

Punishment System in Manusmrti and Dante Algieri's Inferno of *The Divine Comedy*

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Abstract

Both Inferno and Manusmrti use punishment as a means to instill fear in sinners, deterring them from committing wrongdoings in their earthly lives. In Inferno, punishments vary for different sinners, including politicians, and focus on rebirth as a consequence of earthly karma. In contrast, Manusmrti emphasizes punishment for thieves but does not include the concept of rebirth. Both texts aim to create fear to prevent sins and crimes, promoting an ideal society. The fear of divine punishment serves as a law, with Christianity in Inferno encouraging holiness and the concept of karma in Manusmrti paralleling this idea. The notion of being God-fearing in both texts guides individuals to lead virtuous lives to avoid future punishments. The given stanzas from Manusmrti and the lines and passages of Inferno have been adopted as the primary data and the related articles of various authors and waves have been taken as the secondary sources for the analysis of the punishment system in both of the texts. It has explored that both texts have generated the concept of God-fearing to lead the society without of sins and crimes.

Keywords: fear, hell, karma, punishment, portrayal

Introduction

The Manusmrti, often referred to as the law of mankind, is regarded as one of the most significant texts on Brahmanical laws. According to Panda (Preface), it is the most renowned and influential work on the subject. Composed by Maharshi Manu in clear and concise Sanskrit verses, the Manusmrti consists of 2,685 couplets, organized into twelve chapters (Panda, 2014, Preface). These chapters address a range of topics, including rules, duties, and professions tied to the caste system, corporal punishment, and the king's role in administering justice, such as "the king's duty; the king and the judge; constitution of Sabha; methods of corporal punishment" (Panda, 2014, p. xiv).

The Manusmrti outlines the consequences of sin, discussing the results of various sinful actions, their effects on the body and health in this life, and the punishment awaiting sinners in the afterlife, such as "various sin results, diseases and bodily effects due to sins in former lives; mortal sins... torture of hell" (Panda, 2014, xiv). The text also sets forth norms and systems essential for attaining a high level of culture and civilization. Furthermore, it describes various societal institutions along with the rules and regulations that govern these systems. One of the key elements of the Manusmrti is its classification of society into four caste groups, each with its respective professions:

. . . Ksatriya entrusted with the work of defending the realm. Physical power vested in the Ksatriyas and spiritual in the Brahmanas. . . Agriculture and usuary were not allowed to the Ksatriyas as also to Bhahamanas. . . Third in social rank were the Vaisyas. Their additional duties were agriculture, trade, commerce, cattle rearing and other pursuits for the production of wealth. . . The lowest in the scale stood the Sudras. . . His only work was service, including such duties as removing of dirt, filth and other unclean occupations. (Panda, 2014, p. xvi- xvii)

This passage suggests that the social structure of human settlements was established from the very beginning based on the caste system. The roles and professions of the four castes were defined with the emergence of the caste system within Hindu culture. The Manusmṛti served as the guiding law for the Hindu community, and many rituals practiced today are derived from the laws outlined in this scripture. As Panda (2014, p. xvii) notes, *Manusmṛti* is considered the fundamental legal text of Hinduism. The text also provides the framework for the punishment of wrongdoers and the justice system that addresses the needs of the victims, all of which are carried out in accordance with the directives laid out in the Manusmṛti.

The system of judgment is rooted in moral and ethical principles, values, beliefs, and the commandments of divine power. Society functions according to the divine order, and punishment is meted out to wrongdoers based on what is deemed right and wrong according to heavenly theological values. Religion thus plays a crucial role in deterring individuals from committing sins and avoiding punishment, both in this life and in the afterlife. Punishments can vary, ranging from verbal reprimands and slaps to more severe forms such as stabbing or even shooting with the intent to kill. Theological texts, such as the Bible and the Manusmṛti, outline the types of punishments to be administered to sinners. The divine punishment system is designed to instill fear in people's minds, as fear is the foundation of law, order, ethics, and morality. It is this fear that helps guide individuals along the correct path in life.

Fear plays a significant role in various aspects of life, helping to maintain peace and harmony within society. Punishment serves as a means to encourage individuals to be honest, hardworking, and ultimately successful in life. Across different religions and cultures worldwide, there is a common belief in divine judgment, which leads to either punishment or eternal life after death. Many traditions hold that, in the afterlife, individuals are judged based on their actions in this life, resulting in reincarnation, paradise, or damnation.

While Manu's *Manusmṛti* and Dante Alighieri's *The Divine Comedy* are vastly different in terms of space, time, language, and culture, both share significant similarities in addressing the afterlife, hell, and the concepts of sin, justice, and divine retribution. Both texts delve into the consequences of human actions—both good and bad—that individuals must face in the afterlife. In fact, both *Manusmṛti* and *The Divine Comedy* envision heaven and hell in strikingly similar ways within their conceptual frameworks.

