

American Dante Bibliography for 1953

Anthony Pellegrini

This bibliography is intended to cover Dante translations published in this country in 1953, and all Dante studies published in 1953 that are in any sense American. The bibliography is in the main the work of Dr. A. L. Pellegrini; but the analyses signed V.L. were prepared by Professor Vincent Luciani for the periodic "Bibliography of Italian Studies in America" which he publishes in *Italica*, and are here reprinted with his kind permission and with that of the Editor of *Italica*, Professor J. G. Fucilla.

Translations

Alighieri, Dante. *La Divina Commedia*. Translation by **H. M. Ayres**. Vol. II, *Purgatorio*, and Vol. III, *Paradiso*. New York: Vanni, 1953.

Reproduces the Società Dantesca text as revised by Vandelli, and has, on opposite pages, a prose translation, without notes, which strives to be true in spirit to the original. Vol. I, *Inferno*, appeared in 1949.

Alighieri, Dante. *Purgatory*. Translated and edited by **Thomas G. Bergin**. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953.

Done in English blank verse, except for occasional passages merely summarized in prose. Edited with explicatory footnotes and provided with a brief general introduction, a list of significant dates of Dante's life, and a diagram of Purgatory. References to *Inferno* are to Bergin's translation, published in 1948, in the same series ("Crofts Classics").

Alighieri, Dante. *Canzone* ("Io son venuto al punto de la rota"). Translated by **Harry Duncan**. *Hudson Review*, VI (1953), 540-543.

The verse translation, facing the Italian text on opposite pages, follows approximately the same rhyme scheme as the original.

Studies

Erich Auerbach. "Epilegomena zu Mimesis." *Romanische Forschungen*, LXV (1953): 1-18.

Contains a discussion (pp. 7-8) of Dante's concept of "comedy," its close kinship to Uguccione's, and its ultimate source in Theophrastus.

Erich Auerbach. *Mimesis: the Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Translated from the German by **W. R. Trask**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953.

Contains a chapter on “Farinata and Cavalcante,” pre-printed in Trask’s translation in *Kenyon Review*, XIV (1952), 207-242, illustrating these points: (1) Dante employed stylistic devices not achieved by any previous vernacular writers; (2) despite inclusion of low elements, the style of the *Comedy* is an elevated one based on sustained *gravitas* and integration of individual cases, however mean, with lofty divine judgment; (3) through Dante’s wonderful realism, the earthly instances in the *Comedy* often surpass in effect their intended figural significance. The original German edition of *Mimesis*, published in 1946, has been extensively reviewed.

Erich Auerbach. *Typologische Motive in der mittelalterlichen Literatur*. Krefeld: Scherpe Verlag, 1953. (Schriften und Vorträge des Petrarca-Instituts Köln, 2.)

Discusses the exegetical method of figurism and typology—as distinct from ordinary symbolism and allegory—of biblical tradition and shows its possibilities of application, among other things, to many otherwise difficult points in Dante’s *Commedia*, e.g., Rahab (*Paradiso*, IX, 109-126), Cato (*Purgatorio*, I-II), *letargo* (*Paradiso*, XXXIII, 94-96). Reviewed by Erich Loos in *Romanische Forschungen*, LXVI, 201-202. A shorter English version of Auerbach’s study has appeared as “Typological Symbolism in Medieval Literature” in *Yale French Studies*, No. 9 (Spring, 1952), 3-10.

William Blake. *Blake’s Illustrations for Dante: Selections from the Originals in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia and the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts (Fogg Picture Book No. 2)*. Harvard University Printing Office, 1953.

A pamphlet containing plates of twenty of Blake’s drawings for the *Divine Comedy*, with an Introduction by Helen M. Willard, a short list of reference books for further study of Blake, and translations by C. S. Singleton facing the plates.

G. A. Borgese. “Dante and his Time.” *Diogenes*, No. 4 (Autumn, 1953): 1-16.

A general but substantial discussion of the major aspects of Dante’s life, thought, and masterpiece in relation to his time. The author notes that this is an excerpt of a longer essay to be published in 1954 as an introduction to an edition of the *Divine Comedy* (Henry Regnery Company) and in Italian translation in a volume of essays by Borgese (Mondadori). (There seems to be no record of its appearance in 1954 in either version. Borgese died in 1952.)

