

Toronto Salutes Dante

Inferno XX in Italian, English, and French

Italian	English	French
Di nova pena mi conven far versi e dar materia al ventesimo canto de la prima canzon, ch'è d'i sommersi.	I must make verses of new punishment and offer matter now for Canto Twenty of this first canticle-of the submerged.	Il me faut mettre en vers une peine nouvelle et donner matière à ce vingtième chant du premier cantique, celui des enfouis.
Io era già disposto tutto quanto a riguardar ne lo scoperto fondo, che si bagnava d'angoscioso pianto;	I was already well prepared to stare below, into the depth that was disclosed, where tears of anguished sorrow bathed the ground;	J'étais déjà tout entier attentif à regarder le fond qui m'était découvert 6 et qu'arrosaient des pleurs d'angoisse ;
e vidi gente per lo vallon tondo venir, tacendo e lagrimando, al passo che fanno le letane in questo mondo.	and in the valley's circle I saw souls advancing, mute and weeping, at the pace that, in our world, holy processions take.	et je vis venir par la vallée ronde des gens qui pleuraient en silence, marchant au pas qu'on a sur terre au chant des litanies.
Come 'l viso mi scese in lor più basso, mirabilmente apparve esser travolto ciascun tra 'l mento e 'l principio del casso,	As I inclined my head still more, I saw that each, amazingly, appeared contorted between the chin and where the chest begins;	Quand mon regard glissa plus bas sur eux, chacun m'apparut étrangement tordu entre le menton et le haut du buste :
ché da le reni era tornato 'l volto, e in dietro venir li convenia, perché 'l veder dinanzi era lor tolto.	they had their faces twisted toward their haunches and found it necessary to walk backward, because they could not see ahead of them.	car vers les reins leur face était tournée, et ils devaient marcher à reculons puisqu'ils étaient privés de la vue vers l'avant.
Forse per forza già di parlasia si travolse così alcun del tutto; ma io nol vidi, né credo che sia.	Perhaps the force of palsy has so fully distorted some, but that I've yet to see, and I do not believe that that can be.	Peut-être par l'effet de la paralysie des corps ont-ils été tournés ainsi ; mais je ne l'ai pas vu, et ne le crois pas.
Se Dio ti lasci, lettor, prender frutto di tua lezione, or pensa per te stesso com'io potea tener lo viso asciutto,	May God so let you, reader, gather fruit from what you read; and now think for yourself how I could ever keep my own face dry	Que Dieu, lecteur, te laisse prendre fruit de ta lecture, et à présent juge par toi-même comment je pouvais garder les yeux secs,
quando la nostra imagine di presso vidi sì torta, che 'l pianto de li occhi le natiche bagnava per lo fesso.	when I beheld our image so nearby and so awry that tears, down from the eyes, bathed the buttocks, running down the cleft.	lorsque je vis de tout près notre image si tordue que les larmes des yeux 24 baignaient les fesses entre les reins.
Certo io piangea, poggiato a un de' rocchi del duro scoglio, sì che la mia scorta mi disse: "Ancor se' tu de li altri sciocchi?	Of course I wept, leaning against a rock along that rugged ridge, so that my guide told me: "Are you as foolish as the rest?	Certes, je pleurais tant, appuyé à la roche du dur écueil, que mon guide me dit : « Es-tu toi aussi de ces insensés ?
Qui vive la pietà quand'è ben morta; chi è più scellerato che colui che al giudicio divin passion comporta?	Here pity only lives when it is dead: for who can be more impious than he who links God's judgment to passivity?	Ici vit la pitié quand elle est bien morte ; qui est plus scélérat que celui-là qui compatit lorsque Dieu a jugé ?
Drizza la testa, drizza, e vedi a cui s'aperse a li occhi d'i Teban la terra; per ch'ei gridavan tutti: "Dove rui,	Lift, lift your head and see the one for whom the earth was opened while the Thebans watched, so that they all cried: "Amphiaraus,	Lève la tête, lève-la, et regarde celui pour qui s'ouvrit la terre des Thébains ; ils lui criaient tous : "Où tombes-tu
Anfiarao? perché lasci la guerra?". E non restò di ruinare a valle fino a Minòs che ciascheduno afferra.	where are you rushing? Have you quit the fight?' Nor did he interrupt his downward plunge to Minos, who lays hands on every sinner.	Amphiaros? pourquoi laisses-tu la guerre ?" Il ne cessa pourtant de rouler dans l'abîme jusqu'à Minos, qui s'empare de tous.
Mira c' ha fatto petto de le spalle; perché volse veder troppo davante, di retro guarda e fa retroso calle.	See how he's made a chest out of his shoulders; and since he wanted so to see ahead, he looks behind and walks a backward path.	Vois comme il a fait de son dos sa poitrine ; et parce qu'il voulut voir trop loin en avant, il regarde en arrière et marche à reculons.
Vedi Tiresia, che mutò sembiante quando di maschio femmina divenne, cangiandosi le membra tutte quante;	And see Tiresias, who changed his mien when from a man he turned into a woman, so totally transforming all his limbs	Vois Tirésias qui changea d'apparence, lorsque de mâle il devint femme, tous ses membres se transformant ;
e prima, poi, ribatter li convenne li duo serpenti avvolti, con la verga, che riavesse le maschili penne.	that then he had to strike once more upon the two entwining serpents with his wand before he had his manly plumes again.	puis il lui fallut frapper de nouveau, avec sa verge, les serpents enlacés, avant de retrouver le plumage viril.
Aronta è quel ch'al ventre li s'atterga, che ne' monti di Luni, dove ronca lo Carrarese che di sotto alberga,	And Aruns is the one who backs against the belly of Tiresias-Aruns who, in Luni's hills, tilled by the Carrarese,	Aruns est celui qui s'adosse à son ventre, qui, dans les monts de Luni où va piocher le Carrarais qui vit un peu plus bas,
ebbe tra ' bianchi marmi la spelonca per sua dimora; onde a guardar le stelle e 'l mar non li era la veduta tronca.	who live below, had as his home, a cave among white marbles, from which he could gaze at stars and sea with unimpeded view.	eut pour demeure parmi les marbres blancs une grotte où pour voir la mer et les étoiles sa vue pouvait s'étendre librement.
E quella che ricuopre le mammelle, che tu non vedi, con le trecce sciolte, e ha di là ogni pilosa pelle,	And she who covers up her breasts-which you can't see-with her disheveled locks, who keeps all of her hairy parts to the far side,	Et celle-ci, qui couvre ses mamelles que tu ne vois pas, de ses cheveux flottants, et tient du même côté toute sa peau poilue,

Manto fu, che cercò per terre molte;
poscia si puose là dove nacqu' io;
onde un poco mi piace che m'ascolte.

Poscia che 'l padre suo di vita uscìo
e venne serva la città di Baco,
questa gran tempo per lo mondo gio.

Suso in Italia bella giace un laco,
a piè de l'Alpe che serra Lamagna
sovra Tiralli, c' ha nome Benaco.

Per mille fonti, credo, e più si bagna
tra Garda e Val Camonica e Pennino
de l'acqua che nel detto laco stagna.

Loco è nel mezzo là dove 'l trentino
pastore e quel di Brescia e 'l veronese
segnar poria, s'e' fesse quel cammino.

Siede Peschiera, bello e forte arnese
da fronteggiar Bresciani e Bergamaschi,
ove la riva 'ntorno più discese.

Ivi convien che tutto quanto caschi
ciò che 'n grempo a Benaco star non può,
e fassi fiume giù per verdi paschi.

Tosto che l'acqua a correr mette co,
non più Benaco, ma Mincio si chiama
fino a Governol, dove cade in Po.

Non molto ha corso, ch'el trova una lama,
ne la qual si distende e la 'mpaluda;
e suol di state talor esser grama.

Quindi passando la vergine cruda
vide terra, nel mezzo del pantano,
sanza coltura e d'abitanti nuda.

Lì, per fuggire ogne consorzio umano,
ristette con suoi servi a far sue arti,
e visse, e vi lasciò suo corpo vano.

Li uomini poi che 'ntorno erano sparti
s'accolsero a quel loco, ch'era forte
per lo pantan ch'avea da tutte parti.

Fer la città sovra quell'ossa morte;
e per colei che 'l loco prima elesse,
Mantua l'appellar sanz'altra sorte.

Già fuor le genti sue dentro più spesse,
prima che la mattia da Casalodi
da Pinamonte inganno ricevesse.

Però t'assenno che, se tu mai odi
originar la mia terra altrimenti,
la verità nulla menzogna frodi".

E io: "Maestro, i tuoi ragionamenti
mi son sì certi e prendon sì mia fede,
che li altri mi sarien carboni spenti.

Ma dimmi, de la gente che procede,
se tu ne vedi alcun degno di nota;
ché solo a ciò la mia mente rifiede".

