon ti sarà' [it will be good for you] links the act of seeing to morality — the very reason to build the architectural mnemonic. Dante-*personaggio* discovers that he is walking on top of a carved pavement that reminds him of the tomb slabs placed in the pavement of churches, and he calls attention to the function of tombs:

> Come, perchè di lor memoria sia,
> sovra i sepolti le tombe terragne
> portan segnato quel ch'elli eran pria,
> onde lì molte volte si ripiagne
> per la puntura de la rimembranza,
> che solo a' pïì dà de la calcagne:
> sì vid' io lì […] (*Purg.* XII, 16–22)
>
> [As, over the buried dead, to preserve their memory, the tombs in a pavement are signed with what they were in life, so that often we weep again because of the pricking of memory, which drives its spurs only into the devoted: so I saw carvings there]

Dante explicitly references the burial practices that were prominent in medieval Florence where the deceased is either referenced by a name in an inscription or he or she is represented in bodily form on tomb slabs within the pavement, as discussed in chapter 5. These carvings function to produce an affective response of weeping in the viewer through their realistic resemblance to the deceased and the fact that they were shown 'at their best'. These images show the greatness of the individual and therefore instil weeping in the viewer for their loss and also function as a means to provoke prayer for their souls, which Dante alludes to here but also with the Sapia and Pope Adrian episodes, noted above. But in an ironic twist, the tombs on the terrace of pride do not show the souls 'at their best', instead they show them at the moment of their downfall, as

noted in chapter 5. Dante also describes the art of the tomb carvings as so masterful that the 'dead seemed dead, and the living living' [Morti li morti e i vivi parean vivi] (*Purg*., XII, 67). This once again recalls the idea of affect, where the torment and downfall are so realistic that rather than produce empathy and prayer for the dead, as the tombs of Florence did, they produce contempt and aversion through their realistic depiction.

As a result of the analysis of the frieze, corbels, and tombs we can see how the terrace of pride can be understood as an example of Dante employing late medieval mnemonic practices by mimicking the architectural foundations of a church. This can help us to understand how this terrace can be used as an exemplar for each terrace on Mount Purgatory.

6.5 Building on the Foundations of a Sacred Space

By understanding the terrace of pride as the foundations of a sacred space, we can also interpret each subsequent terrace as a new level, building on this foundation. As much as Dante is drawing on architectural features on the terrace of pride, the dominant image of Purgatory is, of course, a mountain and this is typical of the way that Dante mixes natural and human-made features in the poem, such as the City of Dis as a wild, natural landscape in Hell. But Dante uses architectural motifs found in a church as one of many lenses to view the mountain. By using the motif of living stones, foundation stones, and creating a mnemonic rubric for the reader and Dante-*personaggio* on the terrace of pride, he invites us to employ memory training techniques such as the use of striking images to produce affect, taking in the entire image, postures of Dante-*personaggio* and the souls, as well as the rituals one finds in the church structure, to remember and build on the lessons he has learned. The architectural foundations described on the terrace of pride also contribute to the liturgical atmosphere of Purgatory, helping to produce the idea of the church. These liturgical aspects of *Purgatorio* have been well documented and analysed by scholars. For example, Treherne analyses the terrace of pride frieze and connects the sensorial confusion with the embodied experience of the Eucharist

and goes on to trace Eucharistic references throughout the mountain.[35] As noted earlier with the examination of the entryway to the terrace of pride, the hymn ‘Te Deum laudamus’ is recited by the proud souls as Dante-*personaggio* enters the terrace and he likens it to the liturgical song heard in a church accompanied by an organ. Other liturgical examples are found on the terrace of pride such as the souls reciting the Lord’s prayer (*Purg.*, XI, 1–27), which Phillips-Robins argues allows the reader to recall their lived experience of praying the *Pater Noster*.[36] Another example is the recitation of the first Beatitude as Dante-*personaggio* and Virgil leave the terrace; a ritual that is repeated each time they leave a terrace, similar to receiving a blessing each time a person leaves a church at the end of the Mass (*Purg.*, XII, 110). Thus, it is not only the architectural foundations of the church that Dante alludes to but also the rituals performed within it. Hymns, psalms, and prayers are positioned throughout the cantica, such as on the terrace of gluttons the souls sing “Labia mea, Domine,” from psalm 50 [51]: 3, a penitential psalm sung during Matins. Another example is on the terrace of anger where the souls sing the *Agnus Dei*, a prayer from the ordinary of the Mass. This mixture of architectural motifs with the rituals enacted within the church, links the architecture with the practices and mentally puts the reader back into the church structure. Therefore, Dante does not consistently recreate the church architecture as Dante-*personaggio* ascends the mountain, instead he draws on various elements of it as well as the mnemonic training set up on the first terrace.

6.6 Allusions to the Terrace of Pride’s Architectural Foundations

I have noted throughout the above sections some of the implicit references to architecture through memory training techniques and liturgical practices that relate back to the terrace of pride. There are also more explicit references to the

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[35] Treherne, *Liturgical Imagination*, pp. 125–29. See for example *Purgatorio*, XXI, 149–53; XXV, 153–54; XXII–III.

[36] Phillips-Robins, p. 87. Webb provides a similar argument: that the use of gestures, postures, and gazes invite the reader to perform them alongside Dante-*personaggio* or the souls and thus enter into a relationship with God, see p. 28.

architectural features of Purgatory, such as when Statius describes the space of Purgatory-proper:

> […] "Cosa non è che sanza
> ordine senta la religïone
> de la montagna, o che sia fuor d'usanza.
> Libero è qui da ogne alterazione:
> di quel che 'l ciel da sé in sé riceve
> esser ci puote, e non d'altro, cagione.
> Per che non pioggia, non grando, non neve,
> non rugiada, non brina più su cade
> che la scaletta di tre gradi breve;
> […]
> secco vappor non surge più avante
> ch'al sommo d'i tre gradi ch'io parlai,
> dov' ha 'l vicario di Pietro le piante." (*Purg.*, XXI, 40–54)
>
> ["Nothing that the rule of this mountain allows can be without order or beyond custom. This place is free from any alteration: only what Heaven receives into itself by itself can be caused here, nothing else. For this reason no rain, no hail, no snow, no dew, no frost falls any higher than the little stairway with but three steps; dry vapor does not rise above the highest of the three steps I mentioned, where Peter's vicar sets his feet."]

Statius' account unsettles any ordinary understanding of a natural landscape and helps us to understand it as a sacred space; it is created for a specific purpose and many unnatural things occur, such as the fact that no weather can afflict it or the tree that grows downwards in the following canto (*Purg.*, XXII, 130–135). This description of Purgatory-proper demonstrates that it is a managed space rather than a purely natural space. Another, more explicit example takes place in canto XIX when Dante-*personaggio* encounters the souls on the terrace of avarice. Dante echoes the carved pavement that Dante-*personaggio* trod on, on the terrace of pride:

> Com' io nel quinto giro fui dischiuso,
> vidi gente per esso che piangea
> giacendo a terra, tutta volta in giuso.
> "*Adhaesit pavimento anima mea!*"
> sentia dir lor […] (*Purg.*, XIX, 70–74)
>
> [When I was loosed onto the fifth circle, I saw people weeping there, lying on the earth, all facing downward. "*Adhaesit pavimento anima mea!*" I heard them saying]

On this terrace, the souls become a part of the architectural features, they become the carved pavement that reminds Dante-*personaggio* of the tomb slabs on the terrace of pride. The souls on this terrace are literally enacting the line they recite from psalm 118 [119]: 'my soul hath cleaved to the pavement'. Augustine's commentary on this psalm states:

> Quid est ergo pavimentum? Si tamquam unam quamdam domum magnam universum mundum velimus accipere, videmus velut eius cameram coelum: terra erit igitur pavimentum. (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 118, X, 1)
>
> [What then is the pavement? If we take the entire universe as like a great house, its roof being the heavens, the earth will be its pavement].[37]

As Augustine's commentary demonstrates, this psalm was often associated with the same living stones motif as we found on the terrace of pride and the souls become a part of the architectural pavement. In addition, this canto also has a reference to St Peter (*Purg.*, XIX, 99). Therefore, this canto recalls the gateway of Purgatory-proper and the architectural features found on the terrace of pride through Dante's flexible use of motifs. Finally, an implicit example occurs on the terrace of envy, when Dante-*personaggio* encounters a soul who cries out: 'Aglauro, che divenni sasso!' [Aglauros who turned to stone] (*Purg.*, XIV, 139). The myth of Aglauros recalls the living stones motif found in the corbels because Aglauros was turned to stone by Envy in Ovid's description of the myth (*Met.* 2.708–832). This connection is strengthened by the souls of the envious who appear as beggars sitting on the steps of a church, dressed in robes the same colour as the rock of the mountain, recalling the steps to the entryway of Purgatory-proper (*Purg.*, XIII, 46–48). Therefore, at the beginning of Purgatory-proper the reader is provided with the foundations of this managed space and throughout the journey up the mountain, the reader is reminded of this space and the rituals within it. Dante reminds the reader of this throughout the terraces in different ways, drawing on various mnemonic rules, recalling liturgical practices, and by alluding to the first terrace's architectural foundations such as the gate and pavement. By building on this foundation throughout the

[37] See notes by Durling and Martinez, The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 2: Purgatorio, p. 321 l. 73.

ascent, we are provided with a new lens through which to view the procession in the Earthly Paradise.

6.7 The Living Stones Motif in the Earthly Paradise as a Sign of the Culmination of the *Purgatorio*'s Building Project

The interpretation of the procession in the Earthly Paradise as a consecration procession in chapter 4 confirmed that the church was a physical building but it was created by and symbolised the community of the Church both in Heaven and on Earth. I argued that in the Earthly Paradise Dante builds the church structure, not with bricks and mortar, but with the living stones where the key figures that make up the Church are represented in the procession. With this in mind, the terrace of pride's use of the living stones motif is similar because the architectural features are represented by a blurring of stone and living figures. Therefore, both the terrace of pride and the Earthly Paradise employ the living stones motif to represent the community of the Church. Community is an important feature throughout *Purgatorio* since the souls work together to advance forward, very different from Hell where, even if the souls are grouped together, they are incapable of helping each other. But I believe these two evocations of community at the beginning and end of Purgatory-proper can tell us more about how to interpret *Purgatorio*. By linking the Earthly Paradise procession and the terrace of pride through the living stones motif, the terrace of pride can be understood as the foundations of a sacred space and we can interpret the Earthly Paradise procession as the culmination of this building project, where the space is complete and therefore, can be consecrated.

As noted above, one of the necessities of mnemonic training was the ability to place images in a sequence. This was done in order to enhance one's ability to remember the information, but also to produce connections between each image. Honorius linked the individual parts of the church, such as the altar representing Christ, the windows symbolising the Doctors, and the pavement representing the laity, by following the same sequence as one would follow when moving through a church structure. The viewer would need to analyse each individual part but also its relationship to the whole, to understand it as the community of the church throughout time, producing dialogues between the component parts.

To understand the implications of this, we need to interpret the entire structure of Purgatory and how it functions. The movement of the souls through the architectural space of each terrace, allows Dante to evoke not just a church, but a renewed church in the space of Purgatory. The souls do not simply wait out their time on each terrace but must perform ritual actions through its space so that each soul who has erred, learns from their mistake, and is reformed, allowing them to enter into Heaven.[38]

As noted in chapter 5, St Peter was not only understood as the foundation stone but also as a counter-example to the corrupt popes of *Inferno* XIX and *Purgatorio* XIX; their corruption being tied to material wealth, exemplified in their elaborate tombs and, more generally, to the money associated with the rise in tomb production in late medieval Italy. Dante, therefore, uses St Peter as an exemplar of what the church should be and thus, these examples are another instance of Dante calling for a renewal, a return to the church that was uncorrupted. If we take these references throughout the *Commedia* of St Peter being connected to reform — and connect them to his symbolism at the gate of Purgatory, we might interpret all of Purgatory-proper as an example of how to renew the church and, once we reach its end, a renewed church through the ritual of the consecration procession.

When we consider this in relation to the Earthly Paradise, we can see more clearly a division between this renewed church and the deconsecrated chariot. In the processions chapter, I argued that the Earthly Paradise procession represents the Church as it should be, but the transformation of the chariot represents the Church as it is, a corrupt institution. Therefore, if we interpret Purgatory-proper as an example of the renewed church, culminating in the consecration procession, we are provided immediately afterwards with its antithesis, a reminder that the Church is not as it should be but is a corruption of what was just built in Purgatory-proper. I argue that Dante does this to compare

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[38] Armour makes a similar argument when he states that the angel guarding the door of Purgatory represents 'a projection of the Pope and the Church, idealized and reformed': see *The Door of Purgatory*, p. 51. There are some sections of Armour's argument that I do not agree with, such as his claim that there are no sacramental qualities within the poem and the fact that he uses his arguments about the door of Purgatory to make a biographic claim about Dante going on a pilgrimage to Rome.

the two versions of the Church in order to guide the reader to choose and, importantly, to use the correct model. As noted earlier, the end of the journey through the Earthly Paradise is a crucial moment in the poem because, although Dante-*personaggio* has gone through Lethe and has confessed, he must continue to write about the rest of the journey because of the corruption of the Church and world which, similar to him, still has the opportunity to change. Therefore, Dante provides Dante-*personaggio* and the reader with the foundations on which to build a church within their mind as well as the practices that must take place within it — an understanding of both the vices and virtues — through prayer, postures, and movement, which culminate in the Earthly Paradise consecration procession, providing a model of how to reform the church.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that analysing the terrace of pride from a spatial perspective provides new readings of not only the first terrace but all of Purgatory-proper and the Earthly Paradise. The living stones motif and its connection with memory training at the beginning and end of Purgatory-proper allow the reader to form a link between the sections. Therefore, by interpreting the terrace of pride as the foundations of a church, we can understand Purgatory-proper as a whole in which Dante references the foundations laid in the terrace of pride through architectural motifs and reminders of architectural mnemonic and religious practices in order for Dante-*personaggio* and the reader to build the church in their mind. Each time they enter a new terrace, they add to this foundation, until they reach the Earthly Paradise where a consecration procession occurs, sacralising the space that has been built within the mind. Dante draws on ideas about church architecture, such as those of Durand and Honorius, that refer to, not a specific church, but any church structure. This encourages the reader to reflect on what a renewed church might look like, drawing connections between their lived experience of the built environment of churches, and the spiritual and moral reform which is so central to Purgatory as a whole.

Chapter 7 **Conclusion**

This thesis has argued that architectural and urban space play an important role in Dante's construction of the afterlife, and that they would also have helped shape his contemporary readers' understanding of the text. The core of the thesis was devoted to analysing architectural models and how Dante engages with them in his poem. My argument was not that Dante's experiences of any particular building or buildings were replicated within the *Commedia*, but instead that he drew on the lived experience of architectural models and their symbolic meaning, in order to guide the reader in relating his account of the afterlife to their experiences of spaces on Earth.

This thesis explored architecture as a significant feature of the poem and of its cultural, religious, and civic contexts, challenging any assumption that architectural motifs or references are merely decorative or extraneous to the fundamental concerns of the text. It argued that Dante uses the built environment to inform the reader's spiritual and intellectual journey. This allows architectural resonances of the afterlife to become a part of the penitential process, not only for the inhabitants of the afterlife and Dante-*personaggio*, but also for the reader of the *Commedia*. Architecture helps to mould the individual identity and subjectivity of the reader just as it moulds identity in reality. Dante's contemporaries, familiar with the architectural models that Dante draws on, would have been taken on the journey with him, their experiences of these spaces enriching their understanding of Dante's text, as part of their wider cultural and intellectual contexts. Furthermore, it was not only Dante's Florentine contemporaries that could interpret and understand his text: rather, the practices and rituals associated with the built environment discussed in this thesis were prevalent throughout urban contexts in medieval Italy. By understanding this material culture, we can better interpret the poem today.

An approach to the text through the primary lens of architecture and the built environment is a useful way of reading the poem because it helps us to understand the lived experience of Dante and his contemporaries as well as how they might have interpreted his poetic creation of the afterlife. It also helps

us create connections between canti that might otherwise go unnoticed and assists the reader in a broader interpretation of episodes. The architectural prompts within the poem provide stand-alone examples such as Hell as a cloister or they bring together multiple architectural features within an episode such as the pavement, corbels, and frieze on the terrace of pride. But architectural references and resonances occur throughout the entire poem, from the gate of Hell to the City of the Empyrean. One of the fascinating points about researching the architectural environment of Dante's *Commedia* is the fact that Dante's use of architecture in the poem transcends the particularities of Florentine space, and allows the shaped, created spaces to be used as a tool, exploring the wide range of issues in which the *Commedia* engages.

I have treated architecture and the built environment in the forms they would have been known by Dante's contemporaries as not only lived experiences but as active agents in forming one's identity and understanding of the world. By comparing the architectural space — both in terms of the historical architecture of Florence and Dante's allusions and references within the text — with contemporary theologians' use of buildings to convey meaning in the areas of memory training, ritual movement through liturgical practices, sermons, biblical commentaries, and other historical documents, I explored the interface between these two areas of cultural production and social experience. By doing so I have examined medieval understandings and uses of architecture in enabling spiritual growth. I have argued, in particular, that Dante plays with architectural models of space to allow the reader to bring their lived experiences of the built environment to their interpretation of the poem. Dante's choices in shaping the architecture of the afterlife invite the reader to understand their meaning beyond physical boundaries or particular spaces.

Each chapter analysed the symbolic meaning and social, cultural, and religious practices associated with architectural structures, be that the component parts of the city (chapter 2) or the individual built elements of the cloister, the church, and tombs (chapters 3–6). The thesis started by contextualising the Italian cityscape to show Dante's engagement with the expansion of Florence in terms of his representations of the main architectural features of the city. It provided examples of Dante's use of these types of architecture within the *Commedia* and how they reflect the symbolism and

function embodied in these structures on Earth. This allowed us to understand how they function to produce meaning in terms of individual and communal identity, while also linking all of the afterlife to understandings of the cosmos. By analysing the cityscape in this way, we are provided with further connections in understanding the parallels between the cities of Dis and the Empyrean but also Dante's engagement with ideas of communal identity that informed his understanding of civic life within the cityscape. In late medieval Florence, the building boom was seen as an attempt to unite the city and bring it closer to God and His order. Therefore, by understanding the architectural components that create this unity, and by comparing them to Dante's description of architecture in terms of its main features, with reference to the city as a whole, we can understand that both these cities are presented as being under God's control and display different forms of order and unity through their inhabitants and architecture. The cityscape and cloister chapters of this thesis analysed the interesting relationship Dante creates with his descriptions of opposing spaces in the layout of the City of Dis with the City of the Empyrean and the structures of Hell and Paradise. By connecting these opposing places through their description as cities and cloisters respectively, the reader better understands God's role within the creation of these spaces and how one interacts with them.

In addition, Dante's references to the cloister space inform our understanding of the canti in which they are made, enriching our interpretation of the other claustral imagery as well as the chosen punishment for the sinners, such as the counterfeiters and forgers heaped in piles and riddled with disease who used their minds not for meditation on God but for evil. Although the cloister is not the main architectural space within the canti in which it is mentioned, the fact that Dante uses it to describe the structure of both Heaven and Hell allow the reader to understand Dante's argument that all things are shaped by God's hand; by following the meditational practices enacted within the cloister space, one will become closer to God. Conceptions of moral transformation through movement extended into the interpretation of processional movement through the lens of consecration processions within the poem in chapter 4.

In the Earthly Paradise, ideas associated with consecration processions assist us in interpreting Dante's moral transformation as well as the

transformation of the chariot as a de-consecration, helping the reader to interpret Dante's condemnation of the Church but also providing the reader with a pathway to reconciliation and healing through individual, moral transformation. This analysis also guided the reader to understand Dante and his contemporaries' experience of consecration processions. This helps us to compare processional movement throughout the poem such as in Purgatory, where the circling movement and actions of the participants aid their transformation; in Hell, by contrast, this movement does not lead to any transformation, but is a dead end. A common thread between the cloister, procession, and tomb chapters is the use of church architecture to convey Dante's condemnation of the Church through examples of using claustral space incorrectly for pursuits other than meditation, the de-consecration enacted by the Earthly Paradise procession, and the use of and purchasing of elaborate tombs as a lavish pursuit respectively.

The expansion of Florence not only created new churches, but it also changed the ways in which the church space was used, such as through the increase in tomb purchases. By interpreting tomb styles and their decorations, we can better understand ideas of medieval self-fashioning which allow us to broaden our understanding of heavily discussed episodes such as that of Farinata, the heretic stuck in an *avello*. The *avello*-style tomb provides a further layer of meaning because it symbolised pride and the idea of representing oneself 'at one's best'. Dante plays with the practices associated with this type of tomb since he buries Farinata, not with his family, but with his enemy and the hoped-for resurrection implicit in the *avelli* decoration is ironic since the Epicureans did not believe in the resurrection of the body. This play with tomb styles and decoration is also found with the slabs on the terrace of pride, where rather than invoking pity and prayer for the deceased, anger and distain are enacted through the images of the deceased at their worst. Finally, the funerary motif also emerges in the episode of the simoniacs, buried headfirst in the ground, engaging in ideas of burial and resurrection, similar to the heretics. Thus, the architectural structures and decoration of tombs help us to better understand Dante's play with ideas of community and identity, the contemporary debate on the relationship between the body and soul, and Church corruption.

The case study of the terrace of pride combined the key concepts and interpretations analysed in the cloister, procession, and tomb chapters. By analysing the many architectural features of the terrace of pride in the light of the arguments that this thesis puts forward, this thesis broadened the interpretation of the architectural components of the terrace, analysing them as a coherent whole, in the form of the foundations of the church. This expanded our understanding of the architectural structure of Purgatory-proper and for interpreting it as a meditational device for spiritual growth towards God.

The *Commedia* is a text that enables the reader to become an active participant in the journey towards God, enacting various rituals and religious practices throughout the journey. Through my analysis of the architecture and practices enacted within these spaces I have sought to understand one of the ways in which Dante leads his reader towards God, enables them to experience individual spiritual growth, helps to interpret ideas of communal and individual identity, and aids the reader in making sense of the world. This thesis engages with the current interest in Dante scholarship to understand the lived experience of Dante and his contemporaries to better interpret Dante's writing. There are certainly more episodes in the *Commedia* that can be interpreted through this architectural approach and my hope is that these are developed with additional studies. This thesis also reveals further areas of research which could consider architectural spaces beyond Florence, which Dante encountered during his exile, or the architecture and built environment described in his other works.

The thesis provides methodological approach to scholarship for understanding the role of the reader or viewer in medieval culture, in particular, and the use of architectural space to shape human experience. It builds on recent trends in literary studies and draws on spatial theory to challenge the idea that the medieval understanding of space was primitive and instead shows a sophisticated approach to space. This methodology can be applied to other medieval vernacular texts to open up new ways of reading and interpreting. One possible avenue in this direction would be to consider how the ideas of architecture explored within my research go beyond Dante, across cultural and linguistic barriers by exploring similar urban settings across Europe in the fourteenth century. For example, one might compare the university environment of Bologna or the aristocratic city of Verona, asking how the representations of

architecture coincide or depart from one another and how they provide clues to cultural understandings of architecture. Such a project would provide an understanding of how medieval writers engaged with, and were shaped by, the changing architectural spaces which surrounded them and their readers.

Figures

Figure 1 This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons.

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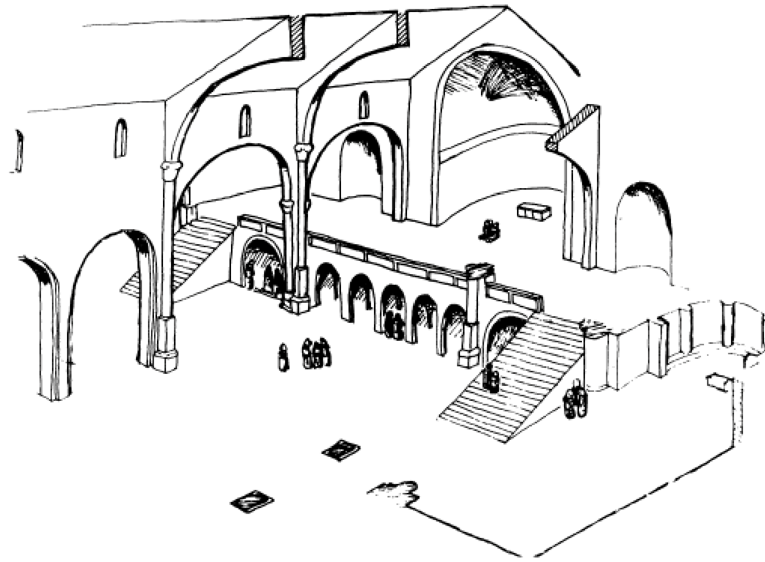

FIGURE 20. *Reconstructed view of the Romanesque church in the thirteenth century.*

Figure 4 *Reconstruction of Santa Reparata (*c*. 13th century)*, from Franklin Toker, ‘Excavations Below the Cathedral of Florence, 1965-1974’, *Gesta*, 14.2 (1975), 17–36 (p. 35) <https://doi.org/10.2307/766737>.

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Figure 6 ***Piazza San Giovanni*****, from Wikicommons, By sailko - Self-photographed, CC BY 2.5, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2226104.**

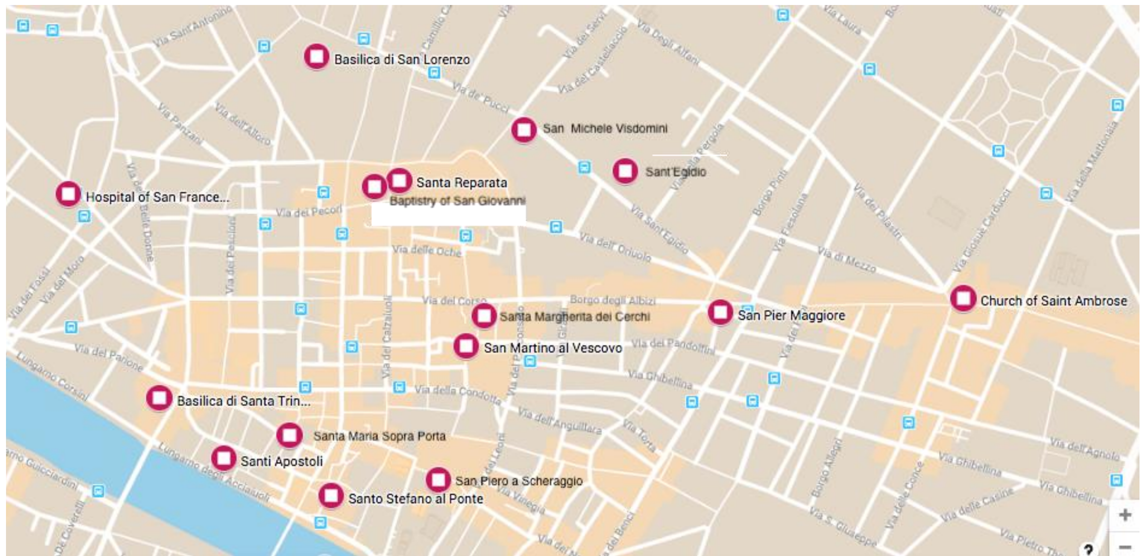

Figure 7 ***Structures in operation in 1300.***

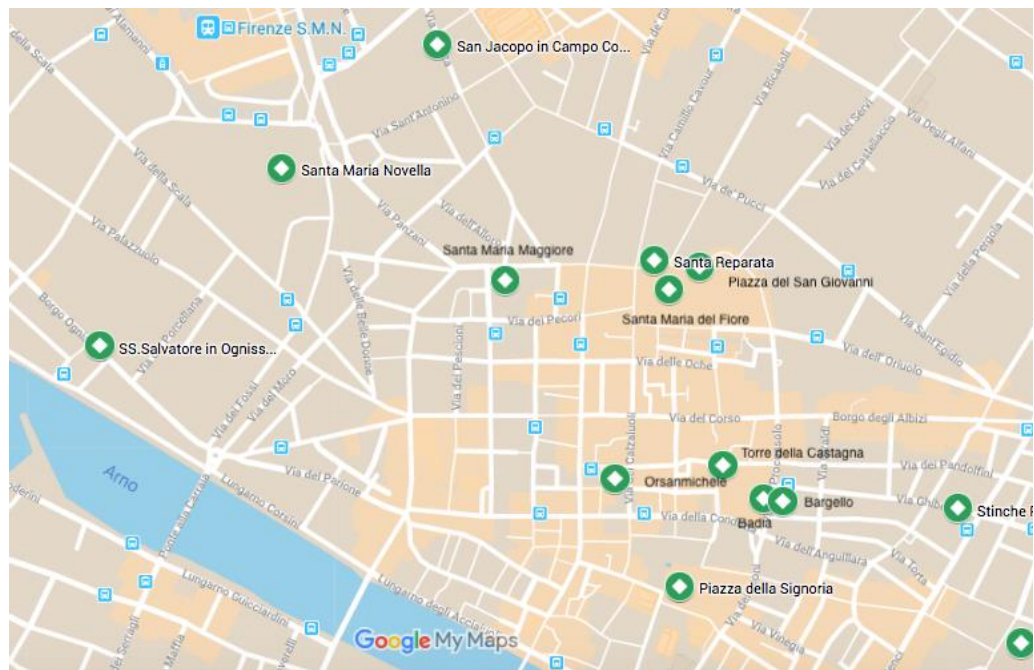

Figure 8 ***Structures Under Construction in 1300.***

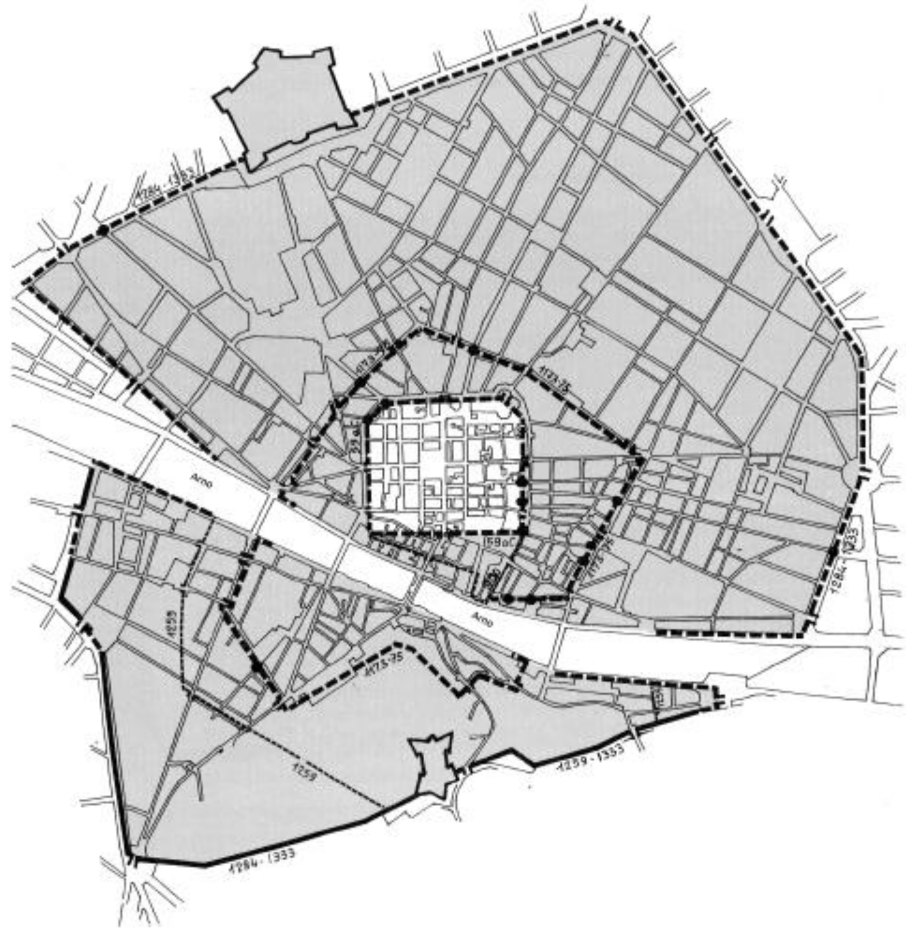

Figure 9 ***Walls of Florence from Roman Establishment to 1333,*** **from Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile,** ***Dante in Context*****, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 536, reproduced with permission of The Licensor through PLSclear.**

Figure 10 *Palazzo del Capitano*, from Wikicommons, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=450938.

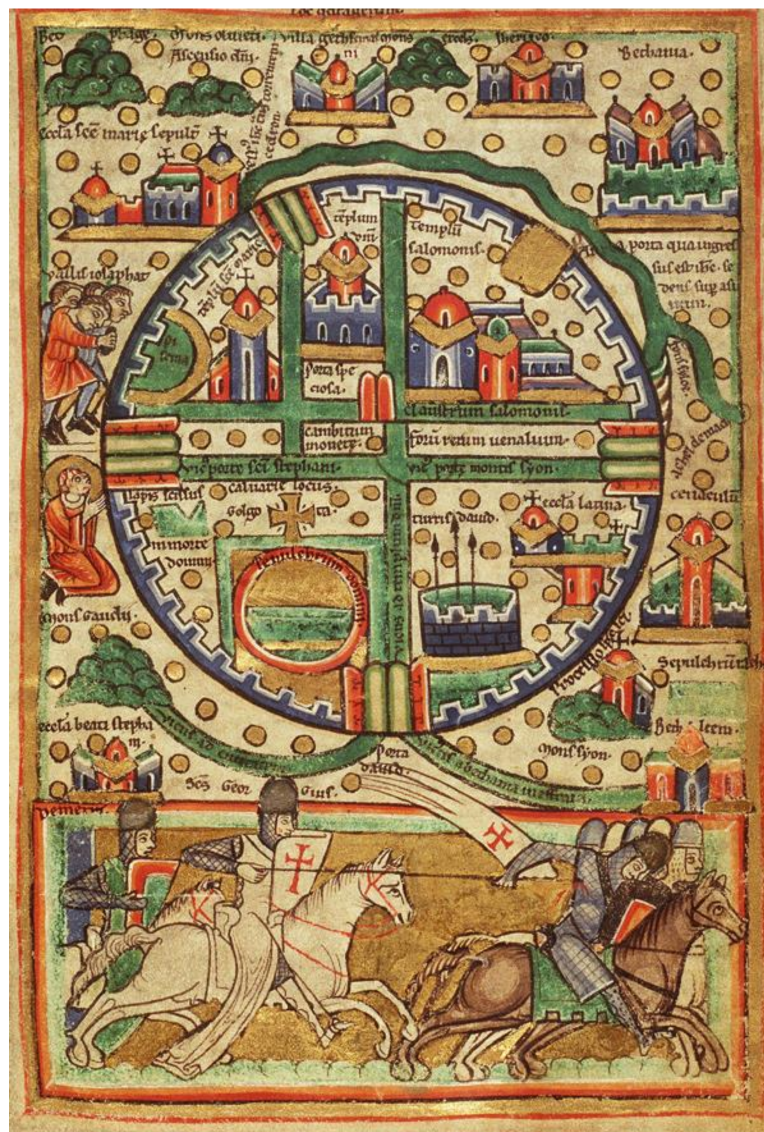

Figure 11 ***Map of Jerusalem,*** **12th century, from Wikicommons, Public Domain, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Plan_of_Jerusalem%2C_12th_Century._ca._1200.jpg.**

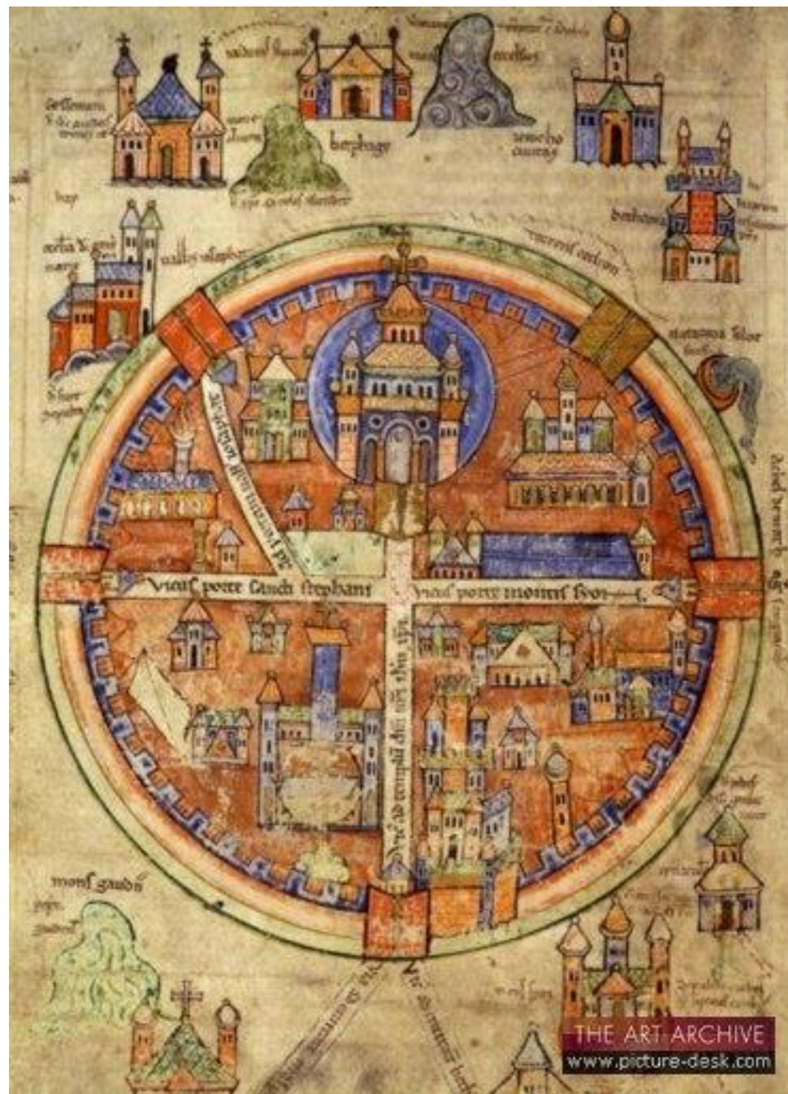

Figure 12 ***Map of Jerusalem,*** **from Wikicommons, Public Domain,**

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Upsala_map.jpg.

Figure 13 ***Angel Showing John the New Jerusalem with the Lamb of God at its Centre, c.*****1000–1020, Bamberg Apocalypse, Germany, Staatsbibliothek Bamberg, Ms. Bibl. 140, f. 554, from Wikicommons, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BambergApocalypseFolio055r New_Jerusalem.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BambergApocalypseFolio055rNew_Jerusalem.JPG).**

Figure 14 ***The Heavenly Jerusalem,*** **Liber Floridus of Lambert of Saint-Omer, 12th century, Ghent University Library Ms. 92, fol. 65r, Public Domain, https://lib.ugent.be/en/catalog/rug01:000763774.**

Figure 15 *The Heavenly Jerusalem, c*. 1370–1390, Apocalypse with commentary in French, London, BL, © British Library Board, Yates Thompson MS 10, f. 36r.

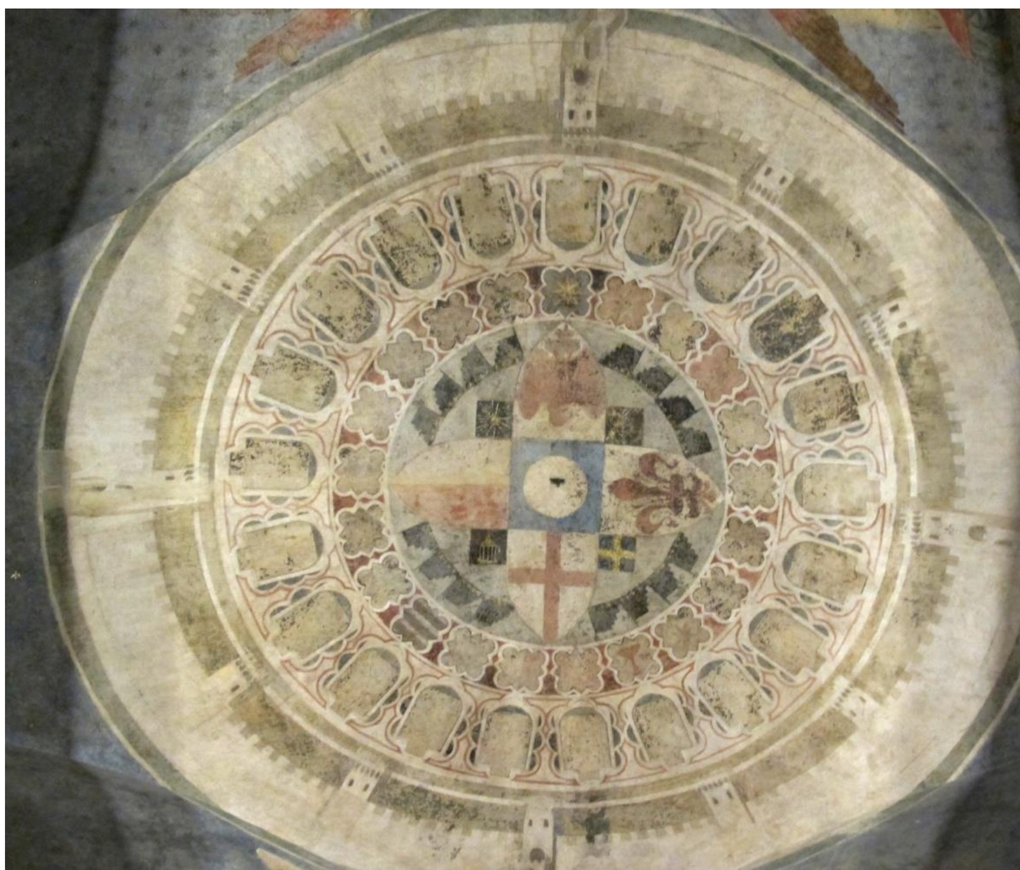

Figure 16 ***Palazzo dell'arte dei giudici e notai, rappresentazione araldica di Firenze*****, from Wikicommons, 12 February 2013, I, Sailko, CC BY-SA 3.0 https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/39/Palazzo_dell%27arte_dei_giudici_e_notai%2C_rappresentazione_araldica_di_firenze_06.JPG.**

Figure 17 ***Detail of The Empyrean,*** **Giovanni di Paolo, *c.* 1444–1450, Northern Italy, London, BL, © British Library Board, MS Yates Thompson 36, f. 184r.**

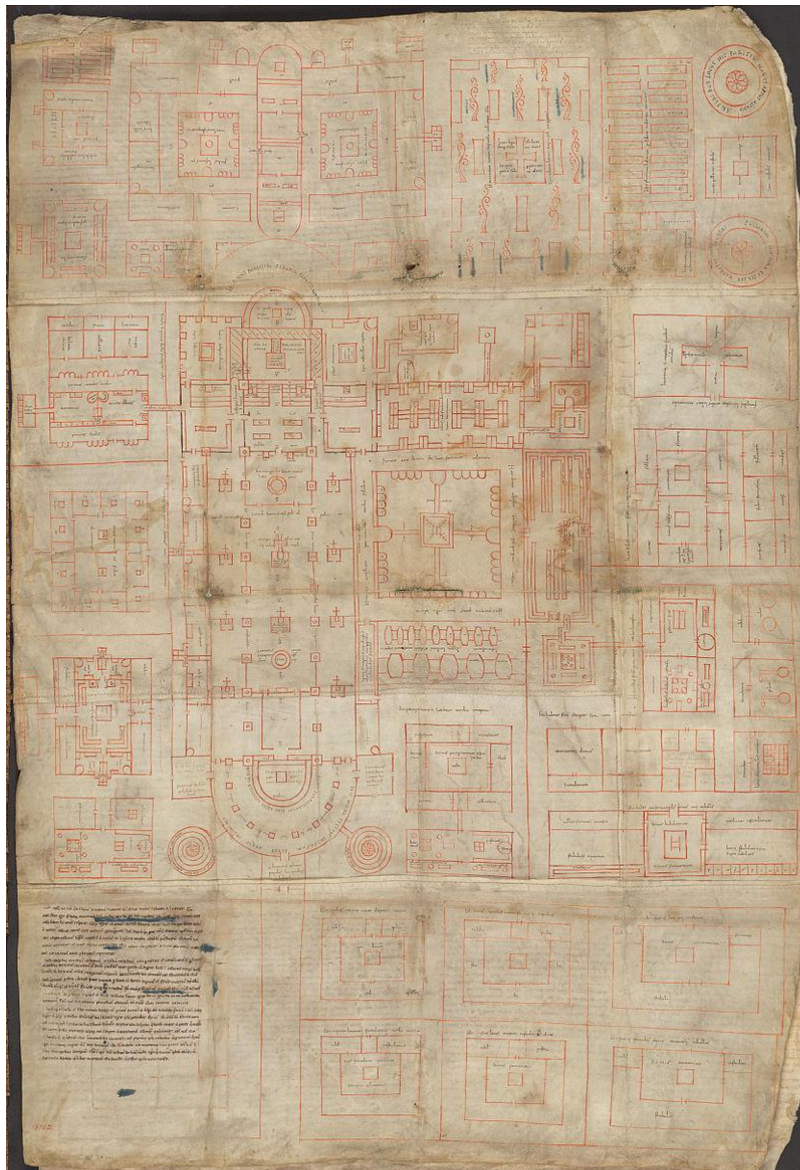

Figure 18 *Plan of St Gall*, ninth century, Reichenau, Stiftsbibliothek Sankt Gallen, MS 1092, from Wikicommons, Public Domain, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a5/Codex_Sangallensis_1092_recto.jpg.

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1. Vesting of the clergy**.**

2. Vigil with the relics, outside of the church and inside a tent with the sung litany.

3. Procession from the tent to the church with the relics.

4. **Triple circuit around the church**. **The bishop sprinkles the walls with holy water and knocks on the main doors at each circuit, reciting the antiphon, Tollite portas.**

5. The church doors are opened from the interior and the bishop enters with a few clergy.

6. Litany and prostration.

7. **Inscription of Greek and Latin alphabets in ash on the floor of the church in a cruciform pattern (the abecedarium).**

8. Preparation of the 'Gregorian Water'.

9. Consecration of altar.

10. **Aspersion of altar (seven times).**

11. **Aspersion of interior of church (three circuits).**

12. **Aspersion of length and width of interior.**

13. Prayer of consecration.

14. Proceed to altar.

15. **Preparation of mortar**.

16. Incensing and anointing of altar with oil and chrism.

17. Anointing of interior walls with chrism.

18. Return to altar.

19. Incensing altar.

20. Prayer of consecration.

21. Blessing of linens, ornaments, vestments, etc.

22. Exit church to tent; change of vestments.

23. Prayers outside of doors; blessing of doors.

24. **Process around exterior of church with laity.**

25. **Address to people, lord and constructor of church.**

26. Entrance with relics.

27. Installation of relics into altar.

28. Anointing of altar with chrism.

29. Vesting of altar.

30. Illumination of church.

31. Mass. (emphasis mine)

Figure 20 *31 Steps for the Dedication Rite,* Birkedal Bruun, Mette, and Louis I. Hamilton, 'Rites for Dedicating Churches', in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy,* ed. by Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2016), pp. 180-81.

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Figure 24 *Man of Sorrows on Tomb of Cangrande I della Scala*, 1329, Santa Mara Antiqua, Verona, from Wikipedia, Didier Descouens, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Arche_scaligere_%28Verona%29_L%27arca_di_Cangrande.jpg.

Figure 25 Tomb of Cangrande I della Scala, 1329, Santa Mara Antiqua, Verona, from Wikipedia, Didier Descouens, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Arche_scaligere_%28Verona%29_L%27arca_di_Cangrande.jpg.

Figure 26 *Man of Sorrows*, Niccolò di Tommaso, *c*. 1370, likely from a monastery in Florence, from The Met Museum, Publica Domain, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/472301.

Figure 27 This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons.

Figure 28 ***The Last Judgement, Scrovegni Chapel,*** **Giotto, 1306, Padua, from Wikicommons, Public Domain, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/16/Last-judgment-scrovegni-chapel-giotto-1306.jpg.**

Figure 29 ***The Last Judgement,*** **Baptistery of Florence, 13th century, Florence, author's own photo.**

Figure 30 ***Samples of Tomb Slabs*****, Santa Maria Novella, author's own photo.**

Figure 31 ***Jacapo Cavalcanti*, crypt, Santa Reparata*, c.* 1302,**

author's own photo.

Figure 32 ***Tassello of Gherardino Gianni*****,** ***c.*** **1334, exterior of Santa Croce, from Anne Leader with permission from Fondo Edifici di Culto del Ministero dell'Interno, 'The Sepulchralization of Renaissance Florence', in** ***Memorializing the Middle Classes in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*****, ed. by Anne Leader, Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Culture, LX (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 2018), fig. 3.11 on p. 90.**

Figure 33 ***Tomb of Clement IV,*** **1274, San Francesco, Viterbo, from Web Gallery of Art, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/o/oderisi/clement4.html.**

Figure 34 ***Tomb of Nicholas III,*** **1285, Vatican Grottos, Rome, Italy (Originally in Old St Peter's), from St. Peter's Basilica Info, http://stpetersbasilica.info/Grottoes/Nicholas%20III/Tomb%20of%20Nicholas%20III.htm.**

Figure 35 ***Tomb of Boniface VIII,*** **1303, Vatican Grottos, Rome, Italy (Originally in Old St Peter's), from Web Gallery of Art, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/o/oderisi/clement4.html.**

Figure 36 *Tomb of Adrian V,* 1276, San Francesco, Viterbo, from from Web Gallery of Art, from Web Gallery of Art, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/a/arnolfo/6/7viterb1.html.

Figure 37 ***Interior of the Florence Baptistery, Apse, c*****. 1225, mosaic, Fra' Jacopo della Scarsella, from Wikicommons, Sailko, CC BY 3.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0.**

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