G. A. Borgese. “Della critica dantesca.” *Acme*, Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell’Università di Milano, VI (1953): 15-76.

Italian translation (by Giulio Vallese) of Borgese’s study, “On Dante Criticism,” originally published in *52nd-54th Annual Reports of the Dante Society*, 1936, pp. 19-70. (For reviews, see below.)

C. M. Bowra. “Dante and Sordello.” *Comparative Literature*, V (1953): 1-15.

Contends that Dante so admired Sordello’s political convictions that for his famous

outburst on Italy (*Purgatory*, VI) he followed, with variations, the principles of government expressed in *L'Ensegnamen d'Onor* and that in his denunciation of negligent rulers (*Purgatory*, VII), he expanded upon the ideas contained in Sordello's *planh* on the death of Blacatz. [V.L.]

Irma Brandeis. "On Reading Dante Whole." *Hudson Review*, VI (1953): 404-412.

Contends, in opposition to Croce's thesis, that the lyrical episodes of the *Divine Comedy*, far from being pauses in the great themes of the poem, contain an essential revelation in dramatic form of the nature of some particular moral condition and carry forward the work of the whole poem as cogently as do the revelations by argument, by dream or by sacramental vision. The author analyzes as an example the canto of Farinata, who maintains in the other world the spirit of faction and thus fails to see humanity whole. [V.L.]

Amerindo Camilli. "L'anno della visione dantesca." *Italica*, XXX (1953): 44.

In answer to his critics, who refer to 1301 as the year of the Vision, Camilli discusses the method of counting and insists that Dante, starting with the year 1 for the birth of Christ, must have accepted A. D. 1300 as His 1300th year and A. D. 34 as His 34th year.

Guido Capponi: "La Fortuna di Dante attraverso le riviste del periodo coloniale americano." *Studi Danteschi*, XXXI, Fasc. 2 (1953): 81-119.

Finds, from an examination of American periodicals from 1745 to 1830, that early America's attitude towards things Italian was generally unfavorable, that it was acquired from British writings and reinforced by Puritan anti-Catholicism, and that the unfavorable attitude endured in varying degree even after English opinion improved and American travelers were beginning to have first-hand contact with Italy. It is only after 1800 that there arose a significant interest in Dante as well as in Italian literature in general. This developing interest became the exclusive province of the intellectuals.

Ernst R. Curtius. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. Translated from the German by **Willard R. Trask**. New York: Pantheon Books, 1953. (Bollingen Series, 36.)

Contains one long chapter and sections of three others on Dante, as well as references to him *passim* throughout. Within the book's larger thesis, Dante is related to the vast body of European culture consisting of the works of the Latin Middle Ages and of the works of Antiquity as then seen. Discussing numerous Dante topics and problems, e.g., Dante's attitude toward poetry, his use of exemplary persons, his book metaphor, number symbolism, Beatrice, etc., Curtius indicates that the roots of the *Divine Comedy* lie in that cultural complex, and he therefore urges more concentrated and methodical investigation in this direction. The original German edition of Curtius' book, published in 1948, has been extensively reviewed.

Francis Fergusson. *Dante's Drama of the Mind: a Modern Reading of the Purgatorio*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953.

Considers the *Purgatorio* a self-subsistent unit, the *Comedy's* center and transitional

canticle, where Dante's own spirit is observable at work, along a line of emerging spiritual movements dramatically conceived and presented. Dante-Pilgrim and Dante-Author are differentiated and a gradually diminishing distance between them is traced, until they finally merge where Dante is named by Beatrice. The highly interpretive study primarily examines the Pilgrim's spiritual growth in its four-fold pattern of increasing awareness, corresponding to the four days of the purgatorial journey: (1) the first *moto spiritale* is lyrical, in the earth-like setting of the *Antepurgatorio*; (2) the second involves the soul's awakening to self-knowledge through moral, then intellectual, effort, according to Virgil's *lumen naturale*; (3) the third exhibits the soul's continuing urge to transcend mortality; (4) the fourth constitutes direct obedience to what is perceived in the Earthly Paradise, where innocence is regained. The line of development is related, furthermore, to the gradually changing aspect of Virgil's role till his ultimate inadequacy yields to Statius' assistance; to corresponding stages of development in Dante's own life; to the *itinerarium mentis in Deum*; to the four-fold system of theological allegory. Contains a separate section of notes, designed to suggest key reading on special matters mentioned. Reviewed by T. G. Bergin in *Yale Review*, XLIII, 150-151; by Northrop Frye in *Hudson Review*, VI, 442-449; by W. F. Lynch in *Thought*, XXVIII, 459-462; by W. M. Miller in *Modern Language Journal*, XXXVII, 318-319; and by Howard Nemerov in *Sewanee Review*, LXI, 500-506.

R. W. Frank Jr. "The Art of Reading Medieval Personification-Allegory." *ELH*, XX (1953): 237-250.

Distinguishes between 'symbol-allegory' and 'personification-allegory', and proceeds to focus on the second type as exemplified in *Piers Plowman*, while using the *Divine Comedy* as a contrasting example of the first. The author warns, moreover, against assuming a *fourfold* scheme of allegory in medieval works; its use, even by Dante, is yet to be proved.

J. G. Fucilla. *Studies and Notes (Literary and Historical)*. Naples and Rome: Istituto Editoriale del Mezzogiorno, 1953.

Contains four Dante studies. (1) "Dante Lands in America," originally published in *Italica*, XXVII (1950), 208-210, notes the first recorded mention of Dante by a colonial American, in a work by John Cotton published in 1642. (2) "The First American Fragment of a Translation of the Divine Comedy Printed in America," originally published in *Italica*, XXV (1948), 9-11, nullifies the author's previous claim in *Italica*, VIII (1931), 40-41, and cites *Paradiso*, XXIV, 101-102, as quoted and translated in a 1679 almanac by John Clapp: this is also perhaps the first American appearance of Italian in print. (3) "An Early American Translation of the Count Ugolino Episode," originally published in *Modern Language Quarterly*, XI (1950), 480-485, gives the unpublished text of Richard Alsop's prose translation (before 1797?) and reviews early instances of Dante in English generally. (4) "Another Early Fragment of a Translation from the Divine Comedy," adapted from its original form in *Italica*, VIII (1931), 40-41, quotes from the 1791 volume of *New York Magazine* William Dunlap's English version in heroic verse of 34 lines from Ugolino's story.

G. B. Ladner. "The History of Ideas in the Christian Middle Ages from the Fathers to Dante in American and Canadian Publications of the Years 1940-1952." *Traditio*, IX (1953): 439-514.

A highly classified bibliographical survey with brief analyses and general comments, containing many items on or related to Dante.

Ulrich Leo. "Luzifer und Christus." In *Benedetto Croce*, a cura di **Francesco Flora**. Milan: Malfasi, 1953), 419-434. (This is a special number of *Letterature Moderne* dedicated to Croce.)

Considers Dante's creation of a weeping Satan less a monument of evil than an object of compassion, since his tears identify him as a fellow-sufferer with the other denizens of Hell. Also, arguing from—among other things—the suggestive parallelism between "ecco Dite" (*Inferno*, XXXIV, 20) and Pilate's "ecce homo," the author submits that Satan is conceived as a parody of Christ, as well as of the Trinity. He closes with a comparison between Dante's Satan and Tasso's Plutone.

Jacques Maritain. *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*: The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington. New York: Pantheon Books, 1953. (Bollingen Series, XXXV-1.)

In the final chapter the author claims for the *Commedia* the superiority of what he conceived to be the three epiphanies of creative intuition, viz., poetic essence or inner melody, action and theme, and number or harmonic structure, which are correlated with the three components of beauty: clarity or radiance, integrity, and consonance, respectively. He stresses especially Dante's creative innocence, in the sense of naivete and integrity, as the major aspect of his genius, and Dante's luck—a product of the coincidence of God's grace, the poet's virtues as a man, his cultural heritage, the uniqueness of the historical moment, and the fact that, since medieval poetry, while fully developed, was not yet differentiated into separate forms, the *Commedia*, uniquely, succeeded in being Song, Drama, and Novel with the same intense reality and in a substantial unity. The section on "Dante's Innocence and Luck" was preprinted in *Kenyon Review*, XIV (1952), 301-323. *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* has appeared, minus the pictorial illustrations, most of the quoted texts, and many footnotes found in the original, in a paper-back edition (New York, Noonday Press, 1955: "Meridian Books," M 8).