Allor mi disse: "Quel che da la gota
porge la barba in su le spalle brune,
fu - quando Grecia fu di maschi vòta,

sì ch'a pena rimaser per le cune -
augure, e diede 'l punto con Calcanta
in Aulide a tagliar la prima fune.

Euripilo ebbe nome, e così 'l canta
l'alta mia tragedia in alcun loco:
ben lo sai tu che la sai tutta quanta.

was Manto, who had searched through many lands,
then settled in the place where I was born;
on this, I'd have you hear me now a while.

When Manto's father took his leave of life,
and Bacchus's city found itself enslaved,
she wandered through the world for many years.

High up, in lovely Italy, beneath
the Alps that shut in Germany above
Tirolo, lies a lake known as Benaco.

A thousand springs and more, I think, must flow
out of the waters of that lake to bathe
Pennino, Garda, Val Camonica.

And at its middle is a place where three-
the bishops of Verona, Brescia, Trento-
may bless if they should chance to come that way.

Peschiera, strong and handsome fortress, built
to face the Brescians and the Bergamasques
stands where the circling shore is at its lowest.

There, all the waters that cannot be held
within the bosom of Benaco fall,
to form a river running through green meadows.

No sooner has that stream begun to flow
than it is called the Mincio, not Benaco-
until Governolo, where it joins the Po.

It's not flowed far before it finds flat land;
and there it stretches out to form a fen
that in the summer can at times be fetid.

And when she passed that way, the savage virgin
saw land along the middle of the swamp,
untilled and stripped of its inhabitants.

And there, to flee all human intercourse,
she halted with her slaves to ply her arts;
and there she lived, there left her empty body.

And afterward, the people of those parts
collected at that place, because the marsh-
surrounding it on all sides-made it strong.

They built a city over her dead bones;
and after her who first had picked that spot,
they called it Mantua-they cast no lots.

There once were far more people in its walls,
before the foolishness of Casalodi
was tricked by the deceit of Pinamonte.

Therefore, I charge you, if you ever hear
a different tale of my town's origin,
do not let any falsehood gull the truth."

And I: "O master, that which you have spoken
convinces me and so compels my trust
that other's words would only be spent coals.

But tell me if among the passing souls
you see some spirits worthy of our notice,
because my mind is bent on that alone."

Then he to me: "That shade who spreads his beard
down from his cheeks across his swarthy shoulders-
when Greece had been so emptied of its males

that hardly any cradle held a son,
he was an augur; and at Aulis, he
and Calchas set the time to cut the cables.

His name's Eurypylos; a certain passage
of my high tragedy has sung it so;
you know that well enough, who know the whole.

c'est Mantô qui erra par les terres,
puis s'arrêta au lieu où je naquis ;
je veux te parler un peu d'elle.

Lorsque son père quitta la vie
et que la ville de Bacchus devint esclave,
elle erra longtemps par le monde.

Là-haut dans la belle Italie, il est un lac
au pied de l'Alpe qui ferme l'Allemagne
à hauteur du Tyrol, son nom est Benaco.

Mille ruisseaux, et plus, je crois, arrosent
les Apennins, de Garde au val Camonica,
avec l'eau qui se tient dans ce lac.

Là est un point, au milieu, où l'évêque de Trente
et celui de Brescia et celui de Vérone
pourraient bénir, s'ils faisaient ce chemin.

Peschiera s'y élève, beau et puissant rempart,
capable d'affronter Brescians et Bergamasques,
là où la rive est la plus basse.

Il faut que par là s'écoule toute l'eau
qui ne peut séjourner dans le Benaco,
et prenne son cours dans les verts pâturages.

Dès que l'eau commence à couler,
elle n'a plus nom Benaco, mais Mincio
jusqu'à Gornal, où le Pô la reçoit.

Elle n'a pas coulé loin qu'elle trouve une plaine
où elle s'étend, et forme un marécage ;
et parfois l'été elle y devient malsaine.

Passant par ces lieux la vierge sauvage
vit une terre au milieu du marais,
inculte et privée d'habitants.

Là pour fuir tout commerce humain elle se fixa,
pour exercer son art avec ses serviteurs ;
elle y vécut, et y laissa son corps inanimé.

Plus tard les hommes épars aux environs
se rassemblèrent en ce lieu protégé
par le marais, qui s'étendait de toutes parts.

Ils firent la ville sur les os de la morte,
et pour celle qui la première l'avait élue,
l'appelèrent Mantoue sans consulter les sorts.

Ses habitants jadis furent plus nombreux,
avant que la folie de Casalodi
se laissât tromper par Pinamonte.

Je t'avise donc pour que, si tu entends
qu'on décrit autrement la naissance de ma ville,
aucun mensonge n'altère la vérité. »

« Tes raisonnements, Maître, sont si certains,
et s'emparent si bien de ma foi », lui dis-je,
« que les autres seraient pour moi charbons éteints.

Mais dis-moi, parmi ceux qui s'avancent,
si tu en vois qui soient dignes de note ;
car ma pensée revient sans cesse à ce seul point. »

Il dit alors : « Celui dont la barbe descend
en flot des joues jusqu'aux épaules brunes,
- quand la Grèce fut vidée de ses mâles,

si bien qu'à peine il en resta dans les berceaux —,
était augure et donna le signal en Aulide
avec Calchas de couper la première amarre.

Il eut nom Eurypyle, c'est ainsi que le chante
ma haute tragédie en quelque endroit ;
tu le sais bien, toi qui la connais toute.

Quell'altro che ne' fianchi è così poco,
Michele Scotto fu, che veramente
de le magiche frode seppe 'l gioco.

Vedi Guido Bonatti; vedi Asdente,
ch'avere inteso al cuoio e a lo spago
ora vorrebbe, ma tardi si pente.

Vedi le triste che lasciaron l'ago,
la spuola e 'l fuso, e fecersi 'ndivine;
fecer malie con erbe e con imago.

Ma vienne omai, ché già tiene 'l confine
d'amendue li emisperi e tocca l'onda
sotto Sobilia Caino e le spine;

e già iernotte fu la luna tonda:
ben ten de' ricordar, ché non ti nocque
alcuna volta per la selva fonda".

Sì mi parlava, e andavamo introcque.

That other there, his flanks extremely spare,
was Michael Scot, a man who certainly
knew how the game of magic fraud was played.

See there Guido Bonatti; see Asdente,
who now would wish he had attended to
his cord and leather, but repents too late.

See those sad women who had left their needle,
shuttle, and spindle to become diviners;
they cast their spells with herbs and effigies.

But let us go; Cain with his thorns already
is at the border of both hemispheres
and there, below Seville, touches the sea.

Last night the moon was at its full; you should
be well aware of this, for there were times
when it did you no harm in the deep wood."

These were his words to me; meanwhile we journeyed.

Et celui-ci, qui a les flancs si amaigris
fut Michel Scott, qui a vraiment connu
tout le grand jeu des ruses magiques.

Vois Guido Bonatti, vois Asdente,
qui voudrait à présent n'avoir connu
que le cuir et le fil, mais se repent trop tard.

Vois les infortunées qui laissèrent aiguille
et navette et fuseau, pour se faire voyantes ;
elles jetèrent des sorts par herbes et par images.

Mais viens donc à présent, Caïn chargé d'épines
se tient déjà sur le bord des deux hémisphères
et touche la mer au-dessous de Séville.

Déjà la nuit dernière la lune était ronde :
tu dois t'en souvenir, car elle t'aida
plus d'une fois, dans la forêt profonde. »

Il me parlait ainsi, et nous allions tous deux.

Credits

Italian: D. Alighieri, *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. by G. Petrocchi (Florence, 1994) from the website www.danteonline.it by the Società dantesca italiana.

English: D. Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, ed. by Allen Mandelbaum (Berkeley, 1980) from the website www.danteonline.it by the Società dantesca italiana.

French: D. Alighieri, *La Divine Comédie*, ed. by Jacqueline Risset (Paris, 2010).

Commemorating the 700th anniversary of the death of Dante Alighieri, **Toronto Salutes Dante** features more than thirty Canada-based guests who read Dante's *Inferno* in various languages, several for the first time. In addition to ten different Italian dialects, there are represented Anishinaabemowin, Arabic, Bulgarian, English, Farsi, French, German, Latin, Mandarin, Portuguese, Québécois, Russian, Sanskrit, Slovak, Spanish, Stoney Nakoda, Swedish, Thai, and Ukrainian. In 15-minute clips, well-known personalities of Canadian public and cultural life, professors, and students at the University of Toronto, and members of the Italo-Canadian community share their voices and fresh memories of the most important Italian author in world literature. Listen to Dante's *Inferno* as you have never heard it before on the [Department of Italian Studies' Youtube channel](#) from March 25th to June 2021.

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