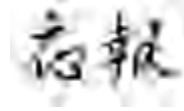


The Greek word *tetragrammaton* ('four-letters') is the term by which the four Hebrew letters of God's ineffable name (Jehovah or Yahweh) are traditionally designated.

82



CONTRAPASSO

The Japanese heading is *ōhō* 'retribution'.

The word *contrapasso* (< L *contra* 'in reply to' + *passus* [past participle of *patior*] 'suffer') in Dante's *Inferno* (used by him only in canto 28) refers to the process and the principle by which sinners suffer condign punishment for their crimes. The concept may have been borrowed by Dante from Aquinas, but the Latin word *contrapassus* preexisted both of them in the Scholastic theological literature as a translation of Aristotle's *antipeponthōs*. In contemporary Italian the word is spelled *contrappasso* and means 'retaliation'.

That the punishment should fit the crime is part of a long tradition (including the Bible), but Dante gives it a particular twist by showing that it goes beyond being the outcome of divine retribution in death to being the fulfillment of a destiny freely chosen by each soul in life.†

The key to the formulations and allusions of section 82 is given below in the footnotes to an annotated version. These refer to matters and individuals mentioned earlier in section 8, as well as to those described in what I originally conceived of as a *Corpora Delicti*. In order to understand the key, the reader first needs to become acquainted with what was originally contained in the appendices to this account (Appendix 1 is in section 8).

are German tourists—or so we were told by locals when we visited the Atlantis Restaurant on that side of the island.

†Marianne was never satisfied with the traditional explanations of Dante's particular choices of punishments to fit particular crimes and was planning to write an article setting out her own—characteristically innovative—scheme.)

Appendix 2: NYU (1980-83)

After leaving Yale in 1978, Marianne was unemployed for 2 years before being appointed to a three-year associate professorship in Italian at NYU in 1980. The probationary nature of this appointment is material in view of what happened to her during this period: as at UCLA, it transpired later that the job was being held for another (Italian) person, a certain Teodolinda Barolini, who wanted to move from California back to New York (she was a Columbia Ph. D. whose husband still lived in Manhattan while she was an assistant professor at UC Berkeley) and into the NYU position vacated by Marianne after she was denied tenure in 1982. (NB: Barolini was plugged into the academic Mafia in the University of California system.)

To back up a little, the head of the Italian section of the Dept of French and Italian at NYU was a certain Luigi Ballerini, who had been at UCLA during Marianne's first year there (1968-69) but had moved to NYU in '69 (NB: he subsequently returned to UCLA and is there now). It is evident—from what happened at NYU—that Ballerini was part of the UCLA conspiracy to get rid of Marianne (while playing no "official" role) and took his marching orders from his former (and soon-to-be-again) colleagues.

Marianne's hiring at NYU did not follow the conventional pattern. She was appointed suddenly, pretty late in the 1979-80 year, with no preparatory positive signals from Ballerini. It is important to note that under normal circumstances Marianne's record would have warranted an associate professorship with tenure, but she was given a 3-year contract instead, with the understanding that she would be evaluated for tenure in her third year.

From the very beginning of her time at NYU, directly and indirectly it was made clear to Marianne that she was unwelcome. She was assigned an office that had been a closet—literally. She was routinely and pointedly kept out of the loop concerning Italian section meetings, i. e., mysteriously failed to get notices, etc., that were supposed to have been left in her mail box (this is important because one of the grounds of her non-renewal was her non-attendance at meetings). Worst of all, Ballerini employed an agent provocateur (an Italian graduate student who was not enrolled), whom he sent to Marianne's classes to try to disrupt them. (Although the provocation only succeeded in part, one can imagine its impact on a probationary faculty member).

Then, at the end of 1982, Marianne received notice that she would not be promoted to tenure. The grounds as conveyed to her were, once again, the utterly spurious ones (as at UCLA), patently concocted by Ballerini. The

chairman of the Dept., Thomas Bishop (from the French section), refused to go against Ballerini's recommendation, hiding behind the Italian section's putative "autonomy," i. e., that it was up to the Italian section head to determine who was appointed/promoted to teach Italian subjects, and the Dean of the Faculty backed him up despite student protests (Marianne had done her usual exemplary job as a classroom teacher and advisor, and the students were up in arms over her termination).

Marianne's NYU position was a sham through and through. She was hired on false pretenses and fired on false grounds. After her role as a stop-gap had been fulfilled, the position was given the following year to Barolini, who got tenure.

This was Marianne's last full-time job. She never held one again.

Appendix 3: Brown (1989-98)

In April 1989 I came to Providence to meet with the new President of Brown, Vartan Gregorian (who had just been inaugurated). After two consecutive searches the Slavic Dept at Brown had recommended me for appointment to fill the vacancy left by Victor Terras upon his retirement. I was being offered a tenured professorship effective July 1 and wanted to discuss some of the ramifications with Gregorian before accepting it. Because I also had an offer pending from UC Riverside and had to decide, I explained my predicament and asked Gregorian to appoint Marianne to a permanent position at Brown as a condition of my agreement to accept Brown's offer. Gregorian said that he would but could not do so immediately, and we shook hands on what I considered to be a gentleman's agreement. (Later I learned that Gregorian made many promises that he did not keep to many people at Brown.)

I started at Brown in the fall of '89 but nothing happened for Marianne until the summer of 1990 when I received a sweetened version of the earlier offer from UC Riverside. This had the effect of prompting Gregorian to appoint Marianne to a half-time job for 2 years in the Comparative Literature Dept. As happened subsequently with her 3-year part-time appointment in the Italian Dept (1995-98), Gregorian apparently used his own discretionary budget to fund the arrangement. This stop-gap had the positive effect of keeping me at Brown, but at the same time it subverted the fulfillment of the promise Gregorian had made to me the previous spring. Even without knowing all the details, it is clear to me retrospectively—since the appointment was not renewed—that Comp Lit resisted

Gregorian's overtures about making the arrangement permanent. While Marianne was treated courteously by most of her new colleagues, there was one notable exception, Karen Newman, who made gratuitous cutting comments to Marianne and went out of her way to be unfriendly. This behavior has a natural explanation: here, alas, the more than 20-year old UCLA smear campaign enters a new chapter—at Brown.

As the rottenest luck would have it, who should the chairman of Italian at Brown be in 1989 but the very same Franco Fido named in Marianne's federal suit against UCLA! Fido had first gotten wind of my candidacy through his good friend Karen Newman, who must have alerted him when she was in the group of Comp Lit people who interviewed me in 1988 during the first search, when the Terras position was still a joint appointment between Comp Lit and Slavic. (I was the choice of the Slavic Dept but was dinged by Comp Lit; to resolve the conflict the Provost split the position into two, and I was appointed after the second search). I now surmise that Gregorian had initially tried to make good on his promise soon after our April 1989 meeting but was stymied when he approached Fido only to hear the poison about Marianne spewing from his mouth. Then Fido left Brown. When his job reverted to an assistant professorship (ultimately to be filled by Massimo Riva), Marianne was urged to apply by people outside the Italian Dept and did so at great emotional cost. A friend of Newman and Fido from the English Dept, Coppelia Kahn, was the chair of the search committee; she rudely rebuffed my effort to meet with her in order to explain the unusual circumstances of Marianne's candidacy.

I continued to remind Gregorian about his promise to me throughout his tenure as president, but since my staying at Brown was no longer an issue, Gregorian obviously didn't think he needed to use his political capital to live up to his commitment. It is important in assessing Gregorian's attitude in all this, however, that he did dip into his discretionary fund to arrange for a 3-year part-time appointment for Marianne in Italian (at \$12,000 per annum—the amount of a graduate student stipend). He evidently felt some responsibility to me and to Marianne (which, incidentally, tends to undermine his contention that no promise was made in 1989). But as is so typically the case, anything permanent required the cooperation of the Italian Dept, specifically that of Anthony Oldcorn, its chairman. While seeming to be in favor of improving Marianne's job situation, Oldcorn always stoutly maintained that any position for Marianne would have to be an add-on, thereby—given the status of Italian at Brown—knowingly dooming the effort to failure. (In this one can see the lasting effect of Fido's malign influence.

Oldcorn owes Fido his job: as is widely known, had it not been for Fido's special pleading, Oldcorn would not have gotten tenure.)

Marianne taught one course in the Italian Dept at Brown in the fall of 1997. She was never employed again.

Appendix 4 (Brown: 1998-2002)

Since I was still at Brown and we were often in Providence together, Marianne maintained a connection with Brown by having an appointment as a visiting scholar in Italian Studies, which allowed her to use the library but carried no stipend whatever.

In the fall of 2001, Brown advertised a tenured job in Italian Studies with a strong preference for candidates in medieval and Renaissance literature—exactly the area of Marianne's specialties. This was Oldcorn's position; he was retiring and needed to be replaced. Even though she was already dying, I hoped that a successful candidacy might have a miraculous effect on the course of her illness. Therefore, unbeknownst to Marianne, I submitted an application, signing her name to it. Naturally, it was a very long shot, but I was desperate to do anything I could to help Marianne get what she had been cruelly and unjustly denied for over thirty years. I lobbied actively on her behalf with the search committee and with other faculty members who I thought might have some influence on the committee.

*It should be noted that the application, which I hand-delivered to the Dept of Italian Studies office, **was never officially acknowledged in writing by the search committee or anyone else. Nor did Marianne ever receive any official notification as to the disposition of her candidacy.** The short-listed candidates came (to give their publicly announced trial lectures) and went. What any miscellaneous applicant could have routinely expected in the way of proper procedure was denied Marianne to the very end. Nor was her candidacy ever solicited by anyone at Brown, least of all Oldcorn et al., even though Marianne's undiminished interest in applying for a permanent position was known to all—from the president of the university on down. Having served as a Visiting Professor of Comparative Literature, more recently of Italian Studies at Brown, Marianne could reasonably have expected to be notified of the position's existence before it was officially advertised. But even this minimal act of collegiality was denied her.*

Marianne's application was unsuccessful. The person who was selected (and is still at Brown), a certain individual from the University of Minnesota named Ronald Martinez, could seem an unlikely choice to some-

one who knows the field of Italian studies. But there is one connection that might explain it: Martinez is mainly a Dante translator and editor, and that matches Oldcorn's profile to a T. Oldcorn and Martinez must have been in touch long before Martinez became a candidate to replace Oldcorn at Brown. In no way was Martinez comparable to Marianne as a scholar. At the time of the search (2001-02), Martinez had published three volumes of Dante translations in collaboration with a man named Robert Durling; in other words, Martinez hadn't even published a monograph—let alone one of which he was the sole author.