The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. *Italian Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Memorial Library. Descriptive Survey of the Principal Illuminated Manuscripts of the Sixth to Sixteenth Centuries, with a Selection of Important Letters and Documents.* Catalogue compiled by **Meta Harrsen** and **George K. Boyce**. With an introduction by **Bernard Berenson**. New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, 1953.

Lists three manuscripts of the *Divina Commedia* from the first half and the end of the fourteenth and the early fifteenth centuries. Three black-and-white plates reproduce three illuminated pages from the first two manuscripts.

Sister Maura. "Dante." In *Dalhousie Review*, XXXIII (1953): 201-206.

A sympathetic *profilo* of Dante, remarks about his life and works, with comments upon similarities between the *Commedia* and the Gaelic visions and voyages. V.L.

Leonardo Olschki. *Dante, "poeta veltro."* Florence: Olschki, 1953.

Elaborates his earlier *The Myth of Felt* (University of California Press, 1949), interpreting the *veltro's* birth (*nazione*) as occurring under Gemini, the felt-capped Dioscuri (*tra feltro e feltro*), but now revises his reading of *veltro* from "a wise, human and powerful leader" to a moral guide, one divinely endowed with grace, wisdom and virtue, a *poeta*—actually Dante himself. His *Comedy* would fulfill the mission of driving away vice and restoring justice to the world, as preparation for the proper re-establishment of imperial and papal authority. An appendix, reproducing a lecture by Olschki published in *Nuova Antologia*, CDLV (1952), 386-398, condenses material and conclusions of the above works. Also included are five iconographical plates.

Leonardo Olschki. *L'Italia e il suo genio.* Translated from the English by **Laurana Palombi** and **Marisa Bulgheroni**. 2 vols. ("Biblioteca Contemporanea Mondadori," 1.) Milan: Mondadori, 1953.

Italian version of the author's *The Genius of Italy*.

A. L. Pellegrini. "The *Commiato* of Dante's Sestina." *Modern Language Notes*, LXVIII (1953): 29-30.

Reinterprets *un bel verde* as "lovely foliage" and *uom pietra* as a "stone-man"—an explanation believed to be more in keeping with the rest of Dante's sestina and to satisfy the larger context of the *rime petrose* in general. V.L.

P. G. Ricci. "Bibliografia dantesca del 1951." In *Studi Danteschi*, XXXI, Fasc. 2 (1953): 121-153.

Includes critical notices of varying length of many American Dante studies.

A. S. Roe. *Blake's Illustrations to the Divine Comedy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953.

A thorough and penetrating study of Blake's magnificent drawings for the *Divine Comedy*, which were made in the years 1824-1827. Five introductory chapters consider (1) the history of the drawings, and of the engravings that Blake made from a few of them; (2) Blake's symbolism; (3) Blake and Dante; (4) unity of theme in the drawings; and (5) stylistic matters. The main part of the text is a detailed commentary on the 102 drawings, which are examined one by one with reference not only to their illustrative qualities but also with reference to their expression of Blake's ever-dominant symbolic philosophy of life. All the 102 drawings (and three others) are reproduced in the final series of plates. E.H.W.

M. M. Rossi. "Dante's Conception of Ulysses." *Italica*, XXX (1953): 193-202.

Offers internal evidence against construing Ulysses' harangue as part of the fraud for which he is punished. Rather, Ulysses' tragic voyage was not a *moral*, but a *natural*

transgression of exceeding the limits of knowledge set for the pre-Christian world: he could not reach Mount Purgatory before Redemption. Anent sources, Rossi argues that Dante, not knowing Homer, may have been inspired by some medieval version of Ulysses' end and very probably followed Cicero's favorable opinion (*De officiis*, III, 26). Also interpreted are the circumstance that Virgil, not Dante, speaks to Ulysses; the meaning of *latino* and *perduto*; the abruptness of Ulysses' narration; and the implied chronology of Ulysses' end.

George Santayana. *Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius, Dante, Goethe.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953.

Contains Santayana's famous essay on Dante. (*Three Philosophical Poets* was originally published in 1910 by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.)

Sister Xavier Schuster. "Mary's Place in Dante's *Purgatorio*." In *American Benedictine Review*, IV (Summer 1953), 135-138.

Reviews instances of the omnipresence of Mary in the *Purgatorio*, whom Dante seeks to keep as an example before the souls on their way to God.

C. S. Singleton. "End of a Poem." *Hudson Review*, VI (1953): 529-539.

Insists that there are two Dantes in the *Commedia*: (1) the figure of the wayfarer in the realms beyond, a bearer of past time, and (2) the figure of the poet returned from the journey, a bearer of present time. The two figures merge in the last canto of the *Paradiso* in a continuous shifting movement from present back to past, in a strategy resolving the whole structure of the poem. V.L. (For a review, see below.)

Allen Tate. *The Forlorn Demon: Didactic and Critical Essays.* Chicago: Regnery, 1953.

Contains a chapter on "The Symbolic Imagination: the Mirrors of Dante" (pp. 32-55), originally published in *Kenyon Review* and reprinted in another collection of the author's essays, *The Man of Letters in the Modern World.* (See 74th Report, 55-56.)

Allen Tate. "The Self-Made Angel." *New Republic*, CXXIX.V (31 August 1953): 17 and 21.

Discusses the relation of art to human conduct through a comparison of a *terzina* from Dante's *Commedia (Paradiso, III, 85-87)* with a stanza from Hart Crane's "The Wine Menagerie."

Domenico Vittorini. "Luci ed ombre nella 'Vita nuova.'" *Letterature moderne*, IV (1953): 518-523.

Considers the *Vita nuova's* three planes of reality: (1) Dante's actual emotional experiences; (2) the poems reflecting them; (3) Dante's later prose reflections upon them. Vittorini urges reading the poems independently; for the prose is mere "shadow" contrived to force the poems into an entirely Beatrice-oriented scheme. Traces of other loves remain and

many poems still flash with the sincere lyricism of their original inspiration.

Edward Williamson. "Dante's *Divine Comedy*." *Literary Masterpieces of the Western World*, edited by **F. H. Horn**. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1953, 89-106.

Gives a succinct general outline of the *Comedy*, noting in particular, with occasional key citations from De Sanctis: Virgil's influence, the distinction between the protagonists Dante and Virgil and their historical counterparts, the importance and role in the poem of allegory, reason, justice, poetry and symbolism. The chapter closes with a brief note on Dante's life.

Reviews

G. A. Borgese. "Della critica dantesca." *Acme*, Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Milano, VI (1953): 15-76. Reviewed by:

Giulio Vallese, *Delta* (Naples), N. S., No. 4 (1953): 74.

Irma Brandeis. "On Reading Dante Whole." *Hudson Review*, VI (1953): 404-412. Reviewed by:

Giulio Vallese, *Delta* (Naples), N. S., No. 4 (1953): 72-73.

Francis Fergusson. *Dante's Drama of the Mind: a Modern Reading of the Purgatorio*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953. Reviewed by:

Giulio Varese, *Delta*, N. S., No.5 (1953): 68-76.

C. S. Singleton. "End of a Poem." *Hudson Review*, VI (1953): 529-539. Reviewed by:

Giulio Vallese, *Delta* (Naples), N. S., No. 4 (1953): 73-74.

Aldo Vallone. *La "cortesia" dai provenzali a Dante*. Palermo: Palumbo, 1950. Reviewed by:

Charles Speroni, *Italica*, XXX (1953): 175-176.

E. H. Wilkins. "Reminiscence and Anticipation in the *Divine Comedy*." *55th-67th Annual Reports of the Dante Society* (1951), 1-13. Reviewed by:

C. F., *Studi Danteschi*, XXXII, Fasc. 1 (1953): 173-174.