American Dante Bibliography for 1960

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This bibliography is intended to include the Dante translations published in this country in 1960, and all Dante studies and reviews published in 1960 that are in any sense American.

Translations


A new, paperback edition of Longfellow’s well-known version in blank verse, originally published in 1865 (followed by *Purgatorio* in 1866 and the *Paradiso* in 1867) and subsequently issued in several complete editions of the *Comedy* by various publishers. The translation is followed by Longfellow’s own “Notes to the Inferno,” pp. 143-318.


The introduction, somewhat revised, and the text of the translation are here reprinted from *Harvard Library Bulletin*, XI (See 76th Report, 40). There are extensive sections of “Notes for the Introduction” and “Notes for the Translations.”


Reprinted, with the Italian text and Rossetti’s versions, from *Kenyon Review* XVIII, along with the original accompanying essay. (See 75th Report, 20 and 22, and see below, under Studies.)

Studies


Contains a review article, “Dante and Beatrice” (pp. 84-91), which censures the romanticizing of Dante’s relation to Beatrice. While claiming fact to be the basis of art, Arnold nevertheless argues for the artist’s freedom in the use of fact. The *Vita Nuova*, a work of art
based on a slight biographical element, is a case in point. This piece was originally published in *Fraser’s Magazine*, LXVII (1863).

**Erich Auerbach.** *Lingua letteraria e pubblico nella tarda antichità latina e nel medioevo.* Milan: Feltrinelli, 1960.

Italian version of the original edition in German, published in 1958.

**D. C. Baker.** “Recent Interpretations of Chaucer’s *Hous of Fame* and a New Suggestion.” *University of Mississippi Studies in English*, I (1960): 97-104.

Includes reference to Boethius and Dante, who “dominate the imagery, allusion, and thought of the poem,” as they serve to support Chaucer’s contrasting the notions of the poet as liar, misleader, tempter (according to Platonic-Boethian tradition) and as guide, leader, prophet (Aristotelian-Dantean view). The tension remained irreconcilable for Chaucer in the *Hous of Fame*.


Paperback re-printing of the original hard-cover edition published in 1954. (See 73rd and 74th Reports)


Documents Byron’s powerful attraction to, indeed self-identity with, Dante’s Francesca story in his works, correspondence, and even his personal life, in which the story is poignantly and repeatedly reflected.


Contains an essay, “Dolcissimi affanni” (pp. 55-99), on Dante and Petrarch, their artistic and historical relationship, with further reference to the modern artist: “abbiamo da un lato la tecnica dell’immagine imposto al verbo poetico, dall’altro il verbo poetico imposto sull’immagine.” The author emphasizes that Dante’s attention is focused on the concrete, that his poetry seeks the representation of a sensible reality.


An organic study to guide the general reader, based on the persuasion that Dante’s *Commedia* is of continuing moral value and that the work, contrary to the Crocean view, is “poem . . . integrated poem . . . whole poem, without any dissidence between structure and other elements.” The author elaborates her interpretation, with a representative sampling of the whole poem, in six essays preceded by an introduction: (1) Substance and Idea; (2) The Image of Sin in
Action; (3) Four Images of Fraternal Love (4) Beatrice; (5) Aspects of Minor Imagery; and (6) The Ladder of Vision. A bibliography completes the volume. Portions of Chapters 2 and 5 have previously appeared in Hudson Review as “On Reading Dante Whole” (See 68th to 72nd Reports, 44) and “Metaphor in The Divine Comedy” (See 73th Report, 21), respectively. (For reviews, see below.)


A brief account of Dante studies in America, past and present and of the Dantean influence on such American writers as Melville, T. S. Eliot, and Robert Lowell.


Studies Paradiso XVIII-XX as a unity and contends that the M stands for Maria and the eagle, for a figure of Christ or for some of His officia particularia.


Examines in the Decir a las siete virtudes, of Dantean imitation, the many references vividly portraying an idealized conception of Dante as the poet’s guide and sees in this tribute to Dante a significant contribution to the development of literary appreciation, technique, and character creation and thus one of the earliest expressions of the Renaissance spirit in Spanish literature.


Adds to the parallels mentioned in W. A. Strauss, “Dante’s Belacqua and Beckett’s Tramps,” in Comparative Literature, XI (See 78th Report, 36), many further instances of Beckett’s indebtedness to Dante’s Belacqua figure and relates the Beckett-Belacqua-Sordello inactivity to Geulincx’ pronouncement, “Ubi nihil vales, ibi nihil velis.”


Notes the identical image patterns in Longfellow’s sonnets, “The Cross of Snow,” commemorating the death of his wife eighteen years before, and the much earlier “Divina Commedia IV,” and goes on to trace the poet’s vital and constant relationship to Dante as a stimulus to discovering his own poetic identity.


Rebuts Mr. Weismantel’s article, cited below, and re-emphasizes the purpose and utility of land use models in city-planning.

Contains discussions of Dante in the context of the chapters on “Church and State in the Middle Ages” and “The Literary Development of Medieval Culture,” as well as references to Dante *passim*. Professor Dawson’s *Medieval Essays* was first published in 1953 (London and New York, Sheed and Ward).


The discourse is a poem in free verse “upon the psalms and hymns found in the *Divine Comedy* of Dante Alighieri in view of his [Benedict’s] words to the poet concerning *The Rule*.”


Discusses the current state of Dante studies in America, with specific reference to the more prominent scholars in the field.


Reprint of De Sanctis’ classic from the original American edition in 1931 (New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company). The important pages on Dante are contained in the following chapters: “Dante’s Lyrics” (pp. 62-77), “The Trecento” (pp. 118-157), and “The Divine Comedy” (pp. 158-263). Indexed.


Contains a section on Dante. (See 75th Report, 21.)


Contains Eliot’s well-known essay on “Dante” in which he stressed the importance of reading individual episodes of the *Comedy* in the context of the whole poem. *The Sacred Wood* was first published in 1920 (London, Methuen).


Points out that Conrad patterned “Heart of Darkness” on the theme of descent into Hell
which he borrowed from Dante and Virgil. This piece is reprinted from *Modern Fiction Studies*, II (See 77th Report).


Contains the author’s essay, with translation of Al poco giorno e al gran cerchio d’ombra, entitled “Dante: Green Thoughts in a Green Shade—Reflections on the Stony Sestina of Dante Alighieri” (pp. 21-43), previously published in *Kenyon Review*, XVIII. (See 75th Report, 20 and 22, and see above, under Translations.)


A brief but useful guide, consisting of an explanatory Introduction; A Biographical Dictionary of Personages in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, arranged by cantos; an Index to Personages; three large, folded Tables, one for each canticle, charting, canto by canto, the manifold structure of the poem according to time, place, custodian, personages, etc.; and a large composite Graphic Chart, outlining the physico-spiritual structure of Dante’s universe.


Contends that Dante, in *Inferno* III, 37-39, departed from medieval theological tradition by suggesting a third alternative open to angelic choice, and examines certain complexities attending such a suggestion. First, Professor Freccero establishes the meaning “were by themselves” for per se fuoro, thus better distinguishing the per se angels from the ribelli in general, as well as the fedeli. He goes on to seek a key to Dante’s conception in Fulgentius’ and the pseudo-Alexander’s analyses of angelic choice. Scholastic thought defined sin as a combination of aversion from God and an act of rebellion. The per se angels averted, but unlike the ribelli did not confirm their choice by a rebellious action; they thus stand eternally isolated not only from Heaven, but also from specific classification among the rest of the damned.


Modifying the usual interpretation somewhat, Professor Freccero reads this passage thus: the laws exist, without someone to enforce them, since the Church, by very nature unable to lead in the temporal order, has usurped the emperor’s place and succeeds only in leading its flock into the material temptations to which it is itself subject. What the world needs is a righteous emperor as well as a less worldly pope. The beast of burden, standing for the Church here, is identifiable as the camel used by the exegetes as a figure of duality or duplicity.


Examines, besides the explicit references to Circe in Dante’s *Comedy* (*Inf.* XXVI, 90 ff.,
and *Purg.* XIV, 42), two other figures, the *femina balba* of *Purg.* XIX, 7 ff., and the *bella figlia* of *Par.* XXVII, 136-138, identifying them too as a Circe-Siren combination and Circe, daughter of the Sun, respectively; interprets the Dantean Circe as a personification of the senses which drive men to excessive love of worldly goods; and traces this figure in the *Comedy* to Boethius’ *Consolatio Philosophiae* (IV, pr. iii, 16-21, and IV, m. iii).

**A. L. Kellogg.** “Chaucer’s Self-Portrait and Dante’s.” *Medium Aevum,* XXIX (1960): 119-120.

Notes in the *Sir Thopas* Prologue another instance of Chaucer’s Dantean self-portraits, the source here evidently being *Purgatorio* XIX, 40-53, and points out the artistic effectiveness of Chaucer’s similar use of the dual distinction of himself as omniscient writer and fictive pilgrim.


Contains an essay on “Coleridge’s Divine Comedy.” (See 79th Report, 45.) *The Starlit Dome* was first published in London by the Oxford University Press, 1941.


Pleads strongly for treating the *Commedia as a poem* and charges certain current interpreters with seeking to thrust their own allegorizing schemata upon the work. A number of key questions are discussed, indicating where Dante criticism has erred, for example, the nature of the poem, the problem of sources, the meaning of Beatrice and Virgil. Professor Leo contends that the *Commedia* is not a “dream” (*Traum*), but a “vision,” religiously and philosophically based, to be sure, but essentially a *poetical* vision of transcendental reality; that the Letter to Can Grande supports a dual, not a fourfold, meaning in Dante’s poem, which he sides with Barbi in terming a “symbolist poem” (*symbolische Gedicht*); that Beatrice and Virgil are not allegories, but “poetic figures,” “created of and for poetry,” without prejudice to their historical basis. Against the *Roman de la rose,* deemed the last truly medieval poem by its allegorical design and execution Dante’s *Commedia* is considered a departure from systematic allegory and therefore the first great modern poem.

Contains five chapters and an appendix which, except for Chapter 1, combine portions of studies previously published separately: (1) The Medieval Concept of Hierarchy; (2) The Light Metaphysics Tradition; (3) Light Metaphysics in the Works of Dante; (4) The Analogy of Creation in Dante; (5) Dante and Epicurus: The Making of a Type; (Appendix) The “Sirens” of Purgatorio XXXI, 45. Chapter 1, a new essay, serves as introduction to the rest, which are defined as studies in the models of Dante’s poem—the model of light, the analogical model, and the typological model, by examining a model “which is even more fundamental than these, not only to the Divine Comedy but to the whole of medieval culture, the model of hierarchy.” Indication of the original studies and their places of publication is duly given in the preface. A section of notes and an index complete the volume. (Some of the relevant original studies have been analyzed in 76th Report, 47 and 48, 77th Report, 48, and 78th Report, 32.)


This entire issue of Delta is devoted to a pre-printing of the third part of a general volume being prepared by Professor Montano on Dante’s thought and work. (See 78th Report, 33 and 43.)


With brief analyses.


Contends that Dante’s use of rispito here is a Gallicism for respit—delay, and construes the passage in question as an ironic comparison of nullity, reading: “with the delay with which the little child runs to his mother,” i.e., with no delay, instantly. Professor Pézard goes on to analyze and classify many such comparisons containing varying degrees of irony, gleaned from Dante and others.


Contains a polemical and programmatic essay on “Dante” (pp. 251-269), the original Italian of which appeared in Inventario, VI (1954), 1-10. The author speaks of a “subterranean” Dante that, despite the work of various schools of philology and exegesis, has escaped integration with the scattered culture of today. He sensitively outlines the evolution of Dante’s poetic career and holds up Dante’s poetic of the real, direct, and human, as an example for Italian poets in the present cultural crisis to follow, after their traditional Arcadian escapism.

A severe review-article which seeks to reveal flaws in Curtius’ Dantean studies, contained in his *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, as illustrative of his critical method in general. Professor Rizzo finds Curtius’ main thesis in part unoriginal, in part undemonstrated, and insists that, despite the value of his erudition, Curtius’ overly analytical approach tends, in practice, to obscure the vital synthesis that is the work of art.


Studying the reactions of English romantic poets to Dante, the author finds Dante’s attraction based on five romantic leitmotifs which they discovered in his work, and focusing mainly on Shelley and Byron, concludes: Shelley, while rejecting much of Dante, was deeply influenced by the latter’s style and imagery; Byron, more interested in Dante’s life than his poetry, portrayed him as a Byronic hero; while both reflected Dante’s utopian ideas in their own.


Arguing for a broader “contextual approach,” as against ascriptions *in vacuo*, in the study of sources, Professor Schless examines several cases of purported Dantean parallels in Chaucer to show that such “influences” may, on more comprehensive investigation, prove to be more accurately attributable to the common literary stock of the time.


Contends that an understanding of Melville’s use of Dante’s *Comedy*, particularly the *Inferno* (Cary translation), along with Flaxman’s illustrations, is the key to the structure and meaning of *Pierre*. The “use of Dante and his work takes the form of an expository symbol; that is to say, by direct quotation from or allusion to Dante at crucial moments of narrative and psychological crisis in *Pierre*, Melville foreshadows or resolves the action of the characters and brings into focus the background in which they move.” Six instances of such expository symbolism are examined. In *Pierre*, as with *Mardi* and *Moby-Dick*, there is no overcoming the inspection of evil, because the hero lacks the sanction of Divine Love that bore Dante successfully through the *Inferno*. Four of the Flaxman illustrations are reproduced in line drawings.


A review-article of C. S. Singleton, *Dante Studies 2: Journey to Beatrice* (See 77th *Report*, 52-53, and 78th *Report*, 35), containing a chapter-by-chapter summary of the book, followed by critical comments which especially take to task (1) what are considered excursions too far outside the poem itself, (2) the belaboring of certain points with excessive erudition, and
(3) the blanket ignoring of all previous interpreters of Dante. (For various reviews of Professor Singleton’s book, see 78th Report, 40, and see below, under Reviews.)


Citing Farinelli’s criticism based on the availability of only the first two verses of each canticle of Dante’s Commedia as translated by Díaz, Professor Selig reproduces, from the appendix of a 1541 work, longer extant passages of Díaz’s otherwise lost translation, so that a more adequate judgment may be possible.


Contains substantial discussions of Dante in relation to rose symbolism in a chapter on “The Medieval Heritage,” part of which was previously published as “Dante’s Mystic Rose,” in Studies in Philology, LII (See 74th Report, 53), and in a chapter on “Joyce and Synthesis,” part of which was previously published as “The Artist and the Rose,” in University of Toronto Quarterly, XXVI (See 76th Report, 52). Indexed.


Interpreting the beginning of both the Inferno and the Purgatorio as a scene of conversion, unsuccessful in the first instance, successful in the second, Professor Singleton contends that in both instances the master pattern, according to Dante’s usual method of allegory by evocation, is Exodus, an established figure of conversion in the Middle Ages, which saw in every conversion the basic elements of Exodus: departure from Egypt and crossing of the Red Sea (turning away from sin) and subsequent wandering in the desert wilderness (lingering temptations). The failure of the initial conversion, followed by a descent through Hell, is clarified by the traditional pattern of descent before ascent familiar in Christian doctrine. Imitating God’s polysemous way of writing, Dante has utilized Exodus as the common figura of both Redemption through Christ and the conversion of the soul. That Exodus is the controlling image in the Prologue scene finds confirmation not only in the more explicit conversion scene to which the wayfarer “returns” in Purgatorio 1, but also repeatedly in the whole context, allusive details, and recalls throughout the area of Ante-Purgatory, especially—as signaled by Dante’s addresses to the reader—in the instance of divine aid come to protect the esercito from the serpent (Purg. VIII) and in the wayfarer’s prophetic dream of Ganymede and the eagle, realized by Lucia’s transporting him upward to the Gate of Purgatory (Purg. IX). Thus, only after recognition of his own feebleness, without divine aid, followed by descent in humility on the example of Christ, is the wayfarer, girt with the rush of humility on the shore of Purgatory, prepared to receive the divine aid which will ease his ascent up the mountain directly.

Italian version (by Giulio Vallese) of Professor Singleton’s well-known essay, originally published as “Dante’s Comedy: The Pattern at the Center,” in Romanic Review, XLII (1951), 169-177 and later reprinted in his collection, Dante Studies I. Commedia Elements of Structure (See 73rd Report, 60-61).


Contains three Dantean studies, already previously published: “Speech and Language in Inferno XIII” (See 77th Report, 61); “Farcical Elements in Inferno, c. XXI-XXIII,” in which is examined the intellectual as well as artistic justification for introducing such farce in the poem: the farcical episode, God-willed, God-limited, God-judged, serves to represent the low human type of the entirely God-forsaken; and “The Addresses to the Reader in the Commedia” (See 74th Report, 53). Indication of the original places of publication of these studies is duly given in the table of contents.

**Charlotte Spivack.** “Macbeth and Dante’s Inferno.” North Dakota Quarterly, XXVIII (1960): 50-52.

Observes “the striking continuity of the medieval heritage revealed in Macbeth when the play is read in the light of the Inferno with its absolute moral scheme. Shakespeare here makes extensive use of “the dual Dantesque theme of the equivocal nature of evil and its double-dealing consequences.”


Contends that comparative criticism must take into account the “incommensurability” of Paradise Lost and the Divina Commedia and seeks to determine Milton’s unexpressed ideas on literary genres by examining two analyses of the Commedia by Jacopo Mazzoni, a sixteenth-century contemporary whose writings must have reflected Milton’s own ideas on poetics. The Commedia was, on many counts, considered to belong to the genre of comedy, while Paradise Lost was patently conceived as a heroic poem, in terms of Renaissance neo-Aristotelian poetic theory. This serves to underscore that Milton’s and Dante’s poems are basically incommensurable and should be so recognized, though each in its way is a Doetic treatment of general Christian doctrine.


Contains a discussion of Vergil’s manifold significance for Dante.


Contends that Dante found ready-made in the story of Exodus, as preserved symbolically in the
Easter liturgy, the journey pattern of the Christian life which he needed for modeling the pattern of the *Divine Comedy* as a like journey from “Egypt” to “Jerusalem,” or from slavery to liberty. Father Tucker sketches the story of Exodus literally and symbolically in its three phases: (1) departure of the Israelites from Egypt (slavery and sin) and crossing of the Red Sea (baptism); (2) wanderings in the desert (trial and hardship); and (3) crossing of the Jordan (second baptism) and entry into the Promised Land (salvation). He then shows how Dante’s poetic journey follows closely on this same pattern, from the moment he comes to in the dark wood and passes metaphorically through the perilous waters of the *pelago* to the moment he passes the River Lethe at the top of Purgatory and on to Paradise. Evidence of Dante’s intimate knowledge of the Exodus story, along with its rich spiritual significance, and of his conscious use of the same pattern for the framework of the *Divine Comedy* is found in his references to Exodus in the Letter to Can Grande and in the *Convivio* and in the *Comedy* itself, for example, in the singing of the psalm, *In Exitu Israel*, by the souls arriving at the beginning of the *Purgatorio* and in the allusions to the passage from Egypt to Jerusalem and from slavery to liberty in *Paradiso* XXV and XXXI, respectively.


Examines Melville’s great indebtedness to Dante in *Pierre*, which closely parallels the structure and pattern of action of the *Inferno*. In scene, action, and examples of sin, Saddle Meadows reflects the first five circles of the *Inferno*, while the city likewise reflects the last three circles. Further Dantean parallels and echoes are found in Melville’s language and characters, and in the theme itself of *Pierre*, which constitutes an “anatomy of sin.” But where Melville here sees no resolution in the conflict between moral ideals and the world’s corruption, Dante’s poem leads to Paradise.

**Reviews**


**C. A. Swanson,** *Italica*, XXXVII (1960): 292-293.

**Erich Auerbach.** *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature: Six Essays.* New York: Meridian Books, 1959. Reviewed by:


[Anon.]* Yale Review*, XLIX, No. 2 (1960): x-xii;


**Ulrich Leo.** *Sehen und Wirklichkeit bei Dante, mit einem Nachtrag über das Problem der Literaturgeschichte.* Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1957. Reviewed by:


Bruno Migliorini. *Storia della lingua italiana.* Florence: Sansoni, 1960. (Contains a chapter, pp. 179-194, on Dante’s linguist theories and his practice, especially in the *Divina Commedia*, and references, pp. 299f. and 345ff., to his later linguistic influence.) Reviewed by:


