

Dante Society Newsletter

Volume 11, Number 1

November 2004

Spring Election Results

Last spring Simon Gilson and Jan Ziolkowski were elected to the Council for 2004-2007. Todd Boli was elected to the office of Secretary-Treasurer for a one-year term. In May, Nancy Vickers was elected Vice President of the Society by the Council, for a term of one year.

The Winter Meeting of the Dante Society

The Dante Society will meet in conjunction with the 2004 MLA Convention in Philadelphia, on Tuesday, December 28, from 8:30 to 9:45 a.m., in Commonwealth Hall B of the Loews Philadelphia Hotel. **Wai Chee Dimock**, Yale University, will speak on the topic "Planetary Dante." Giuseppe Mazzotta will preside. Everyone participating in the MLA Convention is invited to attend.

DSA Annual Meeting

We will hold our Annual Meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on Saturday, May 21, 2005. **Regina Psaki** (University of Oregon) will speak on "Asceticism and its Discontents: Dante and the Contemptus Mundi Tradition." Further information will follow in the spring Newsletter.

Society to Honor Robert Hollander

At next May's Annual Meeting, the Dante Society of America will honor Professor Robert Hollander for his outstanding contributions both as a scholar and as past President of the Society. A medal and a gold florin will be presented to Professor Hollander in recognition of his many achievements. The Society warmly invites all members to attend this important ceremony.

Essay Prize Winners for 2004

The Dante Prize for the best undergraduate essay was awarded to **Benjamin F. Johnson** of Brigham Young University, "*Rekindling Dante's Carboni Spenti: Vindicating Virgil to Preserve an Empire.*" The Grandgent Award for the best essay by a graduate student went to **Robert Di Pede** of Seton Hall University, "*The Sensual Pilgrim, Transfiguration and the World: The Poetics of Society in the Dantean Vision of Love.*" Alessandro Vettori (chair) and Brenda Schildgen served as Prize Committee readers.

We invited this year's prize winners to share with our members some information about themselves. Mr. Di Pede, this year's winner of the Grandgent Prize, responded as follows.

"I am honored to have been selected for the Charles Hall Grandgent Award and receive the distinction with a profound sense of gratitude to the numerous Dantisti who have helped me better to understand and love 'il gran poeta.'

"I am completing my MA in English at Seton Hall University. My undergraduate studies were undertaken in Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto (Class of 2001) where I first read Dante under the inspiring tutelage

of Prof. Antonio Franceschetti (Dept. of Italian). The present essay came into being under the guidance and encouragement of yet another medievalist, Dr. Angel Weisl (Seton Hall University), in her course 'Studies in Medieval Literature and Culture: Reading Medieval Bodies.' It is, however, to my grandmother Ninetta, from Lucca, that I am most indebted for teaching me Italian (Toscanaccio) and the culture – our culture – that continues to resonate with Dante's influence.

"Thank you again for the honor and rest assured of my continued interest in Dante."

Capital Campaign Update

The Dante Society's first fundraising campaign is underway. Campaign Co-Chairs Teodolina Barolini, Joan Ferrante and Nancy Vickers report a gratifying number of generous and enthusiastic responses to their recent appeal for the cause.

As the nation's oldest professional literary association, the Society has evolved from the intimate group assembled by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in the 1860s to a twenty-first century international organization that advances and promotes Dante studies worldwide. As the Society's mission has evolved, so have its needs. Its membership is widely dispersed, and it has turned to the World Wide Web for communication and publication, in addition to publishing in traditional ways. It is also currently piloting a web-based image archive, which has made ever more compelling the need for a modest, technology-based infrastructure.

The Council of the Dante Society has planned and initiated this campaign to raise \$120,000, which would bring the Society's total endowment within the range of \$200,000. Income from this endowment would provide \$10,000 annually to the operating budget and would cover the costs of the clerical and technical support essential to the Society's twenty-first century identity and goals.

The Campaign extends over the next three years, during which time members will receive periodic solicitations. To inspire potential contributors, the Campaign Co-Chairs will match all gifts, adding a fourth dollar for every three dollars donated, up to thirty thousand dollars. ***Please remember that because the Dante Society of America is a non-profit charitable organization, your gift is fully tax deductible.*** If you have questions, want to consider a multi-year pledge, or would like to discuss a major gift, please contact: Teodolinda Barolini (tb27@columbia.edu, 212-854-2308); Joan Ferrante (jmf2@columbia.edu, 212-854-6415); or Nancy Vickers (nvickers@brynmaur.edu, 610-526-5156).

DSA Joins the Million Book Project

The Dante Society of America has joined the Million Book Project by granting to Carnegie Mellon University a non-exclusive license to offer in digitized format on the World Wide Web all titles published by the Society fifteen or more years ago.

The Million Book Project aims at creating a universally accessible multi-lingual library of at least one million books by 2007. To date, the Project's focus has been on university presses and scholarly associations. In exchange for its license, our Society receives without cost to us preservation-quality copies of our digitized books (chiefly past volumes of *Dante Studies*) and the associated metadata. In addition, we gain opportunities for generating revenue by participating in the Project's Print-on-Demand service. The DSA further retains the right to withdraw titles from Web-site availability at any time.

The Dante Society looks forward to benefiting from the technology offered by the Million Book Project to make its archive of published scholarship easily and freely available to a truly worldwide universe of readers.

Dante Sessions at Kalamazoo

The Fortieth International Congress on Medieval Studies will be held at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 5-8, 2005. The Dante Society of America is sponsoring the following four sessions (one in conjunction with the Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales). Dante Society members can consult the International Medieval Congress Web site at www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress.

Dante I: Perspectives on the *Divine Comedy*

Chair: Mary Watt (University of Florida)

- **Robert Di Pede** (Seton Hall University): "The Sensual Pilgrim, Transfiguration, and the World: The Poetics of Society"
- **Tonia Bernardi Triggiano** (Dominican University): "*Paradiso* XI-XII: Franciscan 'belle e brutte figure'"
- **Christopher Kleinhenz** (University of Wisconsin-Madison): "Visualizing Dante and the *Commedia*"

Dante II: Problems in the *Divine Comedy*

Chair: Nicholas R. Havely (University of York)

- **Christine Baur** (Fordham University): "The Justice of Virgil's Place in the *Commedia*"
- **Glenn A. Steinberg** (The College of New Jersey): "Dante, Virgil, and Christianity: Biblical Allusion and Clueless Pagans in *Inferno* IV"
- **Marsha Daigle-Williamson** (Spring Arbor University): "Not One, Not Two, But Three Dantes: Intentional Reflection of the Trinity?"

Dante III: The Fortunes of Dante in Italy and England

Chair: Christopher Kleinhenz (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

- **Caron Ann Cioffi** (Independent Scholar): "The Sepulcher of the Heart: The Influence of Dante on Petrarch's Eleventh Eclogue"
- **Nicholas R. Havely** (University of York): "'Questo libro chonpri in londra': Selling the *Commedia* in 15th-Century England"
- **Mary Watt** (University of Florida): "Michelangelo's Moses: A Dantesque Portal to the Circle of Pride"

The Intellectual Education of Dante (Co-sponsored by F.I.D.E.M.)

Chair: Christopher Kleinhenz (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

- **Stefano Gulizia** (Indiana University): "Dante, Macrobius, and the Rhetoric of Reciprocation"
- **Roy Hagman** (Trent University): "Dante and the Nobility of Latin"
- **Julia Bolton Holloway** (University of Colorado, Boulder [Emerita]): "Digitizing Brunetto as Key to Dante"

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Dante Society Newsletter

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