The Vedic literature is vast and profoundly significant, encompassing major texts such as the Vedas, including their Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, as well as the Puranas, Smritis, and the epics. These texts served as foundational guides for society, outlining how it should function. Within the Hindu tradition, the *Manusmṛti* predates recorded history. Similarly, Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*, part of *The Divine Comedy*, addresses hell as a realm where souls face divine justice for sins committed during their lives. Both works are highly allegorical in nature, as Allan Gilbert notes, with the allegory in *Inferno* reflecting "evil men as they actually live on

earth” (Dante’s *Conceptions of Justice*, p. 74). Therefore, any reading of these texts requires interpretation at multiple levels.

The first level is the surface level, focusing on the literary and textual features, such as the narrative techniques, the details of the storyline, and the physical and geographical depiction of hell as a real place (Armour, 2005, p. 56). Beneath this surface level, there exists an undercurrent of allegorical meaning. For instance, classical mythological figures like Minos and Zeus are used allegorically, where Minos serves as the “dreaded and semi-bestial judge of the damned who assigns to each soul its eternal torment” (Inferno, 1984, p. 46). Within the terrifying portrayal of hell, both authors aim to communicate the concepts of sin, divine justice, and retribution, each shaped by their respective cultural and social contexts.

Manu conveys the notion of hell to his audience indirectly, maintaining a distance from sin and retribution. In contrast, Dante not only witnesses hell but experiences it firsthand, although under divine protection. This allows him to observe the consequences of sin, and, as Chiarenza (1989, p. 39) notes, the souls condemned to hell are “eternally condemned to the tomb, where they believe life would end,” providing Dante with an opportunity to learn from the divine punishment of others.

The Divine Comedy, regarded as the greatest poem of the Middle Ages, was written by Dante in the early fourteenth century. He began composing the poem around 1308 and completed it around 1321, finishing his work in exile, where he wrote the final parts of the *Commedia*. It was officially recognized and honored in 1321. As noted by Sisson, *The Divine Comedy* has been translated from Italian (La Divina Commedia) into English, starting with Cary’s translation, followed by Longfellow, and later by C.H. Sisson (40). In the introduction to his own translation, Sisson explains in “On Translating Dante” that “the translator must find both the meter and the tone that allow him to faithfully render the original text, making a readable English version” (39).

Dante’s *Divine Comedy* is structurally divided into three parts: *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*. *Inferno* consists of thirty-four cantos and recounts the journey of Dante, who is in a dream-like or death-like state, as he travels through hell and purgatory in search of his ultimate destination—beholding God in paradise.

This research has highlighted two significant similarities in Manu and Dante’s concept of when punishment begins. Both authors suggest that punishment for sins begins even before death. The key difference is that, for Dante, only some sinners lose their souls before death, with their mortal bodies continuing to walk among the living, inhabited by demons. In contrast, Manu emphasizes that all sinners will depart from their mortal bodies in painful, degrading ways, and their punishment starts in this life, with the king responsible for administering justice. For both authors, the sequence of events that befall an individual is seen as a consequence of sins committed either in this life or in a previous one.

Furthermore, both Manu and Dante acknowledge that sin is inevitable. Manu speaks of justice and punishment both in life and the afterlife for sinners. Dante, at the beginning of *The Divine Comedy*, admits his own guilt: “Midway in our life’s journey, I went astray/ from the straight road [...] to find myself /alone in a dark wood” (Divine Comedy, 1984, p. 16.1-3). Scholars have pointed out the allegorical significance of Dante’s vision occurring at dawn, a time of renewal

and resurrection, symbolizing the "regenerative peak when the lost soul realizes it has gone astray," marking the start of the soul's potential rebirth (Divine Comedy, 1984, p. 16:x). This suggests that sin is inevitable, but the desire for repentance and the return to virtue invites less severe punishment (Sharon, p. 88). Intentional sin, from which the sinner does not repent, condemns the soul to the horrors of hell.

In both Manu and Dante's works, the journey into hell begins with death. Manu describes the horrific state of the sinner's dying body, while Dante's description of finding himself "alone in a dark wood" mirrors death in both language and spirit. He writes, "I find myself /alone in a dark wood [...] / its very memory gives a shape to fear/ Death could scare be bitterer than that place!" (Divine Comedy, 1984, p. 16.1-6). Both Manu and Dante view sin as inevitable but emphasize that free will, realization, and true repentance are within human control. For both authors, these are the highest forms of penance, essential for the pursuit of justice and punishment.

Both the *Manusmṛiti* and *The Divine Comedy* explore in detail the consequences of human actions—both good and bad—that individuals must face in the afterlife. In many ways, both texts depict heaven and hell in strikingly similar ways within their conceptual frameworks. This study aims to examine the similarities and differences in the punishment systems outlined in Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* from *The Divine Comedy*. The research focuses on the types of punishments described in both works and the criteria for assigning these punishments, specifically looking at sinners: thieves in *Manusmṛiti* and living soul of Dante, on the basis of karma, the politicians, character differences of Dante and Virgil, and punishment of rebirth in *Inferno*.

Through detailed textual analysis, the research has investigated the conceptual parallels between the two works, highlighting both the similarities and the contextual differences in how punishments and justice are portrayed. Both texts establish systems of law and justice through which sinners are judged, and these seven types of sinners are penalized according to their violations of these laws. The research has compared how punishment and justice are conceived in both texts, revealing the similarities and differences in their respective punishment systems.

Problem of Statement

Dante's *Inferno* has been found being compared with *The Garudamahapurāṇam* in the punishment system. The resemblances and differences have been found being analyzed in *The Garuda Purāṇa* with *Inferno* but Dante's *Inferno* has not been found being researched with the *Manusmṛiti*. So, to do the research in this field is an academic problem.

Research Questions

The research has been guided by two main questions:

A). What are the major resemblances and differences in regard to punishment in Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante Alighieri's "Inferno" in *The Divine Comedy*?

B). How are the types of punishments depicted in both works and on what basis the punishments are decided basically focusing on the sinners: thieves in *Manusmṛiti* and living soul of Dante, on the basis of karma, the politicians, character differences of Dante and Virgil, and punishment of rebirth in *Inferno*?

Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research are:

- A). To do the comparative study of provision of resemblances and differences of punishments stated in Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante Alighieri's "Inferno's" sinners: Thieves in *Manusmṛiti* and, living soul of Dante, on the basis of karma, the politicians, character differences of Dante and Virgil, and punishment of rebirth in Inferno.
- B). To study the types of punishments depicted in both works and on what basis the punishments are decided basically focusing on the sinners: thieves in *Manusmṛiti* and living soul of Dante, on the basis of karma, the politicians, character differences of Dante and Virgil, and punishment of rebirth in Inferno.

Significance of the Study

The concept of afterlife judgment has long been seen as a valid means of punishment, as it offers a resolution to the frustration of witnessing evil go unpunished in this life. Both *The Divine Comedy* and the *Manusmṛiti* portray justice through the judgments of the afterlife. Dante emphasizes the divine wisdom behind the rewards and punishments in the afterlife, asserting that these need to be justified. The ideas of the common good in Aristotelian and thematic justice, which focus on righteousness and concern for both oneself and others, resonate similarly in both Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* in *The Divine Comedy*. Although the contexts of these two works differ, their underlying concepts of judgment, punishment, and justice share notable parallels that can contribute to the broader understanding of humanity.

Despite these religious and philosophical beliefs in divine judgment, there is a tendency to regard ideas of afterlife punishment as relics of the past. However, suffering is also seen as possessing a healing and refining power in life itself. Humans undergo physical and mental pain to purify themselves, making them worthy of entering heaven and avoiding further suffering in the afterlife. This study is significant because it raises important questions, such as whether someone can escape afterlife punishment if they have repented for their sins during their earthly life.

This research holds significance as it broadens awareness among people from different cultures and religions, highlighting the existence of similar concepts across diverse belief systems. By comparing and contrasting these ideas, the study helps dispel misconceptions and fosters a deeper understanding between cultures and religions. In doing so, it offers a new perspective on religious texts, which can contribute to shaping the psychology of those who engage with them.

Additionally, this work serves as a valuable resource for theologians, encouraging them to be more mindful and accountable in addressing social prejudices perpetuated through religious interpretations. The research also provides future scholars of religious texts with a framework for examining these works from this particular viewpoint. As theology continues to be a major point of discussion today, this study advances the understanding that theology is a powerful tool in constructing ideological systems. The research not only energizes academics but also proves beneficial to the general public, particularly those following Hinduism and Christianity.

Ultimately, any well-conducted research can positively impact society, and this study aims to do just that.

Delimitations

The researcher has selected only two texts Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante Alighieri's "Inferno" in *The Divine Comedy*. Only the punishments which are decided for the sinners: Thieves in *Manusmṛiti*, living soul of Dante, on the basis of karma, the politicians, character differences of Dante and Virgil, and punishment of rebirth in Inferno.

Methodology

This research has been based on the qualitative analysis of the texts of Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante's Inferno as the primary focus of the primary data. The methodology is based on the analysis of the primary and the secondary data found on the various journals and waves regarding the *Inferno* of Dante in *The Divine Comedy* and *Manusmṛiti*. It has the similar method as Adhikari (2020 & 2024) and Adhikari et al (2020 & 2022) and Adhikari (<https://doi.org/10.3126/kv.v5i1.70884> & <https://doi.org/10.3126/taj.v3i1.71972> & DOI: <http://doi.org/10.25058/179400x.1709> & (IJOES), vol. 7, no. 2, 2025, pp. 11-28. DOI: 10.47311/IJOES.2025.7.02.28). www.ijtell.com. & www.ijoes.in.) have employed in the qualitative research. Likewise, Adhikari et al (2024 <http://dx.doi.org/10-15294/paramita.V34i.47901>. & 2024 <http://dx.doi.org/10-15294/paramita.V34i.50309>) and Guragain, et al (2024 DOI: 10.59324/ejtas.2024.2(5).07 & 2024 www.tijer.org., & 2024 DOI: 10.59324/ejtas.2024.2(4).20, & 2024 WWW.GRPUBLISHING.ORG, & 2024 <https://doi.org/10.18535/sshj.v8i09.1295>, & 2024 doi:10.29121/granthaalayah.v12.i7.2024.5687, & 2024 www.journal-ems.com DOI: 10.59573/emsj.8(2).2024.35 and Adhikari www.ijoes.in and click on Vol-7,ISSUE-1 & Guragain & Adhikari in www.journal-ems.com. DOI: 10.59573/emsj.8(2).2024.35) have applied the similar research methodology in their qualitative research as this paper has used for the detail analysis of the data of the primary texts *Manusmṛiti* and *Inferno* of Dante in *The Divine Comedy*. The required lines and passages from the texts have been adopted as the primary data. The secondary sources have been adopted from various critical writings of various authors and wave materials found apt for the study. Manu's *Manusmṛiti* has been analyzed with the karma theory of punishment and *Inferno* has been interpreted on the basis of punishment principle of Christianity. So, the Karma theory and the Christianity have been applied as the lens to analyze the punishment system to the sinners.