Although anyone experienced in the ways by which academic positions are filled would not be surprised that a clearly inferior candidate was chosen, in this case there is one piece of indirect evidence that makes it likely to assume that Martinez resorted to a wholly unscrupulous ploy to assure that a clearly superior rival's candidacy would be torpedoed.

In the August 2002 issue of *Modern Philology*, one of the world's most important scholarly journals in the field of language and literature published quarterly by the University of Chicago Press, there appeared a review of the last book by Marianne in her lifetime, *Dante and the Knot of Body and Soul* (St. Martin's Press, 1998). This review differed radically from all the reviews of Marianne's book published theretofore. The review was relentlessly scurrilous, sarcastic, and defamatory, using words like "shabby" for the whole effort, denigrating Marianne's scholarship, accusing her of all kinds of defects and failures—all concocted for a nefarious purpose and banking on readers not bothering or being able to check these defamatory statements for accuracy by actually looking in the book. This was clearly a hatchet job.

Why would Martinez do a hatchet job on a book that had already been reviewed favorably several times?

Note the date of this review's appearance: August, 2002, almost exactly four years after Marianne's book was published (November 15, 1998). (NB: scholarly quarterlies that have an August publication date often only appear in the fall.) In order for it to appear in the fall of 2002, it had to have been written and ready for inclusion in the journal up to a year before, i.e., it must have been submitted to the journal around the time that the search committee was drawing up a short list of candidates.

Imagine the devastating effect of this review on Marianne's candidacy if the committee had access to it BEFORE it appeared in *Modern Philology*. Oldcorn, who incidentally was chair of the search committee—yes, chair of the committee seeking to find his replacement—could easily have acquainted his fellow members with Martinez's review in manuscript form. It could

have been done informally. That would have been enough to poison Marianne's chances. For wholly unscrupulous university faculty members like the ones peopling this Italian Studies search committee, it didn't matter that Oldcorn's introduction of Martinez's review into the deliberations was completely out of bounds. Oldcorn needn't have done more than alert them to the fact that a devastatingly negative review would be appearing in an important scholarly journal.

Although not without precedent—given the slow pace of scholarly publication schedules—it is noteworthy that a review appeared FULLY FOUR YEARS after the publication date of the book. What is likely in this case is that Oldcorn and Martinez conspired to PLACE a defamatory review of Marianne's book well after the book was published SO THAT the manuscript of the review would be available to the Brown Italian Studies search committee JUST WHEN it was considering Marianne's candidacy, i.e., in the fall of 2001. Why else would a review have been published four years later? Typically, reviews appear within two years of the publication of the book under review. *Modern Philology*, as a prominent journal in the field, would automatically have been sent a review copy by St. Martin's Press in the fall of 1998 when the book was published. Whether this journal then solicited a review immediately or later is moot. The fact remains that Martinez's defamatory review appeared when it did—strongly implying that it was written around the fall of 2001, when the search for the Italian Studies position at Brown was under way.

Apropos of the Jewish capo theme [referred to earlier], it should be noted that one of the search committee members was a certain anthropology professor named David Kertzer, who was on the committee ostensibly in virtue of the fact that he had written books on Italian history. Shortly after the completion of the search and after Martinez was appointed, Kertzer's title became professor of anthropology AND ITALIAN STUDIES. And in 2005, Kertzer became the Provost at Brown—another in the long line of perfidi judaei administrators that aided and abetted the commission of criminal acts calculated to thwart Marianne's quest for justice.

Marianne died on June 3, 2003.

Key to 82

82. Contrapasso

Lady Murasaki and Prince Towa no Ai were sitting on a bench in a park in Florence, the Cimitero delle Porte Sante. It was twilight of a summer's day, and they were tired after having spent the entire afternoon walking through the Dantean city they knew well. The particular bench they had chosen was surrounded by gravestones. Suddenly the cemetery, which had been quiet as a tomb except for the tolling of a distant carillon¹, was filled with loud and plaintive wails. Terror and suffering suffused the air.

"It sounds as if the dead were groaning. I'm going to investigate," said Prince Towa no Ai. He got up and walked a few steps to a large monument that loomed just before them. There was a cavernous pit adjacent to the funerary architecture, as if the gravediggers had recently been at work preparing for a newcomer to the city of the dead. Just as Lady Murasaki came up to have a closer look next to Prince Towa no Ai, a man stepped out of the shadows. They recognized Yeshua.

"My God, you've come back," exclaimed the Prince and rushed to embrace their friend. "Yeshua, we missed you. Are you alright?"

"Yes, of course, although I've been doing a lot of traveling since we last saw each other at the Shimmering Pines. Pilate's been keeping me company." Yeshua's companion now stepped out of the shadows too, and was greeted with enthusiasm. Yeshua directed his friends' attention to the pit, from which the groans were emanating. Several men and women were walking or crawling about in great pain, in a malebolgic² tableau.

"If you look closely, you should be able to discern the identity of the persons making those terrible sounds. They're all known to you. The one in front just below us is Azazellini³. Do you recognize him?"

Lady Murasaki and Prince Towa no Ai saw who Yeshua was pointing to but had to peer intensely into the half light of the pit in order to discern the living cadaver that once was the swaggering Chairman of the Bureau of Manuscripts. What appeared before them was a skeleton with phlegmy yel-

¹ See fn. 6.

² In Dante's *Inferno*, *malebolge* is the eighth circle of Hell. Roughly translated, it means "evil ditches" or "evil pouches."

³ Azazellini = Checchetti.

low slobber trickling from his crooked mouth between animal-like moans. He had no upper lip, and his eyes were suppurating from ulcers that three giant magpies⁴ with massive beaks were pecking at ceaselessly. From his fleshy chest there hung a huge crab⁵ with the face of an ugly crone, the scabrous letters ROYCE⁶ burned into her forehead. The crab-woman's pincers were sunk deep into the man's body, and she emitted a relentlessly high-pitched disyllable, which sounded like FRO-DE⁷ and resembled Levantine ululation. A dwarf dressed in a clown suit and a blue and gold⁸ beanie repeatedly inserted and withdrew a rod sheathed in barbed wire from the man's anus, whence a bloody bolus of feces and guts was being extruded piecemeal. The man's head was inclined to the ground as his tongue struggled to slurp up the pieces. The dwarf's every thrust in and out was accompanied by a shriek in Italian: "FA IN CULO."⁹

"He's not alone. There's his partner in crime," said Yeshua, pointing to an emaciated individual half-walking, half-crawling just behind Azazellini. It was Sachssohn,¹⁰ the Senior Courtier. Around his neck there hung a chain, by which he was being alternately led and jerked by an enormous bull-necked ogre dressed in what looked like the '60s uniform of a California prison

⁴ *cecca* = 'magpie'

⁵ Latin *cancer* = 'crab'. Cecchetti's wife (who was supposedly Jewish) reportedly died of cancer. Cecchetti exploited his wife's Jewishness as a putative defense when accused of anti-Semitism in connection with Marianne's termination. Marianne herself always suspected the Italian academic establishment—particularly in the USA, as well as in Italy—of being anti-Semitic and considered anti-Semitism an important element first in her being fired, then later being shut out of the profession. See fns. 7 & 26 for details concerning another likely anti-Semite in the UCLA Italian Dept., Fredi Chiappelli (dead).

⁶ The Italian Dept. was housed in Royce Hall, which had a carillon.

⁷ *frode* = 'fraud'. Note the paronomasia with Fredi (Chiappelli) and *freddo* 'cold' below.

⁸ The UCLA school colors.

⁹ 'did [i.e., fucked you] in the ass [hole]'

¹⁰ Probable original German-Jewish spelling of the surname of David Saxon, the Academic Vice Chancellor at UCLA during the period when the atrocity took place (1968-70).

guard, except that his helmet bore a Star of David¹¹ surmounted by a Red Star.¹² From Sachssohn's right palm there protruded the long bloody nib of a fountain pen,¹³ evidently as the result of having been plunged into the back of his hand with great force. From time to time the guard would stop pulling the chain and slap Sachssohn's face with a thick sheaf of papers while barking out, over and over again, the same words: "Sign the Loyalty Oath!" Every time Sachssohn did as he was told and signed one of the papers thrust before him, the guard would jerk him upright by the chain and shout in his face: "Barrator!¹⁴ You Wrote Stare Decisis! Sign Your Name!" Whereupon Sachssohn was made to chew and swallow the piece of paper only to be struck in the back with the guard's billyclub with such ferocity that the ingested material was immediately vomited up onto his chin and chest. The entire process was then begun over again.

Lady Murasaki and Prince Towa no Ai betrayed no emotion at the scene before them. Because their attention was concentrated on the pit, they did not notice the two figures who had silently taken their places next to Yeshua and Pilate. It was Bolcitan and The Cat. "Condign punishment for crimes heretofore unavenged," said Bolcitan to no one in particular. The Cat stood upright next to his master, silent for once. Then he burst out: "Look over there, master, behind Azazellini and Sachssohn. It's Cocotte¹⁵ the

¹¹ Saxon was known to be Jewish.

¹² Saxon claimed not to have signed the Loyalty Oath at the U of Calif during the McCarthy Communist witch hunt years (1950s), but according to faculty scuttlebutt the claim was spurious. His criminal actions are consistent with the scuttlebutt.

¹³ See the commentary on section 8.

¹⁴ A barrator is a person who commits barratry, an old term meaning (inter alia) (1) an unlawful breach of duty (esp. on the part of a ship's master or crew resulting in injury to the ship's owner); (2) sale or purchase of positions in church or state (= simony).

¹⁵ F cocotte = 'chicken, loose woman, tart'. Sounds like "Cottino" (see next fn.).

Oven-Woman¹⁶ and her eternal companion, The Eyeless Dog-Man.¹⁷ They were in it together with Azazellini from the start.”¹⁸ Indeed, despite the unfamiliar cognomina by which The Cat had identified them, Lady Murasaki and Prince Towa no Ai recognized this pair as two other members of the Bureau of Manuscripts. Their fleshless limbs were locked in embrace, as were their lipless mouths, the upper teeth of the Oven-Woman pinioned into the lower teeth of the Dog-Man. The male had the body of a man and

¹⁶ Refers to Marga Cottino-Jones, woman in the UCLA Italian Dept. *Cotto* = ‘baked [in an oven]’. She was the acting chair in the summer of 1968 while Fido was away. It was to her that Marianne spoke about needing to delay her teaching for two weeks due to the impending birth of our daughter. This conversation took place soon after Marianne received an official appointment letter from the University (late spring 1968). Cottino-Jones assured her that this period would be covered by TAs. On the basis of this conversation Marianne applied for and received a two-week official Leave of Absence with Full Pay to cover the latter half of October and was back at work as promised on November 1. Cottino-Jones, along with Cecchetti et al., later falsely claimed that Marianne had never informed the Department of her pregnancy.

¹⁷ Refers to Franco Fido. “Fido” is a common American name referring to a(ny) dog. The first constituent “Eyeless” refers to the fact that Fido was supposedly in an auto accident after leaving UCLA that resulted in serious injury to his eyes. According to Marianne’s colleague who was friendly to her, a certain Lecturer in Italian named Mario Pietralunga, in his last year at UCLA (1968-69) Fido was hauled up on charges by the Administration for engineering a kick-back scheme whereby his research assistant submitted fictitious hours for work never actually performed and then gave part of the money to Fido. Fido was forced to return it, but typically was not disciplined.

¹⁸ There was a conspiracy among Fido, Cottino-Jones, and Cecchetti—and Chiappelli—to fabricate a case for termination, which actually began in 1968, before Cecchetti arrived on the UCLA campus. Marianne finished her doctoral dissertation in the late fall of 1968, during her first semester of teaching, and submitted a revised version to the Univ of Calif Press for its Philology series. The ms. was given for review to Cecchetti (this transpired later), who turned it down. The reviewer’s report was full of spurious assertions and was clearly a hatchet job. Rather than rebutting it point by point, Marianne sent it to the University Press of Kentucky, which accepted it for publication. It is clear from the falsehoods he concocted in 1969 that Cecchetti was already in on the fix at the time he reviewed the ms.

the head of a dog whose sockets enclosed no eyes. Outsized horn-rimmed glasses¹⁹ were nailed into his temples with rusted spikes, from the sides of which there seeped a viscous fluid. The female had the legs of a crane,²⁰ and her enormous breasts were contorted so that what remained of their fleshy part resembled, with its venous surface, the facing of a Delft oven, and the nipples, riveted inside the oven to the volvulus in the creature's thoracic cavity, could be seen burning with the intense red and blue flame of an acetylene blowtorch lodged just below her neck. They gasped for breath through their buccal clench as they stumbled along behind Azazellini, the inhalation of one being the exhalation of the other. Each time the Oven-Woman exhaled, she hiccupped twice and spat out a vocable that sounded like CHICHIBIO.²¹

Prince Towa no Ai was the first to catch sight of a female with enormous steatopygia being dragged along under the Dog-Man, her mouth permanently glommed on to his ithyphallic member. "Why, that's LuAnn Rossiter and Berto Ricci.²² Of course, it all fits. LuAnn and the Dog-Man were thick as thieves at Redfern. All we need now is Chuck Chavadze to complete the picture."

"Your wish, etcetera. There's Chavadze," said Bolcitan, "over on the other side of the pit. He's the one who's moaning and grabbing his kidneys. Looks like he can't stop micturating." Prince Towa no Ai followed Bolcitan's

¹⁹ Fido wore such glasses.

²⁰ See next fn.

²¹ Name of a character (a cook; he roasts a crane to give to another character) in one of Boccaccio's *Decameron* tales. Cottino-Jones is the author of a ridiculously bad article on something she calls "the hiccupping rhythm of Chichibio."

²² Characters from Marianne's novel, *Higher Learning*. Rossiter = Karen Newman, a woman with big hips ("steatopygia"), close friend and colleague of Fido = Ricci. Chavadze = Vartan Gregorian, president of Brown, 1989-97. Gregorian was often observed repeatedly having to excuse himself (to go to the toilet) during private meetings. Gregorian steadfastly denied that he had ever promised me that Marianne would be appointed to a permanent position at Brown as part of the agreement I made with him in April 1989 before accepting a professorship in the Slavic Dept. It was a gentleman's agreement (i.e., nothing in writing), but it turned out that there was only one gentleman in the room where the promise was made, and it was not Gregorian.

index finger and recognized the man in question, even though his view was partly obscured by a yellow spray. It was a perpetual geyser of urine being spat out into Chavadze's eyes by a gargantuan bruin at his side. The animal alternated lapping up and expectorating the product of the man's incontinence back at him.²³ The bruin was kept at his task by a potato-nosed minder holding him on a leash, who yelled the Russian hortative *SSYSH' EMU V GLAZA*,²⁴ which accurately and pithily captured the sense of the bruin's action.

