



Canto 20

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Summary

The canto begins as Dante and Virgil are progressing through the terrace of the avaricious (the fifth terrace). The wolf of antiquity is brought up. As Dante moves along he has heard a cry which sounded of agony. The soul that Dante heard was speaking of about a biblical image, Second he speaks of Fabricius and how great he is, and of Nicholas who gave the tree maidens marriages. The soul has revealed himself "Hugh Capet was my name" (20.49). Hugo is a 10th century king of France, he is in the fifth terrace because of his greed. Hugh tells the political situation at the time. He tells of the prophecy of the new Charles, how they will emerge in France. Charles shows lots of greed "No care for their own flesh and blood" (20.84). Hugh also speaks of Mary, Philip IV, and Pygmalion. He tells of others who have shown greed "Achan, presumptuous fool who robbed the spoils" (20.109-110) and "Polymester who cut down Polydorus" (20.115). At the end of the canto there is an earthquake on Delos "never so violently was Delos shaken" (20.130). After the quake Dante and Virgil proceed with the holy journey.

Characters

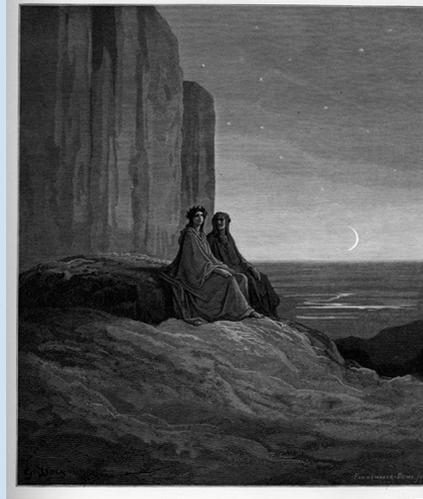
Dante- He progresses along, he encounters a soul, and is told of a prophecy.

Virgil- He progress along with dante.

Hugh Capet- He Was a french king, he died in 996. He is the 10 generation desentect on the throne. He is punished because of his greed.

Theme

You can see the theme of greed show thought the characters hugh and dante. Also in the stories that are told in the canto. Greed is a big factor throughout.



Dante and Virgil



Hugo capet

Stylistic features

Metaphors- Hugh uses a tree to compare himself the root of evil plant "I was the chief root of that evil tree"(20.43).

Biblical allusion- the earthquake of Delos. The shepherds who heard the song.

Biblical image- "straining to give birth"(20.21) adds to the theme of agonizing expectation.

Questions

1. How is greed shown throughout this canto? What does Dante think of greed?
2. What is the prophecy that Hugo Capet tells? What is the importance?
3. What is the importance of the wolf? What does Dante think of the wolf?

Works Cited

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