

The Dante Society Newsletter

Volume 21, Number 2

March 2015

A Letter from the President

As I write, we are already well into the 750th anniversary of Dante's birth, with the attendant intensification of celebratory activities, which are, one supposes, only "umbriferi prefazii" of what is to come in 2021, the 800th anniversary of the poet's death. For the Society itself, this birthday marks the culmination of the process of renewal, if not in fact rebirth, that we have spoken of over the last few years. We got this year off to a wonderful start with Prof. Daniela Boccassini's lecture entitled "Re-envisioning Dante's Mind" at the annual meeting of the MLA in Vancouver. We trust that our members will use the DSA email list to keep us informed of additional events which they have organized or in which they are participating.

By the time this Newsletter reaches you, our new website will have "gone live" and, among other things, it will now be possible to join the Society or renew one's membership electronically (while one may also continue to pay dues "the old-fashioned way" by check!). Please take the occasion not only to renew your own membership, but also to encourage friends, colleagues, and students to consider joining now that the process is so much simpler. You will also notice that our membership categories have been simplified. Where there were six categories, now there are now only four: student, regular, joint, and life. At the same time, we have created the opportunity for you to express your support for the Society and its many activities—including the new Education and Outreach initiative, annual membership meeting, and new annual conference that accompanies it—by making a tax-deductible donation at a level where your means and your enthusiasm find a happy medium of expression.

The coming months will see, among other things, the first annual meeting of the Society ever held outside Cambridge, MA. It will take place Saturday, May 2, at the University of Chicago, and will be immediately followed by the conference on "Dante's Political Theology" organized by Justin Steinberg with substantial support and encouragement from the Society. All members, especially our Midwestern friends, are warmly urged to

join us for this "coming out party." See below for further details.

Soon the 2014 issue of our journal will be delivered to your mailbox, marking the close of Richard Lansing's wildly successful decade-long tenure as editor-in-chief of *Dante Studies*. We eagerly anticipate the appearance this fall of the 2015 issue (volume 133), which, moving away from traditional practice, matches the year of issue with the date on the cover. This will be the first issue with our new publisher, Johns Hopkins University Press, and also the first issue assembled by our new editor-in-chief, Justin Steinberg. Soon, too, we will become affiliated with the Renaissance Society of America and will begin planning regular sessions at its annual conference, just as we already do with the MLA and the International Congress on Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo.

Finally, it is a great pleasure and a signal honor to report that at the fall meeting of the DSA Council, we decided to invite three dantisti of international renown to become Honorary Members, even as we mourned the passing of two other members previously recognized with that distinction: Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi and Jacqueline Risset. All three of those invited have accepted our invitation, so I ask you to join me in welcoming Enrico Fenzi (Independent Scholar), Ruedi Imbach (Emeritus, Sorbonne), and Prue Shaw (Emerita, University College, London). Brief biographies have been circulated previously on our email list and will be posted on our website.

Albert Russell Ascoli
ascoli@berkeley.edu

Annual Meeting, May 2, 2015

The Annual Meeting will be held on the campus of the University of Chicago, Wieboldt Hall 408, from 9-10 a.m. on Saturday, May 2. Following in the same room from 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m., there will be an international conference on "Dante's Political Theology" organized by Justin Steinberg and co-sponsored by the DSA and the University of Chicago. Logistical questions for both events may be directed to Madison Hendren (madison1@uchicago.edu). For general questions, please contact DSA Secretary-Librarian Christian Dupont (dante.society@gmail.org). A list of Chicago hotels is available at: <https://visit.uchicago.edu/accommodations.shtml#Chicago>.

Annual Conference Program

University of Chicago, Wieboldt Hall 408
Saturday, May 2, 2015

10:30 Opening Remarks

Justin Steinberg, University of Chicago

10:45-12:30 "Law, Empire, Exegesis"

Diego Quaglioni, University of Trento:
"Dante's Political Theology: from
Convivio to *Monarchia*"

William Caferro, Vanderbilt University:
"Dante, Riccobaldo and Empire"

Respondent: Julius Kirshner, University
of Chicago

12:30-1:30 Lunch

1:30-3:00 "Divine Governance: Dante's Angels and Devils"

Emanuele Coccia, Centre d'études des
normes Juridiques "Yan Thomas"
EHESS, Paris: "Holy Power: Angelic
Power and Political Order"

Ronald Martinez, Brown University:
"The Dionysian Supremacy: Angelic
Hierarchies and Civic Order in Dante's
Commedia"

Respondent: Armando Maggi,
University of Chicago

3:00-3:10 Break

3:10-4:40 "Spatial Politics of the Afterlife"

Elisa Brilli, University of Toronto:
"Rome: A Political-Theological Matter
at the Beginning of the 14th Century"

Chiara Franceschini, Fondation Maison
des sciences de l'homme, Paris:
"Contested Liminalities: Space and
Suspense in *Inferno* IV"

Respondent: Daisy Delogu, University
of Chicago

4:40-5:00 Break

5:00-6:00 Round Table Discussion and Closing Remarks

See the DSA website for further details.

Spring Elections

Enclosed you will find a ballot of candidates prepared by the Nominating Committee. Please mark your ballot and seal it in the provided ballot envelope. Also enclosed is a proxy for the Annual Meeting. Please return it, together with the ballot envelope, so that it arrives before April 29 to The Dante Society of America, Inc., P.O. Box 600616, Newtonville, MA 02460. The Committee brings forward the following four colleagues as nominees for the two open positions on the Council:

Christiana Purdy Moudarres is Assistant Professor of Italian and Director of Undergraduate Studies, Yale University. She received her Ph.D. in Italian from Yale (2010) and an M.A. in Religion from Yale Divinity School (2012). Her research focuses on Dante, the intersection of faith and science in the Middle Ages, and medieval feminist studies. She has published articles on Dante and the interplay of medieval theology and medicine and is currently completing her first book, *Dante, Poet of the Future: Faith, Science, and the Imminence of the Age to Come*. She has also edited three collections of essays, including *New Worlds and the Italian Renaissance: Contributions to the History of European Intellectual Culture* (Brill, 2012). She has been a Visiting Fellow at UCLA's Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and was recently awarded a Yale Morse Fellowship in the Humanities for 2015-16.

Kristina M. Olson (Ph.D., Columbia University, 2006) is an Assistant Professor of Italian at George Mason University. Her research investigates the intersection of history and literature in the works of medieval and early modern Italian authors. She published her first monograph, *Courtesy Lost: Dante, Boccaccio and the Literature of History*, with the University of Toronto Press (2014). She is currently working on a second book, *Sumptuous Literature: Clothing, Governance and Nostalgia in Dante and Boccaccio*, as well as a second edition of the MLA volume *Approaches to Teaching Dante's Divine Comedy* with Christopher Kleinhenz. Olson has published articles on Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch, and co-edited the anthology *Open City: Seven Writers in Postwar Rome* (Steerforth Press, 1997), with the late William Weaver. She serves as Treasurer of the American Boccaccio Association and co-

organizer of the Italians and Italianists at the International Congress on Medieval Studies.

F. Regina Psaki is the Giustina Family Professor of Italian Language and Literature at the University of Oregon. She publishes on Dante, Boccaccio, and medieval courtly genres, translating chivalric romances from French and Italian: *Il Tristano Riccardiano* (2006), *Le Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole* (1995), and *Le Roman de Silence* (1991). With Gloria Allaire she co-edited *The Arthur of the Italians* (2014), and with Thomas C. Stillinger she co-edited *Boccaccio and Feminist Criticism* (2006). A current project in both French and Italian is "The Traffic in Talk about Women: Misogyny and Philogyny in the Middle Ages," a study of non-fiction writings in praise and blame of women.

Antonio Rossini holds a Laurea in Lettere Classiche from the University of Rome Tor Vergata, an M.A. and Ph.D. in Italian Studies from the University of Toronto, and a post-doctoral Licentiate in Medieval Studies from the Pontifical Institute for Mediaeval Studies of Toronto. He teaches Italian language, culture, cinema, and literature courses at the University of Windsor in Windsor, Ontario. He has also taught at McMaster University and the University of Toronto. He specializes in Dante Studies and in particular the relationship between the *Divine Comedy*, the Bible, and classical Latin poetry. He has published extensively in both Italian and Canadian journals. His third book, *Trinità e Comunione in Dante*, came out in January 2013 in the series *Quaderni della Rivista di Cultura Classica e Medievale*.

Essay Prizes

The deadline for submissions for the 2015 Dante Prize and the Charles Hall Grandgent Award is June 30, 2015. The Dante Prize of \$500 is offered for the best essay submitted by an undergraduate enrolled in any college or university in the USA or Canada, or by anyone not enrolled as a graduate student who has received an undergraduate degree from a college or university in the USA or Canada within the past year. The Grandgent Award of \$750 is offered for the best essay submitted by a student enrolled in any graduate program in the USA or Canada. Submission details are available on the DSA website.

Correction: Andrea Acosta received an honorable mention for her submission to last year's Dante Prize.

Council Members, 2014-15

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Kristina Olson, *George Mason University*

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THE DANTE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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