Punishment system in Inferno

As per the research questions, objectives and methodology of this research, it has been attempted to explore three-pronged literature, focusing mainly on critical religious discourse analysis, pertinent literature on both Manu's *Manusmṛiti* and Dante's "Inferno."

Present research has revealed the fact that a lot has been written on and about both the texts and the writers of these texts but none has attempted to make a comparative study focusing on the issue of punishment. The researcher has filled the gap.

Punishment is a system of improving the behaviors, conduct and to prevent him or her from committing the same type of crime. It is a process of deterrence. Punishment does not take place without the certain weakness, crime or the sins. Punishment is to maintain catharsis to the persons who are victimized one. But the punishment in the Inferno of Dante Alighieri's is not to improve the manners of the sinners. It is also not for sinners and the criminals to prevent from

doing the similar crimes as mentioned above but it is the outcome of the real activities of the person in the real life on this earth. There are both similarities and differences of punishment to the falsifiers; Upper castes and Lower castes, Thieves, Adulterers, traitors, Fortune tellers/soothsayers and crafters/bribers in the eastern principle of Hindu religion and in the western ideology of the Christianity can certainly have the range of differences even in the concept of them and similarities. The similar as well as the different ideas of the different authors and critics are discussed in detail. The comment of various commentators of *Inferno* is presented respectively.

Inferno is the first volume of *Divine comedy* of Dante. It deals with the narrator's visit in the hell in real life. The visitor takes the support of the guide, Virgil, the Roman poet, who is advised by one of the ladies of the heaven for his redemption. They face various souls of the dead being punished in the hell on the account of their sins committed on earth. But the critics do not talk alone about *Inferno* rather they comment about it with other two volumes, Purgatory and Paradise, of *The Divine Comedy*.

Charles S. Singleton in his article "Dante" in the *Divine Comedy* states about the structure of the narration and the fact is not explained. He comments "The factual approach has ways of leaving things unexplained"(1941, p. 109). It is only fictional one. He further states "Keeping the matter in terms of voices in the first person . . . the voice of a man who has returned from the other world to the earth and is reliving his experiences through memory"(p. 110). The author means that the narrator has returned from the hell and telling his experiences through his memory. Singleton quotes James Russell Lowell's remark regarding Dante's criticism as surprisingly:

"We read the *Paradise Lost* as a poem, the *commedia* as a record of fact; and no one can read Dante without believing his story, for it is plain that he believed it himself"(p. 115). The author compares and contrasts Dante's *Inferno* with the ideas of *Paradise Lost* of John Milton.

Punishment to the living soul of Dante

There are some of the critics who have talked about the first volume, *Inferno of Dante*. Among them Susan E. Blow comments in his article *Dante's "Inferno"* as the place of unmentionable darkness and writes as "We are reasoning largely in the dark as we cannot tell what may be the emotion of direction in the mind of a blind person, how it compares with our own, which has always reference to visual experience"(Ellis, 1995, p. 121). There is no clear direction and the vision in the hell. It becomes just like a blind person walking without any vision and direction and it is something inconceivable. Blow writes that "It is a dying soul which can be restored to life only by the renewal of its relationship to God. In the substitution of self for God lies the germ of all sins" (Ellis, 1995, p. 124). It is said that the *Inferno* traces the history of the soul. It is attempted of healing of the contaminated soul. We struggle for the conquest of the flesh by the spirit.

Susan E. Blow has his own concept of love and the sin expressed in his article. He states that "Sin begins in the slackening of love to God, and culminates in the supreme love of self"(Blow, 1884, p. 134). It is obvious that love of self and the lack of love to God is the root cause of entering into the world of sins. To love self-more than God is the sin of feeling. To see self instead of God is the sin of intellect. Mark Van Doran raises the question of visiting Dante

himself in the hell in the article "*The Divine Comedy*" and forwards his opinion that it is unnatural one. He quotes:

"Who is that, who, without death, goes through the kingdom of the dead?".... It was thus that the rebellious spirits challenged Dante at the entrance to the city of Dis. And in a sense, they were right. For Dante's journey outrages nature. It is natural to desire this much knowledge, but it is unnatural to have it (Ellis, 1984, p. 357).

It is the natural idea of the human mind to desire to have the knowledge of the underground world and the unnatural world as Dante does. It is also a natural to challenge Dante by the spirits not to enter into the world of spirits. Dante's journey to hell as a living soul is a challenge to the nature and it is an act of unnatural one from the side of the living person.

Doren further brings out the idea of Virgil producing the lecture in the hell. He writes "Virgil lectures in Hell upon the classification of sins But the lecture... shows that a system has for a moment broken down" (Ellis, 1984, p. 359). It reveals that Virgil has reached in hell as a guide of Dante and he has delivered the speech regarding the classification of sins and how the different types of sinners are being punished in different circles of hell on the basis of their sins committed on earth. But the writer is in the opinion that Virgil's lecturing in the hell is also nothing more than breaking down the order and system of nature. There is also the idea of blood presented in the hell. In this regard, Doren quotes "who, even with words set free, could ever fully tell, by oft relating the blood and the wounds that I saw now?" "The answer must be another question. Who thinks that Dante's Hell is empty of blood and wounds?" (Doren, 1946, p. 369-370). It shows that what Dante wants to explain about is only the scene of blood and pain felt by the afflicted spirits of the punished ones. Doren talks about the suffering of the spirits in general but he does not talk about what types of spirits get what kinds of punishment in the hell.

Inferno has its own value regarding the Christian souls how and when they are punished but the critics do not present the different types of punishments as described in the text. One of the critics, Lucy Allen Paton in the article "The personal Character of Dante as Revealed in His Writings" states "Dante's Writings are essentially of an autobiographic nature (79). It presents the idea that Dante's *The Divine Comedy* is nothing more than his own experiences of life. It is his own experience of the life of hell is the real picture of the detail descriptions in *Inferno*. But the author does not say anything of the punishment system of the souls in the hell.

Ernest Hatch Wilkins talks about the "Last Judgment" in the article "*Three Dante Notes*" and writes "There is then abundant reason to expect a representation of Dante in the "Last Judgment"(Wilkins, 1915, p. 34). It is obvious that Dante himself represents as one of the characters in the Last Judgment with the Christ: Wilkins quotes Harford "In advance of the right-hand group is the Baptist, on the left St. Peter and St. Paul, and between their advancing limbs an animated head peeps out, which is said to be that of Dante (Wilkins, 1915, p. 32)."

It is the reflection of the idea that Dante must be with the Christ in the Last Judgement. Dante as a living being in between St. Peter and St. Paul peeping out the scene of the Last Judgement. Wilkins also does not talk about the punishment system carried out in the hell to those different souls of the people who have committed the difference sins on the earth.

Different critics have different ideas regarding the writings of Dante especially the first volume *Inferno* of *The Divine Comedy*. Angela Griffin in the review entitled "Inferno" has presented Dante's journey of hell as a metaphysical one. The author Griffin writes "Inferno" which is Dante's account of his metaphysical journey through hell, guided by the classical poet Virgil (Ellis, 1995, p. 94). It is clearly stated that the journey of the hell is guided by classical poet Virgil to Dante and it is one of the metaphysical journeys of the hell. Even the author, Griffin does not reveal the idea of punishment of the spirits on the basis of the sins committed in the earth. The metaphysical journey cannot be a real journey but the imaginative idea of the characters visits in the hell of fancy only.

Punishment on the basis of Karma

Steve Ellis has translated the first volume, *Inferno*, of *The Divine Comedy* into English language from the Latin one. In the introduction section of it, he has given the idea of the hell. He writes "Dante explains how the language he uses in the poem befits its status as a "Comedy", that is the work beginning in the horrors of hell and ending in the joys of paradise"(Ellis, 1995, p. xiii)." It shows that the hell is the place of suffering and trouble to those who are the sinners. It is the real afflicted scene of the hell but it is reflection of those people who are seen in the hell. He further writes about the figures who are met in the hell in Dante's visit. He has explained in the following "Many of the figures he meets in hell in fact seemed to exemplify the former, so that part of Dante's painful education is the discovery that they too are damned (Ellis, 1995, p. xvii)."

It is the picture of the hell where many suffering figures of hell seem to be the part of Dante's painful education system and the torture of himself in his own life. Mark Musa in his introduction to the purgatory talks about all three volumes of *The Divine Comedy*. In the introduction to *inferno*, he states:

The subject of the work, taken its literal sense, is the state of souls after death; but if work is taken allegorically its subject is how man by the exercise of his free will justly merits reward or punishment. So, in this life on earth, as in life after death, man gets what he himself chooses, and reward and punishment are meted out with perfect justice (Musa, 1995, p. x).

It reveals the free will and choice of human beings in earth. It is the act of man to get merits or the suffering in the hell. It rightly shows the punishment and justice that the souls deserve to get on the basis of the good or bad works that they have performed on this earth. There is no one responsible to send the souls in the hell but it is only the person himself what he or she does with his or her free will on this earth. It does not talk only about the condition of the souls after the death but about the choice of the person's behavior and action that determines.

Mark Musa has translated Dante's *The Divine Comedy* into English language from the Latin. In the introduction section of the third volume *The Paradise*, he has presented his views in the following form:

The Divine Comedy is one man's vision of the state of souls after death written with the purpose of saving all mankind. It is both man's attempt to communicate with God and an allegory depicting how everyman, represented by the protagonist or pilgrim, wins reward or punishment in the afterlife while still living in this life, by exercising his free will to good or evil. The

Inferno treats the state of souls of the wicked who are condemned to the pains of hell.... The Inferno exists as a concrete place somewhere below the surface of the earth (Musa, 1995, p. ix).

It mirrors the purpose of saving all the mankind from the suffering of the hell after the physical death on this earth. The first volume, Inferno, deals with the position of the souls of the sinners who are condemned to the suffering of the hell. And it also shows that the hell lies somewhere beneath the surface of the earth and it is the place of suffering beyond the idea of imagination.

Punishment to the Politician

Louis R. Rossi has commented about the concept of Dante's *Inferno* in his article *The Devouring Passion: Inferno VI*. It is explained:

Dante becomes aware of new sinners and new torments.... His movements are the harmonic announcement of the writings of the gluttons. Under the filthy rain that makes them howl. The restless turnings of the gluttons are analogously repeated... in the prophecy of Ciaccio, where he foresees the rise and fall of the rival political parties in Florence (Rossi, 1965, p. 21).

It draws the picture of the sinners and torments in the hell. It is also the reflection of political instability as well as the conflict that existed in Florence. The politician of the time is Ciaccio who is farsighted to see the condition of the politics in Florence and Ciaccio is also regarded as the glutton and in fact Dante meets him in the hell in his visit with Virgil. This kind of fear of punishment to the sinners is equal as Adhikari et al (2022) have figured out regarding the ecology and the environment of the world.

Bill Friesen has written about the scene of hell and Dante being in a more troublesome position in the politics than the punishment and suffering of the hell in his article *A heaven out of hell: the inversion of incarnation dynamics in Canto X of Dante's Inferno*. It is expressed in the following form:

To summarize briefly, Dante is proceeding with Virgil through the sixth circle of Hell, and asks him whose tombs these are. Virgil tells him that they are the Epicureans who believed that the soul dies with the body. Their calm discourse is suddenly interrupted by the towering and imperious shade of Farinata, who recognizes Dante's accent and who led the Ghibellines in Florence against the Guelphs, the party among whom Dante was numbered. Encouraged by Virgil, Dante approaches to speak with Farinata and they begin to talk of Florentine matters. Farinata boasts of how he drove the Guelphs from Florence twice, and Dante, stung to rancour, responds that, even so, they came back each time, though when the Ghibellines were in turn driven out, they did not learn that same trick. However, they are interrupted at this point by Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, father of

Guido, who was one of the foremost poets of Florence and a friend of Dante.

Cavalcante querulously inquires whether, since powers of great genius must allow

Dante to travel here, his brilliant son has come with him too. Dante, however,

points out that he already has a companion, one whom Guido held in scorn. Hearing Dante speak about Guido in the past tense, Cavalcante precipitately leaps to the conclusion that his son is dead. Dante, taken aback, hesitates, and taking this as confirmation of his fears, Cavalcante collapses back into his tomb. Farinata, who remains magisterially aloof during Cavalcante's interruption, then continues his conversation mid-topic, admitting that the news of the Ghibellines' exile comes as more of a blow to him than his present punishment in Hell, though he spitefully responds that Dante will soon know something firsthand about exile. Dante then asks whether Farinata can prophesy things of the future, and also if he is ignorant of the present? Farinata confirms this, admitting that the dead can only perceive events already in memory or yet to come. Virgil calls Dante back and Dante asks Farinata to tell Cavalcante that his son is in fact still alive: that his confusion and hesitation derived from his assumption that the dead could know the present as well as the past and future (Dante, 1995).

It is the scene of the hell where Dante and Virgil happen to be there and Dante meets with imperious shade of Farinata and Dante is told with pride how Farinata drove the Guelphs from Florence twice and he does not feel any repent with the punishment of hell and Farinata presents the idea that the dead could know the present as well as the past and future. Dante is told that son is dead but Virgil told him that his son was still alive. In fact, the hell is supposed to be better than and also equal to heaven. So, Dante is hinted that his life on earth is more troublesome than the life of Farinata in hell. Fear that Dante signaled in the hell is similar as Adhikari et al (2020) have indicated about the global deteriorating condition of the environment.

David A.J. Widmer talks about the sadness, depression and mental problem of life presented in his article Black Bile and Psychomotor Retardation: Shades of Melancholia in Dante's *Inferno*. He writes:

The *Inferno*, the first cantica of Dante Alighieri's *Commedia*, has a wonderful abundance of allusions to the importance of psychomotor symptoms in describing the depressed individual. Slowed steps, garbled speech, frozen tears, these and many other images keep the physical manifestations of psychomotor suffering in the forefront of the reader's mind. Considering Medieval and Renaissance writings on melancholy suffering, it is fitting that Dante shows a bodily illness reflected in the hellish torments visited on the damned. From the souls of the sullen to those of the violent, the panorama of psychomotor symptoms plays a prominent role in the poem as well as in the medical and literary prose of succeeding centuries (Widmer, 2004, p. 91).