Yeshua was beginning to feel faint and murmured something to Bolcitan who turned away. Prince Towa no Ai overheard them. "As they say in Japanese," he observed to Bolcitan, "even the Devil has sunstroke."²⁵

"Isn't that the one they call Il Barone²⁶ over by the bruin?" said Pilate, who joined the conversation for the first time. "Ribbentropp gave him a yacht to sail on Lake Como for his services to the Axis, but no boat will avail him now." Lady Murasaki looked where Pilate had pointed and saw a grotesque simulacrum of a human being. The man's head was thrust between his legs all the way up to his left buttock,²⁷ his lips attached as if by suction. Occasionally, the suction would weaken to release the man's mouth, but only long enough for him to mewl the desiderative fragment *FRED-DO*²⁸ before the vacuum was reestablished.

"How did a collaborationist ever get into the Bureau of Manuscripts?" said Yeshua and then caught himself, but too late to deflect Bolcitan's reminder about the thirty pieces of silver.

"These criminals all seem to have some connection to each other," observed Pilate. "Look at the one in the cage²⁹ near the collaborationist. He's got a young boy³⁰ inside with him and is extending his hands in a supplicato-

²³ See fn 22.

²⁴ 'Piss [2nd pers. sg.] him [dat.] in the eyes.'

²⁵ Paraphrase of Japanese *oni no kakuran* 'the devil's sunstroke.'

²⁶ Chiappelli claimed to be a (Swiss) baron and to own a yacht. According to Pietralunga (but not only), he was said to have collaborated with the Nazis.

²⁷ *chiappa* = 'buttock.'

²⁸ See fn. 7 above.

²⁹ Refers to Luigi Ballerini, the head of Marianne's section at NYU; the "cage" refers to the converted closet he assigned to Marianne to use as her office.

³⁰ Ballerini had a little boy whom he walked to school, etc.

ry gesture while being steadfastly ignored. There's an agent provocateur³¹ jabbing them both with a hot poker, and the man's being made to dance a *gigue* on one foot while the boy whistles a Neapolitan tune. Then there's their neighbor whose predicament is not unfamiliar to me." He pointed to a man with a prominent forehead and a lascivious mouth, which when he leered at the two females in the group revealed his clearly rotting teeth. A makeshift prosthesis was implanted under his upper lip, attached by a wire ligature whose tip protruded through the flesh in the form of a bent arrowhead.³² What had attracted Pilate's gaze was not the man's appearance but his hands,³³ which he washed feverishly in a *lavabo*³⁴ without ever seeming to cleanse himself to his own satisfaction, although no dirt of any kind was visible. From time to time he would shriek "Read what it says, Margo! Only you can save me!" to a demented-looking woman in a nurse's white uniform with a nameplate bearing the word *FLUENZA*³⁵ on her chest and holding a codex with the sole inscribed word *VULGARI* on its cover in her hands. To which this imbecile could only blurt out the anguished answer: "But

³¹ Ballerini sent a graduate student—who was not enrolled—to make trouble in one of Marianne's courses. This man interrupted her lecture with irrelevant questions and comments, was generally obstreperous, and was finally asked to leave by Marianne. He never returned.

³² Refers to John Freccero, who had a prominent brow, rotten teeth, and was observed smiling lewdly at miscellaneous females on the Yale campus. His name means 'arrowsmith' in Italian (*frèccia* = 'arrow').

³³ Refers to Pilate's literally washing his hands in response to a question as to whether Christ's crucifixion should be carried out (at Matthew 27.24). Freccero washed his hands of Marianne after he moved from Stanford to NYU.

³⁴ *Lavabo* means (i. a.) a basin used for ceremonial cleansing of hands in certain Christian churches.

³⁵ Refers to Marguerite Chiarenza, a friend of Freccero's, who wrote a defamatory review of Marianne's book, *De vulgari eloquentia, Dante's Book of Exile* (Univ of Nebraska Press, 1980), which was otherwise very favorably reviewed (and is still the standard analytical work on Dante's treatise). Marianne wrote Chiarenza a letter exposing all the erroneous assertions made in the latter's review and tried to have a formal rebuttal published in the journal where it appeared, but the editor refused.

Gianni,³⁶ I can't read Latin!"³⁷ Simultaneously, two male bath attendants kept trying to give the hand-washer a fresh supply of soap and towels, obviously currying favor by vying to have their particular amenity accepted each time. The first man looked like a superannuated escapee from a borstal and answered to the name Granavecchia.³⁸ His weepy pleas for the hand-washer's favor were met with stony silence. The towels he waved imploringly bore the italicized logo "*Abandon All Hope*."³⁹ The second man looked like a mestizo and answered to the name Zadeka.⁴⁰ He wore a hatchet in his belt, which his fellow-attendant managed to wrench free to inflict grievous wounds to his rival's head and neck without killing him, thereby prolonging the reenactment of their struggles ad infinitum. This man's towels bore the italicized logo "*Calumniate and Conquer*."⁴¹ Between bouts of dancing attendance on the hand-washer, both men whispered and gesticulated to imply that they were bargaining with each other.

³⁶ Short for Giovanni = John [Freccero].

³⁷ Dante's treatise is in Latin. Some of Chiarenza's false assertions about Marianne's book (which included a complete English translation) were based not only on the reviewer's bad faith but on her ignorance of Latin and the textual history of the original.

