

ITAL 310 Dante in Translation
Final Exam
December 19, 2008
Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta

Student Name: _____

This exam is in two parts. The first part consists of a series of quotes which comprise 60 points of the exam: you should devote approximately 30 minutes to these questions. The second part consists of two questions worth 40 points of the exam: you should devote approximately 20 minutes to these questions.

- A. **Identifications.** Set forth below are twelve short passages drawn from either *Purgatory* or *Paradiso*. **Choose ten of them.** Identify the speaker of the lines, the person(s) to whom the speaker is speaking (if known), the context in which the passage appears, and the relationship of the passage to the canto and/or canticle in which the passage is found. Ten identifications at six points each equal a total of sixty points.

Your answers to the identifications should be written on the exam sheet, not in the blue book.

1. “She, bereft of her first husband, despised and obscure eleven hundred years and more, remained without a suitor till he came.”

2. “To end thy longing Beatrice sent me from my place; and if thou look up to the third circle from the highest tier thou shalt see her again, in the throne her merits have assigned to her.”

3. “Put away every falsehood and make plain thy vision, - and then let them scratch where is the itch. For if thy voice is grievous at first taste, it will afterwards leave vital nourishment when it is digested.”

4. “A man is born on the bank of the Indus, and none is there to speak, or read, or write of Christ, and all his desires and doings are good, so far as human reason sees, without sin in life or speech. He dies unbaptized and without faith. Where is this justice that condemns him? Where is his fault if he does not believe?”

5. “These [spirits] have shown themselves here, not that this sphere is allotted to them, but in sign of the heavenly rank that is least exalted. It is necessary to speak thus to your faculty, since only from sense perception does it grasp that which it then makes fit for the intellect.”

6. “But tell me if I see here him that brought forth the new rhymes, beginning with *Ladies that have intelligence of love*. ”

7. “There I became so constant in God’s service that with food seasoned only with olive-juice I passed easily through heats and frosts, content in contemplative thoughts. That cloister used to yield abundant harvest to these heavens, and now it is become barren so that it must soon be exposed.”

8. “I saw on the one hand, beyond Cadiz, the mad track of Ulysses, and on the other nearly to the shore where Europa made herself a sweet burden.”

9. “Ye other few that reached out early for the angels’ bread by which men here live but never come from it satisfied, you may indeed put forth your vessel on the salt depths, holding my furrow before the water returns smooth again.”

10. “For a time I sustained him with my countenance. Showing him my youthful eyes I brought him with me, bound on the right way. As soon as I was on the threshold of my second age and I changed life he took himself from me and gave himself to another.”

11. “Just as the bachelor arms himself and does not speak till the master submits the question – for argument, not for settlement -, so I armed myself with all my reasons while she was speaking to be ready for such a questioner and for such a profession.”

12. “Await no further word or sign from me: your will is free, erect and whole – to act against that will would be to err.”

II. Short Essay Questions: Pick TWO of the four questions below and write a brief essay. Two answers at twenty points each equal a total of forty points.

1. The *Divine Comedy* begins with Dante lost in a dark wood. How does his perspective on this landscape evolve over the course of the poem?
2. Explain Dante’s use and development of prophecies in the *Divine Comedy*. How do they fit into the plot? How do they mirror Dante’s own real life experiences? Cite at least three examples drawn from at least two canticles.
3. What is the role of counseling in the *Divine Comedy*? Consider political, religious and academic counselors that Dante mentions or encounters. Cite at least three examples drawn from at least two canticles.
4. How does Dante develop the theme of exile throughout the *Divine Comedy*? How does Dante’s poetics of exile shed light on his sense of history? Cite examples from each of the three canticles.