It reveals that the writing of *inferno* reflects the bodily illness and suffering. It is the scene of mentally retarded and hellish torments. It is the horrible as well as violent and unbearable position of the damned souls. It is also the illusion of the depressed individuals. Dante shows the bodily illness of the people who images are reflected through the souls of the hell. Fear of hell is

as complex as Adhikari (2020) has argued in conserving the environment and avoiding any kinds of viruses as of the coronavirus from the human being in the world.

Punishment as rebirth

Janis Vanacker brings the concept of human soul changing into tree in his article "Why Do you Break Me?" Talking to a Human Tree in Dante's Inferno. He writes:

At the beginning of Canto 13 Dante and Virgil enter the second ring of the seventh circle after having crossed Phlegethon, the river of blood, with the help of the centaur Nessus. The first aspect that catches our attention is the landscape which contrasts sharply with the location depicted in Canto 12: compared to the first ring where the setting was dominated by boiling blood (Vanacker, 2010, p. 432).

This thirteenth Canto of Inferno of Dante resembles with the concept of Baitarani River of The Garuda Purana. There is a boiling river of blood where the damned souls have to suffer in the hell. Dante presents the nine circles of hell and Vanacker describes the seventh circle of the hell and draws the picture of dreadful scene of the hell.

William R. Cook and Ronald B. Herzman write about Dante's imagery of betrayer with the textual example. They talk about XXXIII chapter of Inferno. They explain:

For the vision of Satan that is Dante the pilgrim's last glimpse shows the three mouths of Satan gnawing on each of the three great traitors- Brutus, Cassin's and Judas. That the punishment of these three is another example of cannibalism has perhaps not been given sufficient attention. Once seen in this light, however, the consistency of Dante's treatment of betrayal becomes apparent. (Cook & Herzman, 1979, p. 381)

The images like Brutus, Cassius and Judas are the examples that they reflect the act of cannibalism. They are also the symbols of betrayers to one another. They are not trustworthy among themselves. They are the traitors. Cook and Herzman further write the idea of the betrayer in the following lines:

In Inferno XXXIII, we find that, this count Ugolino was a man of such a type that he caused the people of pizza to die of hunger and at this time although he had a great abundance of grain was so cruel that a staio of grain cost seven pounds at pizza. (Cook & Herzman, 1979, p 378)

It draws the picture of inhumanity of human world because Vgolino was a man who caused the people of pizza to die of hunger even though he had plenty of grain and the cost of grain also was made very expensive. This was the principle where a man regarding a man as no man.

Susan Lander (2014) in his article *The Thieves: Whatcha Got Whatcha Gettin* explains about the 24 and 25 Cantos of *Inferno* by translating it in his own verse to show the sadness of the hero faced in the hell in this stanza:

Such was my dismay
as master's forehead

Moved from trouble

To calm in an eye-blink (p. 113)

The hero was in melancholic mode and he saw that his master's forehead was turning from the trouble to the condition of calmness. There was nothing better to do but only the idea of having the positive thought and the hope of life. The fear has generated in the minds of Dante and Virgil as Adhikari (www.ijoes.in) has pointed out the fear of conserving the environment in the world.

Difference in the Character of Dante and Virgil

Similarly, C.J. Ryan (1982) in his article *Virgil and Dante: A Study in Contrasts* explains the difference between the character of Dante and Virgil. It is narrated in the following lines:

It is clear from the structure of the narrative, and from Virgil's own words at various points in the journey, that his guidance is limited because he cannot reach up to the full splendor of goodness in heaven, and must therefore cede to the Christian and heavenly guide, Beatrice. I would argue that this canto suggests that

his guidance has a further limitation: not only the heights of heaven and goodness, but the depths of hell and evil escape full comprehension by Virgil. The artist in Dante, the story-teller, leads him never to state openly this limitation in Virgil, so that when Beatrice appears, her stern exaction of further purification and repentance, after all that the pilgrim has undergone under Virgil's tutelage, bursts upon the pilgrim and us with startling force. But it ought not to come as a total surprise, completely rupturing the narrative sequence, for Dante the poet has left us a number of hints suggesting Virgil's limitation in recognizing evil. One such suggestion which should stir within us an uneasiness with regard to Virgil's ability to grasp the full depth of evil comes at Inferno XXI. We recognize Dante's suggestion, and appreciate his artistry, when we examine the contrasts between the attitude displayed by Virgil in this canto and those shown by Dante both as pilgrim and as poetic creator of the scene (p. 16).

It has clearly demonstrated the difference between the character of Dante and Virgil. The narration about the character of the guide, Virgil and Dante himself visiting in the hell. Virgil's guidance is limited because he cannot reach up to the goodness in heaven but he has become only the heavenly guide as a Christian principle. This Canto XXI suggest that his guidance has a further limitation and it is also the scene of hell. The story teller reveals even the character Beatrice and the poet has left number of hints suggesting Virgil's limitation even in knowing the evil. The readers recognize Dante's suggestion and appreciate even his artistic quality as a poetic creator of the scene but still the critic does not argue and show the different punishment systems to the characters or the sinners as the research has raised. Fear can function as strongly as Adhikari (www.ijtell.com) has explained the fear generated through the use of the language.

Punishment to the sinners In Manusmriti

The sinners have punished in the Manusmriti and it is the punishment not in the earthly life but in the next life as it has been explained for the various kinds of the sinners' punishment.

Concept of Punishment

The concept of punishment has been well-defined in Manusmriti and its definition is given in stanza 22th of seventh chapter as “The whole world is kept in order by punishment, for a guiltless man is hard to find; through fear of punishment the whole world yields the enjoyment (p. 427).” It has clearly explained that the world cannot remain in order in absence of the punishment system. In this sense the punishment system is nothing more than the law of maintaining the peace and order in the world. This kind of concept is argued in the stanza 18th in seventh chapter of Manusmriti as “Punishment alone governs all created beings, punishment alone protects them, punishment watches over them while they sleep; the wise declare punishment to be identical with the law (p. 426).” It has displayed that punishment is the law of keeping the society in peace and in order and harmony because it is through the punishment system that functions as the rule and law in controlling the sinners from committing the sins in life. It has become useful use of language to create fear to the sinners as Adhikari (2024, <https://doi.org/10.3126/kv.v5i1.70884>) has pointed out the role of linguistic influence in controlling the situation.

Punishment to thieves

The king has the right to punish the thieves mainly by cutting their hands off as it has been written in stanza 276th in ninth chapter “But the king shall cut off the hands of those robbers who, breaking into houses, commit thefts at night, and cause them to be impelled on a pointed stake (p.717).” This stanza has claimed that the king must cut off the hands of the thieves to maintain the peace and security of the people. The punishment system has further been clarified in 280th stanza in ninth chapter as it has been put down “Those who break into a storehouse, an armory, or a temple, and those who steal elephants, horses, or chariots, he shall slay without hesitation (p. 718).” It has shown that the thieves of horses, storehouse, armory and the goods of temple must be killed without any hesitation so that the thieves cannot be found in the society anymore and the society can be made harmonious and prosperous one. The thieves get scared from repeating the same sins as Adhikar (2024) has argued regarding the position of the society.

Punishment to the supporters of thieves

Those who support the thieves must get the punishment equal to the thieves and it means no one must help the thieves in maintaining the peace and order in the society. This kind of punishment system has written in 278th stanza of ninth chapter as it is argued “Those who give fire, food, arms, or shelter to the thieves and receivers of stolen goods, the ruler shall punish like thieves (p. 718).” It has argued that no one must assist the thieves by providing the fire, shelter and arms to the thieves and none must receive any goods from the thieves and if they support the thieves and receive any stolen goods from them, then the supporters to the thieves too must be punished as the thieves are punished because they are not different from the thieves. Fear to the thieves has generated by the principle as Adhikari (DOI: <http://doi.org/10.25058/179400x.1709>) has argued the fear felt by the individuals while converting the religion from one to another one and dwelling in the same society.

Punishment to anyone

Punishment system has not been confined only to those who are not relatives but to anyone whatever the relations it can be if they are guilty for punishment. This kind of idea has been claimed in 335th stanza in ninth chapter as it has written “Neither a father, nor a teacher, nor a

friend, nor a mother, nor a wife, nor a son, nor a domestic priest must be left unpunished by a king, if they do not keep within their duty (p.600).” This stanza has focused to all to be in their proper duty and in their responsibility and if they violate their assigned duty, then it does not distinguish anyone from the point of punishment and either the father or teacher or friend or whatever and whoever they are, they are deserved to be punished for their guilt. Punishment to anyone gives the similar concept as Adhikari (2024, <https://doi.org/10.3126/taj.v3i1.71972>) has discussed regarding the security of the elderly people in making the sinners to escape committing the sins in the society.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above analysis, it has been explored that the punishment system to the sinners has been found to be similar both in *Inferno* and in *Manusmriti* for the generation of fear to the sinners to be aware of not committing the sins in their earthly lives. The punishment to the sinners in *Inferno* is mainly focused to various types of the sinners including the politicians and it has been found as the punishment of the rebirth due to their karma of earthly lives. However, the differences in the punishment system in both texts is that *Manusmriti* has focused about the thieves and it has not given the principle of the punishment of the rebirth as it has been found in *Inferno*. Both of the texts have turned out that the consequences punishment to the sinners have been validated as the source of generating fear in the mindsets of the people to avoid committing sins and crimes so as to form the ideal society and the fear has acted as the law of the laws. The Christianity has become apt to lead the life of holiness in *Inferno* and the Karma theory has been found analogue to *Manusmriti*. The God-fearing concept has aptly functioned as one of the principles of leading the better path of life so as to escape any kinds of punishment in the next life after the earthly life.

Further research

Comparative research of *Manusmriti* as Hindu law and *Inferno* as the law of Christianity

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