



THE ROMANCE SPHERE

CANTO-BY-CANTO COMMENTARY OF TORQUATO TASSO'S "GERUSALEMME LIBERATA"

Canto 10

Julianne VanWagenen

Canto 10 of Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* is the textual center, but not the narrative center, of the work as far as the role and fortune of the pagan forces are still predominant. The narrative turning point will not come until canto 13, with the rain delivered through Goffredo's prayer, yet in canto 10 there are already hints of a grand-scale change, complicated allusions to Dante's *Purgatorio* and an overcoming of the *Inferno*, as well as signs of discord amongst the pagans and unity in the Christian troops, a unity that for Tasso is the decisive feature of a victorious army (not to mention, yet, successful literature);¹ together, these features give the reader a sense that s/he has arrived at a cusp and that a breaking-point is near. Canto 10, as the textual, if not narrative, center, is a fruitful place to examine the sometimes tense and always complex dialectical mirroring of characters and forces in the *Liberata*. The pagan and Christian wise men, Ismeno and Pietro l'Eremita, predict the future in mirrored scenes, Solimano arises as a Dante-esque pilgrim-hero, while the Christian hero is the incomplete (Rinaldo is still absent) triad of Goffredo/Rinaldo/Tancredi. In a more subtle case of mirroring, Tasso deals with the question, ever important to him, of poetry as imitation, di-

Julianne VanWagenen is a PhD candidate in Harvard University's Department of Romance Languages and Literatures. She is interested in 20th century Italian cultural studies, particularly pre-WWI cultural spasms, anarchy, rock and roll, and the crisis of identity and self-conception in contemporary Italy.

verging from Dante's model and collocating all of the fantastic aspects of the canto under the subject heading, "Dark Arts," imitations of God's power rather than manifestations of it, while at the same time connecting the idea and act of magic, the fantastic, to the acts of reading and writing. Thus, as he creates a complex paralleling of the dark and light arts, of black and white magic, he problematizes the issue of 'faith' and situates literature in an unclear position between the fantastic imitation of nature created by dark powers and a valid tool for manifestations of god-given imagination. In a final point, this chapter functions as a knot, a coming together and/or a tending toward of diverse stories, that momentarily redeems the unity of action in the work as a whole, as a single canvas that Tasso works to weave without giving up the audience-friendly complexity of multiple subplots with seemingly variant teleologies.

Canto 10 continues the plot of canto 9 almost seamlessly. After, in canto 9, Solimano guides his troops to a night assault of the Christian camp and the Christians prevail with the intervention of the archangel Michael as well as the opportune return of Tancredi and the fifty soldiers who had been prisoners at Armida's castle, canto 10 tells of the injured Solimano's flight from the battlefield, towards Egypt, and the appearance of Ismeno, the wizard, who transports him in an invisible carriage to Jerusalem. There, he spies on a pagan war council and reveals himself to the council in order to

stop a peace treaty that has been issued forth by Orcanus. When Tasso returns to the Christian camp, almost three-quarters of the way into the canto, we find the recently returned soldiers regaling the troops with their story of imprisonment in Armida's castle and their deliverance by Rinaldo as they were being transported to Egypt in chains. The canto ends with Pietro l'Eremita's affirmation that Rinaldo lives, his rapt vision of the future, and night falling once again on the characters. The canto, thus, completes one diurnal and thematic cycle, it progresses from a state of uncertainty and violence, the end of a battle and Solimano's flight to Egypt, then his redemption at Mount Zion, and Ismeno's hesitant vision of a distant happy-ending, to a state of joy and peace, the lost soldiers' deliverance from Egypt, the promised redemption of the complete Christian hero as Tancredi returns and Rinaldo is revealed to be alive, and Pietro l'Eremita's teleological reassurance to the soldiers of the war they wage, if not in a revelation of ultimate victory, at least in a clear declaration that the "Ciel," that is, God is on their side.

Within the work as a whole, this canto is positioned at the center of the book and of the section generally referred to as the *perturbazione*, or "disturbance," which comes after the introduction in cantos 1-3 and before the *rivolgimento* or "Upheaval" of cantos 14-18 and the ultimate denouement of the final two cantos.² As part of a continual game of veiling and unveiling, canto 10 marks the be-

ginning of a sustained trend of unmasking that will continue until the end of the *perturbazione* section. Armida is revealed to the army as a wicked enchantress (only to be masked again at the begin of the next section), Rinaldo is revealed to be alive, and the opposing wise men lift the veil from the future, telling each his own truth. In the succeeding cantos, Clorinda will first be revealed as of Christian birth, then she will be unmasked by Tancredi upon her death (only to be masked again in the form of the enchanted tree at the end of the section), realigning Tancredi teleologically with Goffredo's war but complicating and highlighting his inner battle. These "unmaskings" gain speed toward the ultimate unveiling, which comes in the form of an answer to Goffredo's prayer in canto 13, as Pietro l'Eremita predicted, God unveils himself as Goffredo's patron and salvation, delivering the rain that will squelch the seeds of the Christian troops' inquietude and reassure the Christians of their chosen "side" or faith. This revelation seems the fictional representation of the sign that Tasso so long sought himself in his struggle for the concept of faith,³ a sign that, however, never manifested itself to Tasso. For, as Claudio Gigante points out, Tasso laments still in the *Mondo creato*: God the creator of everything but egotistically invisible: "Dove sei? dove sei? chi mi ti nasconde? / chi mi t'invola, o mio Signore e Padre? / Misero, senza te son nulla. Ahi lasso! / e nulla spero: ahi lasso! e nulla bramo"⁴ [Where are you? Where are you? Who hides you from me? Who conceals

you from me, o God and Father? / Miserable, without you I am nothing. Oh misery! / I hope for nothing: oh exhaustion! and nothing do I yearn for].

Canto 10 begins, as already noted, with Solimano's nighttime flight from the battlefield. He is injured and, stopping to rest, he falls asleep and awakens in a quasi-dream state. While it is always dangerous to draw too many comparisons between works, with the opening of this dream-state, canto 10 takes on enough striking similarities to Dante's *Purgatorio* that they are worth mentioning here. These similarities are, furthermore, interestingly complicated by the fact that the pilgrim-hero is a pagan, not on a path to Christian, spiritual salvation, and by the fact that the fantastic elements in the account are artifices of black magic, not manifestations of God's will. While Dante included the fantastic in order to create in the intellect and imagination of the reader an imitation of God's universe, scope, power, love, light, Tasso's inventions of wonderment in canto 10—which Aristotle in his *Poetics* allows for in epic poetry, as long as they are still part of an imitation of reality, life as it is, should be, or is thought to be—are imitations of the reality of the poem, not of life, they are masquerades within the poetic reality. Tasso explains the inclusion of angels, demons, and magicians, converted from the knightly tradition of enchanted rings, shields, and swords, through an interpretation from Aristotle's *Poetics* that allows for the credibly impossible before the possible that is not credible. Tasso points

out that Church leaders have taught, and the Bible teaches, that there are miracles, saints who perform the impossible, and angels and demons. As Tasso states in his *Discorsi dell'arte poetica*: “leggendo e sentendo ogni dì ricordarne novi essempli [di miracoli, angeli, ecc.], non parrà loro fuori del verisimile quello che credono esser possibile” [reading and hearing everyday of reminders and new examples [of miracles, angels, etc.], these do not seem to us outside of the plausible, they are both credible and possible].⁵ Interesting here is his use of the verbs “leggendo e sentendo” rather than “vedendo.” Tasso reinterprets Aristotle as a foundation for the creation of a work that is successful precisely because it contains the necessary degree of verisimilitude in its historicity, fictional realism and invention. Yet, he removes visible “miracles” from imitations of reality by one degree in canto 10: miracles here are imitations of poetry, they are fantastic, while the miracles of the Christian God, presumably real miracles for Tasso, are those that are, for the most part, realistic, if opportune, like the rain that ends a drought.

There is, furthermore, a subtle discrepancy between the apparently “visible miracles” produced by black magic and the actual “seeing” of them. While Dante’s increasingly miraculous fantasy transports him through veils towards the ultimate “seeing,” which is “understanding” and the truth of faith in God, Tasso’s fantastic actions in canto 10 are agents that veil rather than unveil. The carriage that transports Solimano to Mount Zion,

for example, is said, by the narrator in first person in an aside that he dedicates to the “maraviglie” to come, to be not only enshrouded in a cloud, but also invisible, thus doubly veiled: “sì che ‘l gran carro ne ricopre e cinge, / ma non appar la nube o poco o molto” [The chariot hiding and environing; / The subtle mist no mortal eye could view] (10, 16),⁶ yet the riders from inside can see out, even if its a vision fogged by the cloud that enshrouds them. Thus, this miracle bidirectionally occludes a clear vision of nature and reality, just as we see later that Armida’s many tricks do. The most poignant occlusion of vision in Armida’s miracles occurs with her use of mirrors to enchant and imprison Rinaldo, but already in canto 10 Tasso uses her character to play fascinating games of occlusion.

The soldiers’ vision when trapped by Armida devolves into a seeming to see, an appearing, which is brought about through the words read by Armida from a book. “Ella d’un parlar dolce e d’un bel riso / temprava altrui cibo mortale e rio” [She, with sweet words and false enticing smiles / Infused love among the dainties set] (10, 65). While “Con una man picciola verga cote / tien l’altra un libro, e legge in bassa note. // Legge la maga, ed io pensiero e voglia / sento mutar, mutar vita ed albergo” [A charming rod, a book, with her she brings / On which she mumbled strange and secret things. // She read, and chang’d I felt my will and thought, / I long’d to change my life and place of biding] (10, 65-66). Tasso underlines here the power of literature to in-

voke the intellect and the imagination to create credible verisimilitudes that are, however, sometimes deceptions rather than representations of profound truths. Thus, he calls into question his own process, which he will go on for years questioning, as he tweaks and frets over the *Liberata's* possible heresies, ultimately writing the reformed *Gerusalemme conquistata*. The scene in Armida's castle calls into question, as well, if only for a moment, the authority and veracity of "visible miracles" in the Bible. Canto 10's miracles are heard rather than seen, just as Tasso pointed out in *Discorsi* that Christian miracles are. Armida's miracles are recounted by William, who, upon hearing her read from her book is transformed: "(Strana virtù!) novo pensier m'invaglia" [That virtue strange in me new pleasure wrought] (10, 66) in thought and body. He dives into the water, taking the form of a fish. Tasso plays here, momentarily, with the tenuous line between saint and witch, a line that is perhaps only divided by faith, the storyteller's faith, that is. Is the Bible like Armida's book? Or is it like Tasso's own book, which mixes the true and the wonderful to create a level of verisimilitude that describes a deeper truth? Or is it, indeed, the word of God? If the Bible's verisimilitude is literature *par excellence*, however, whether *vero* or *verosimile*, the effect is what is important and it is the opposite of Armida's. Tasso sees the Bible, presumably, as unveiling the world, as bringing the reader, just as God brings Dante, closer to *Paradiso*, but Armida's

words, her transformations, takes the listener lower, he dives under the water, down towards Plutone's realm, and removes himself by one sphere, in a sense, from God's truth, now seeing reality through blurred aquatic diffraction.

This movement in canto 10 of the Christians through Sodom, where Armida's castle is located, and away from *Paradiso*, to a lower sphere, if considered in a Dantean sense, brings us back to the opposite movement of the pagan hero, Solimano, up Mount Zion, which, is a kind of arrival at Monte Purgatorio. The resonances begin linguistically in the third octave: "E come è sua ventura, a le sonanti / quadrella, ond'a lui intorno un nembo vola, / a tante spade, a tante lance, a tanti / instrumenti di morte alfin s'invola / e sconosciuto pur camina inanti / per quella cia ch'è più deserta e sola" [And (as his fortune would) he 'scaped free / From thousand arrows which about him flew, / From swords and lances, instruments that be / Of certain death, himself he safe withdrew; / Unknown, unseen, disguised, travell'd he / By desert paths and ways but us'd by few] (10, 3) We slide from a physical battle to an internal battle, as Solimano walks alone and is overcome by a distraught psyche: "e rivolgendo in sé quel che far deggia, / in gran tempesta di pensieri ondeggia" [And rode, revolving in his troubled thought / What course to take, and yet resolv'd on naught] (10, 3), and falls asleep trying to fight off, not enemies, but thoughts, to "quetar i moti del pensier suo stanco" [To ease the griefs

of his distemper'd thought] (10, 6). He awakes in a dream state, reminiscent of Dante's first dream in *Purgatorio*, where dream and reality mix, and before the pagan stands his guide, the wise man Ismeno, who says: "Io mi sono un ... al quale / in parte è noto il tuo novel disegno" [I am the man, of thine intent (quoth he) / And purpose new that sure conjecture hath] (10, 10), which critics compare to *Purgatorio* 24, 52: "E io a lui: 'I' mi sono un che, quando / Amor mi spira, noto, e a quel modo / ch'è ditta dentro vo significando,'" [I said to him: 'I am one who, when Love / inspires me, takes careful note and then, / gives form to what he dictates in my heart']⁷ which is, in turn, compared to Exodus 3.14, God saying "Ego sum qui sum."⁸ Thus we see the same complex mirroring that we saw before, with the overlap of black magic and Christian miracles; Ismeno is Solimano's guide, his Virgil, and is, in turn, given words and a path that resemble Dante's Christian pilgrimage.⁹ Solimano responds like a Christian pilgrim to his guide: "Padre, io già pronto e veloce / sono a seguirti: ove tu vuoi mi gira" [And humbly said – I willing am and prest / To follow where thou leadest, reverend sire] (10, 13). Thus, as they mount the magical carriage, Tasso opens up a parenthesis of *meraviglia*, that is a sort of sacred parenthesis as well. Solimano, ostensibly the enemy, begins to win the sympathy of readers, which is furthered by the fact that he is the Nicaean prince, who, like Goffredo in Jerusalem, is fighting to liberate his land.

The men arrive at a hidden gate, known only to Ismeno, much like the hidden gate in *Purgatorio*, which is so small that "l cavaliere allotta / co 'l gran corpo ingombrò l'umil caverna" (10, 33). In the English translation by Edward Fairfax, it is interesting that the translator finds Tasso's tone to be one that would allow for the use in English of an inverted metaphor that in Matthew 19 describes a rich man's entrance into heaven: "that narrow entrance past the knight / (So creeps a camel through a needle's eye)." Solimano is the camel who does not fit through the needle's eye in the Gospel yet who squeezes through in the *Liberata*, and in so doing becomes, in a sense, improbably redeemed. Lexical choices at the gate continue to echo Dante, as Solimano is said to follow his guide, intimating a sense of humility that lends complexity and sympathy to the pagan hero: "seguì colui che 'l suo camin governa" [He followed him that did him rule and guide] (10, 33). Ismeno guides Solimano, not to Monte Purgatorio, but, to Mount Zion, where he will arrive just in time to end discussions of a peace treaty and advance the pagan crusade against the Christians. His proud defiance in the face of a peace proposal by Orcanes, is an echo of Goffredo's refusal of the treaty offered by Argante and Alete. Both men, Solimano and Goffredo, must fight their wars, and both men, it seems, are lent divine help towards the continued fight.¹⁰ Solimano reveals himself and confronts the council, revealing to the reader signs of discord and disunity amongst the pagans, which

will eventually lead to their undoing. I will take up this theme again further on, when I look at Tasso's realigning of power, victory, success and salvation, not along a trajectory guided by the correct faith (for as we have seen already he complicates delegation of "good" and "evil" in his depiction of "Christian" and "pagan"), but along a trajectory guided by unity over discord. Before that, however, I would like to take a moment to look at the teleological parallels for the two camps as seen through the mirrored episodes of pagan and Christian visions of the future. For, in the *Liberata*, it is not only the Christian God who furnishes a divine purpose for his men, but Tasso's pagans as well, as is historically accurate, are promised an eventual victory. Thus, their fight is not only caused by the Christians but designed according to their faith as part of an eventual reconquering.

Ismeno's vision comes first, in canto 10 when Solimano, after recovering from the shock of seeing the magical carriage and hearing Ismeno divine his intentions, says: "dimmi qual riposo o qual ruina / a i gran moti de l'Asia il Ciel destina" [Then say what issue and what end the stars / Allot to Asia's troubles, broils, and wars] (10, 18). Ismeno begins by clarifying that he is known as a wizard in Syria but that his ability to tell the future is limited. In this introduction we see the same manipulation and play with the ideas of seeing and reading, veiling and unveiling, as we have seen before in the canto. "Ma ch'io scopa il futuro e ch'io dispieghi / de l'occulto destin gli eterni

annali, / troppo è audace desio, troppo alti preghi: / non è tanto concesso a noi mortali" [But that I should the sure events unfold / Of things to come, or destinies foretell, Too rash is your desire, your wish too bold, / To mortal heart such knowledge never fell] (10, 20). In what can be read as either an apology for his lacking visionary power or a moment of humanistic modernity, Ismeno adds: "Ciascun qua giù le forze e 'l senno impieghi / per avanzar fra le sciagure e i mali, / ché sovente adivien che 'l saggio e 'l forte / fabro a se stesso è di beata sorte" [Our wit and strength on us bestow'd, I hold, / To shun th' evils and harms 'mongst which we dwell; / They make their fortune who are stout and wise, / Wit rules the heav'ns, discretion guides the skies] (10, 20). Ismeno's vision, in fact, is only partial and only partially correct. He says it is in Solimano's power to defeat the Christians and hopes that it will be so, but the main portion of his vision is dedicated to a further future. The vision is only foggy and uncertain: "pur dirò ... che oscuro vegg'io quasi per nebbia. // Veggio o parmi vedere, anzi che lustri molti rivolga il gran pianeta eterno, / uom che l'Asia ornerà co' fatti illustri, e del fecondo Egitto avrà il governo ... basti sol questo a te, che da lui scosse / non pur saranno le cristiane posse, // ma insin dal fondo suo l'impero ingiusto / svelto sarà ne l'ultime contese, / e le affliette reliquie entro uno angusto / giro sospinte e sol dal mar difese. / Questi fia del tuo sangue" [Know this, which I as in a cloud foresee: // I guess (before the

over-gilded sun / Shall many years mete out by weeks and days) / A prince (that shall in fertile Egypt won) / Shall fill all Asia with his prosp'rous frays; ... Let this suffice, by him these Christians shall / In fight subdued fly, and conquered fall; // And their great empire and usurped state / Shall overthrown in dust and ashes lie; / Their woful remnant in an angle strait, / Compass'd with sea, themselves shall fortify. / From thee shall spring this lord of war and fate] (10, 21-23). Ismeno's vision, while unfaithful to the present outcome, is faithful to the final outcome, which will be a Muslim victory brought about by Solimano's descendent. Ismeno's vision is, furthermore, historically accurate and refers to Sala al'Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, who, in 1187, reconquers Jerusalem. The vision goes on to recount that the Christians will be finally eradicated from Asia as they, in fact, were, their final landhold was the island of Cyprus which the Venetians ceded to the Turks in 1571. Ismeno's vision is designed textually to appear lesser than Pietro l'Eremita's, which concludes the canto. The lexical choices emphasize unclarity and uncertainty, yet his truth is nonetheless grander, in a sense, than Pietro's. He sees further and his teleological purpose is ultimate in comparison. The vision for Solimano is bittersweet, he is both envious that the victory will apparently not be his, but proud that it will be his seed to bring it about.

Pietro l'Eremita does not refer to reading; his vision, rather, is direct from the heavens and clear: "l'Eremita intanto

/ volgeva al cielo l'una e l'altra luce ... più sacro e venerabile or riluce! / Pieno di Dio, rapto dal zelo, a canto / a l'angeliche menti ei si conduce: / gli si svela il futuro, e ne l'eterna / serie de gli anni e de l'età s'interna // e la bocca sciogliendo in maggior suono / scopre le cose altrui ch'indi verranno" [with humble cheer / The hermit sage to heav'n cast his eyne, ... With heavenly grace his looks and visage shine; / Ravish'd with zeal, his soul approached near / The seat of angels pure and saints divine; / And there he learn'd of things and haps to come, / To give foreknowledge true, and certain doom. // At last he spoke (in more than human sound) / And told what things his wisdom great foresaw] (10, 73-74). As Emilio Russo points out, Tasso's lexical choices are definite and powerful, in sharp contrast to the words chosen to describe Ismeno's vision.¹¹ His first prediction: "'Vive' dice 'Rinaldo ... Vive, e la vita giovanetta acerba / a più mature glorie il Ciel riserba'" [Rinaldo lives, he said; ... He lives, and heav'n will long preserve his days / To greater glory and to greater praise] (10, 74). One notes that both visions refer to the power and destiny provided by one and the same "Ciel." There is, provocatively, no distinction or difference in the name of the god they reference. Like Ismeno's vision, Pietro l'Eremita tells of a distant future:

Ecco chiaro vegg'io, correndo gli anni
ch'egli s'opponne a l'empio Augusto e 'l doma
e sotto l'ombra de gli argentei vanni
l'aquila sua copre le Chiesa e Roma,
che de la fèra avrà tolte gli artigli;

e ben di lui nasceran degni i figli.

De' figli i figli, e chi verrà da quelli,
quinci avran chiari e memorandi essempli;
e da Cesari ingiusti e da rubelli
difenderan le mitre e i sacri tèmpi.
Premer gli alteri e sollevar gli imbelli,
difender gli innocenti e punir gli empi,
fian l'arti lor: così verrà che vole
l'aquila estense oltra le vie del sole.
(10, 75-76)

[I well foresee he shall do greater thing,
And wicked emperors conquer and subdue;
Under the shadow of his eagle's wings
Shall holy church preserve her sacred crew;
From Caesar's bird he shall the sable train
Pluck off, and break her talons sharp in twain.

His children's children at his hardiness
And great attempts shall take ensample fair,
From emperors unjust in all distress
They shall defend the state of Peter's chair;
To raise the humble up, pride to suppress,
To help the innocents, shall be their care:
This bird of east shall fly with conquest great
As far as moon gives light or sun gives heat.]

In this prediction we get an *Aeneid*-esque apology for, or distraction from, the eventual historical loss of the Asian war: Rinaldo's progeny will defend both the Church and Rome, as well as piously defend the weak and innocent. But after this great, initial effort Pietro l'Eremita is quiet. The vision ends abruptly, if ambiguously, with Tasso stating "il saggio Piero / stupido tace, e 'l cor ne l'alma faccia / troppo gran cose de l'estense altero / valor ragiona, onde tutto altro spiaccia" [These words of his, of Prince Rinaldo's death / Out of their troubled hearts the fear had rased: / In all this joy yet Godfrey smil'd uneath] (10, 78). He says nothing else, because he is tired from his ecstatic vision and because, perhaps, the

truth left to tell displeases him. The canto ends with night falling on the camp, Tasso's imagery lends a sense of assurance and peace to the scene: "Sorge intanto la notte, e 'l velo nero / per l'aria spiega e l'ampia terra abbraccia" [But now from deeps of regions underneath / Night's veil arose, and sun's bright lustre chased; / When all full sweetly in their cabins slept] (10, 78).

It is as if the poem takes a breath here, Tasso has brought the action of the poem, for a moment, into unity, Tancredi has returned, Solimano has guaranteed that the fight will continue, Goffredo knows that Rinaldo is alive, and both sides are spurred on by a common purpose: their faith. Women are absent for a sustained period, and with them goes the distraction of the knightly, romantic subplots. The action is either united or aligned in direct conflict, and this unity of action is reinforced by a moment of union within the Christian camp, while the Muslim side is discordant. The idea of union over discord, a dialectic between one and many, is doubly important to Tasso, both as it regards poetry and faith. In his *Discorsi dell'arte poetica*, he affirms absolutely Aristotle's unity of action as a norm (and, in so doing, disapproves of Ariosto's multiplicity), even in contemporary literature, and he arrives at a proposal for the unity sustained amidst variety,¹² the latter of which was not necessary in ancient times but which contemporary audiences expected. Tasso describes a small world, a *picciol mondo*, created in the best literature, which abounds

with variety, like our world, but which is so cohesive in form that it all unites as one. This dialectic is grafted into his plot—there is the dialectic of the one God and the many diabolic powers and spirits, as well as that of the discordant and united armies—and is the source of moral tension, just as the dialectic of variety and unity in plot is a source of poetic tension.

In canto 10, however, both poetic and moral multiplicity come together, even beyond the story, above the story, to inscribe themselves into human history and a remarkably modern ontology. Ismeno and Pietro, in their visions, cohere the *picciol mondo* that Tasso is constructing by

looking to the same place and using the same name for guidance: “Ciel.” Their visions unite them, as well, with larger historical truths that in a way betray the poetic teleology in the *Liberata* for a grander, more complex and encompassing, story, with human history, with a teleology that can only perhaps be decried through individual faith. All men in canto 10, pagan and Christian, are guided by their faith, and strong in their faith, and the men who are strong in faith rise out of the text as heroes, whether pagan or Christian.

¹ As Zatti argues, in the *Liberata* it is not the nature of the faith, itself, so much as the ability of the faith to unite an army that will create a victorious army (Sergio Zatti, “Christian Uniformity, Pagan Multiplicity,” in *The Quest for Epic: From Ariosto to Tasso*, University of Toronto Press, 2006, pp. 135-59).

² See Paul Larivaille, *Poesia e ideologia. Letture della Gerusalemme liberata*, Liguori, 1987. See also Torquato Tasso, *Discorsi dell’arte poetica e del poema eroico*, ed. Luigi Poma, Laterza, 1964, p. 74.

³ For the many who see Tasso as a poster-child for the Counter-Reformation, thus would find it hard to believe that the author struggled with a lifelong crisis of faith, it is enlightening the parallel that Margaret Ferguson points out between Tasso’s father’s role in the rebellion against the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition in Naples in 1547 and Tasso’s subsequent view of drama. Ferguson claims that the event was formative for Tasso and that when paralleled with his choice of historical narrative, the alignment of the two plots is surprising: “Tasso’s epic is about a fundamental conflict between a city inhabited largely by pagans and the Christian forces which aim to “liberate” that city from spiritual error” (Margaret W. Ferguson, *Trials of Desire: Renaissance Defenses of Poetry*, Yale University Press, 1983, p. 71).

⁴ Torquato Tasso, *Il mondo creato*, ed. Giorgio Petrocchi, Le Monnier, 1951, vv. 10-14 (translation from Italian is my own). See Claudio Gigante, *Tasso*, Salerno editrice, 2007, p. 412.

⁵ Tasso, *Discorsi dell’arte poetica e del poema eroico*, p. 8. Translation from the Italian is my own.

⁶ All quotes from Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata*, ed. Franco Tomasi, Rizzoli BUR, 2009; and Torquato Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, trans. Edward Fairfax (1600), Capricorn, 1963.

⁷ Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*, ed. Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, vol. 2, Mondadori, 1994, p. 710; and *The Divine Comedy*, ed. Mark Musa, vol. II: *Purgatory*, Penguin Books, 1985, p. 259.

⁸ See Ronald L. Martinez, "The Pilgrim's Answer to Bonagiunta and the Poetics of the Spirit," *Stanford Italian Review*, 3 (1983), 37-63.

⁹ Lanfranco Caretti calls this "bifrontismo spirituale" or his bifrontal spirituality. That is, both the pagans and the Christians show signs of what the reader considers positive spirituality, giving the text a dualistic nature (Lanfranco Caretti, *Ariosto e Tasso*, Einaudi, 1977, p. 73).

¹⁰ It is interesting to note here that our heroes deny peace agreements, not because they threaten necessarily the faith of the hero, but as Timothy Hampton points out: "they threaten Tasso's very poem." Thus an ambassador of peace, whether ambassador to the pagans or Christians, is an enemy (Timothy Hampton, *Fictions of Embassy: Literature and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe*, Cornell University Press, 2009, p. 86).

¹¹ Emilio Russo, "Canto X." in *Lettura della Gerusalemme Liberata*, ed. Franco Tomasi, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2005.

¹² Tasso, *Discorsi dell'arte poetica e del poema eroico*, p. 35.