³⁸ Refers to Oldcorn (*grana* 'grain' [corn = *grano*] + *vecchia* 'old') who was from Bristol, England—hence also "borstal," which is British for a kind of reform school. Oldcorn passed himself off for an Anglo, but the easy convertibility of the English constituents into a recognizably Italian onomastic pattern made Marianne suspect that Oldcorn was really of Italian descent.

³⁹ Part of the inscription at the entrance to Hell from Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The Italian Studies Dept. at Brown is housed in a building on Hope Street.

⁴⁰ Refers to Ronald Martinez, author of a scurrilously defamatory review ("hatchet job") of Marianne's last book, *Dante and the Knot of Body and Soul*. Martyn [echoing Martinez] Zadeka is the name of the fictitious author of a dream manual on which Pushkin's Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* relies to interpret her dreams.

⁴¹ Martinez's defamatory review was the instrument whereby he undermined Marianne's viability as a candidate for the professorship at Brown, which he ultimately gained (in 2002).

“Selling indulgences,⁴² I reckon,” said Pilate. The Cat guffawed. Yeshua was on the point of saying something to Lady Murasaki when he noticed that she was no longer among them. Neither was Prince Towa no Ai. Night fell on the infernal scene.

Before composing the Key to 82, I sent a draft of the section to MH, who responded in a way that rather surprised me:

“Well, you certainly have administered some brutal justice to those villains in the Bureau of Manuscripts! I must admit I was shocked at how far you went in some cases. (Does it really need to be so violent and scatological? To me, this seems out of harmony with the book’s overall refinement.) I had rather expected you to devise some more spiritually and symbolically ironic punishments, as opposed to these XXX-rated ones.

“One the other hand, perhaps there are many such ironies that I am simply missing. Perhaps your more astute readers will look past the brute physical vulgarity and violence to an allegorical level of interpretation. After all, you’ve left plenty of hints that this may be your intention, and I am simply unable to interpret some of them.

“Of course, not all of it is lost on me. After re-reading your section 8, I can certainly understand the appropriate symbolism of the pen through Sachssohn’s hand, as well as the delicious irony of his inability to write anything other than “Stare Decisis” each time he tries to sign his name.

“A couple of times, I had some difficulty just visualizing the physical imagery. For instance, I can vividly see the female with the legs of a crane and her huge oven-like breasts, but I can form no precise image out of the phrase that further modifies the oven/breasts—‘from behind which the nipples, riveted to the vulvulus in the creature’s thoracic cavity, could be seen burning with the intense red and blue flame of an acetylene blowtorch lodged just inside the thorax.’ In the case of Chuck Chavadze, I had trouble imagining the physical orientation of the man vis-à-vis the ‘gargantuan bruin at his feet.’ (Is Chavadze lying down, or is he himself a giant?) In the case of

⁴² An indulgence is a remission of the punishment for sins. During the Middle Ages and later, indulgences were sold by the Church, a practice attacked by Martin Luther. The granting of indulgences for money was stopped by papal edict in 1567.

Il Barone, it was hard for me to see how a ‘bonfire’ under his nates would be singeing his eyebrows (if his head is between his legs, wouldn’t the fire be burning the back of the head—and how big is he to be [standing?] over a fire that big?). In the case of the hand-washer, the sentence ‘A makeshift prosthesis was implanted under his upper lip, attached by a wire ligature that resembled a bent arrowhead’ yielded no precise image for me. Also, what makes the man’s hands continue to seem unclean to the narrator if there is no filth evident to the witnesses? (Is it just that he continues to scrub?) Perhaps the vagueness of some of these images is intentional or irrelevant, but I thought I’d let you know my reactions, just in case this issue matters to you.

“I thought the logos on the towels were most appropriate, especially the ‘Abandon all Hope.’ Since this was over the entrance to Dante’s Inferno, mightn’t this scene be better positioned as the first? (In fact, I would just swap the hand-washing scene with Azazellini’s punishment—saving the latter for last, as it is probably the worst and most shocking of all the tortures.)

“Finally, I think you were very wise to have Lady Murasaki and the Prince react to the spectacle precisely as they did. There is no gloating, no outward relish in the revenge, nor is there any apparent pity for the sufferers. In any case, it’s clear from your ending that the Lady and her Prince have more than had their fill of the horrors in this scene—well before it is actually concluded. (I guess my overall reaction is pretty much the same as theirs.)”

I responded to his revulsion at the scabrousness of the images:

“I can well imagine how startled/shocked/taken aback you were by the violence and scatological nature of 82. You’re right to say that it’s out of harmony with the rest of the book, but this brutality is absolutely necessary and unavoidable. I never told you how the people in the UCLA Italian Dept. characterized Marianne in private letters that were made available to us. Words like ‘cloaca’ were among the milder ones used. If you reread Dante’s *Comedy*, you’ll see that he did not shrink from depicting the punishments of his sinners in the most ‘graphic’ terms (as they like to say now). No, here I cannot change the tone: it has to stay exactly as it is in order to give a faithful if oblique representation of the crimes that warrant such awful punishments.

“Actually, to be honest, I’m a bit disappointed at your recoiling from the violence and scatology. I would have expected you to urge me on to even greater heights/depths of brutality.

"Believe me, the ironies are all there, and the punishments fit the crimes in just the way Dante constructed his pairs, i.e., tit for tat. Of course, I'm not surprised that you missed the ironies. It does take special knowledge to decipher the allusions and hidden references, and only people who are both completely in the know and can recall all the details will be able to identify them."

MH was only partly mollified:

"The scenes you revised in 82 to clarify the imagery for me are now in fact much clearer to me. As to the hand-washer, I had originally assumed that the prosthesis was a denture, but it was the manner of its attachment with the arrowhead wire that I couldn't visualize (and still can't). Also, it's the narrator's observation that the man keeps washing "without ever seeming to cleanse himself," not "without ever seeming to feel clean." But these are such incredibly picky little points! When I originally brought them up, I was just reaching. In all likelihood, I'm the only reader who would ever stumble at this sort of thing.

"As to our divergent opinions about the content and tone of the punishments, I think there is no point in arguing. Your response to my misgivings makes me feel that our differences on these matters may be much deeper and wider than I had supposed, making further discussion pointless."

I continued the exchange nevertheless:

"I'm attaching a newly-revised version of 82 which takes account of your questions and criticisms. With the caveat about having to keep the tone intact, you'll see that I've altered the passages where you found the prose wrong-headed or the images hard to understand. I think it now clarifies the hand-washer's predicament in such a way as to remove your objection. Also, I've inserted a character I'd forgotten to include, another malefactor (whom I call "Fluenza"), a woman at the U of British Columbia named Marguerite Chiarenza, who wrote a blatantly defamatory review of a book by Marianne—no doubt at the behest of the Italian academic mafia—to which the editor of the journal where it appeared refused to publish Marianne's point-by-point rebuttal that would have exposed both the reviewer's ignorance and her bad faith.

"I guess you're right about our disagreement over the tone of 82. I know I shouldn't be, but I have to tell you that I really feel let down by your

response. And I wonder just how deep and wide our divergences go. To repeat myself: this is one response I would never have expected of you. Perhaps it has to do with what you and I would consider a sense of fairness. I think you always bend over backwards to be fair and generous, even to your antagonists. In my case, I can't afford to be gentlemanly about the evil acts people committed against Marianne—and continued to commit for thirty long years. It's possible that if somebody you loved had been subjected to such treatment, your response would be closer to mine. Or maybe not . . ."

True to his nature and his friendly feelings, MH expressed regret at having disappointed me without, however, abjuring his own convictions:

"Your current revision of the hand-washer passage has blown my quibbles out of the water. It is now perfectly clear. Incidentally, I neglected to mention earlier that I did notice and enjoy the fact that it was Pilate who observed the hand-washing. A nice echo.

"I love the name FLUENZA—what a deliciously ironic name for a nurse, not to mention its pun-like echo of the real woman's name! For what she did to Marianne, I hope she recognizes herself in your caricature.

"I truly regret that my response to the punishments has made you feel let down and surprised at me. My reaction to your 82 is just an honest feeling, and I can't help it. Feelings simply are what they are. But I hope you know that my intent in expressing my feeling was in no way intended to shock or discourage you in your effort. It was intended only to stimulate your thought about what might be the reaction of some readers.

"Of course, you can't help feeling let down by my reaction any more than I can help feeling put off by (just certain elements of) your #82. I must admit, though, that I'm puzzled as to why you are so surprised at my reaction. On further reflection, maybe you'll agree that my reaction to your punishments is only to be expected.

"In the first place—just as you yourself have astutely pointed out—I never loved anyone who was the victim of such repeated and prolonged acts of evil (and I totally agree that 'evil' is the only word that will do). Had I suffered through the experience you suffered through for 30 years with Marianne, my feelings would surely be much more like yours.

"In the second place, we should remember that you and I have come from very different cultural backgrounds. My early and formative exposure is decidedly Southern American and Christian; yours is Japanese and Jewish. As I understand them, these cultures differ from one another on no

philosophical issues more drastically than they differ on questions of justice.

“I don’t mean to imply that my present concept of justice is Christian—no, I reject the New Testament’s pathetic attempt to palliate its threats of hell with its irrational doctrine of forgiveness and salvation by Grace even more strongly than I eschew the Jewish notion of an-eye-for-an-eye justice—but there’s no denying that my concept of justice is heavily influenced by my Christian upbringing. Christianity continues to shape my thinking to this day, even in those respects wherein it revolts me, forcing me away to some other (perhaps more extreme) alternative. Perhaps the same may be said of you, Michael, with respect to your Jewish heritage.

“Back on that theme of justice, I’m willing to try to explain to you my concept of the same if you are interested—and provided that the discussion can be approached with philosophical aplomb, prescinded from the (understandably) strong emotions underlying your #82. In any case, I hope you can look at our differences in a philosophical light and never allow my agreement or disagreement with you to become a question of my loyalty to you as a friend. Because, in my mind at least, that can never be in question.”

I closed the exchange on 82 by saying:

“As for our disagreement over the appropriateness of the tone that is to be explained by our being Christian and Jew, I thought of it to myself before you expressed it. But that can’t affect our friendship.”

83



LADY MURASAKI WAS DYING

The Japanese heading is *shi* ‘death’.

The description in this section is a true account of the events leading up to and encompassing Marianne’s death. The only detail at the end that I omitted was the doctor’s name, Keith Michl, to whom I will forever be grateful.

MH’s reaction, as my faithful friend and reader, was deeply personal: