

Dante Society Newsletter

Volume 16, Number 2

April 2010



A Letter from the President

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

In my initial presidential letter, I must at the outset thank the Society for affording me the great privilege of taking the helm. I bring to the task many years of teaching and writing about Dante as well as several decades of academic administration. Since I take office in times that are challenging for the Humanities, I hope the latter experience will serve our needs as well as the former.

As I begin my tenure, I can report that we have great strengths to celebrate. The inclusion of *Dante Studies* in JSTOR will significantly expand the readership of the scholarly journal that remains the DSA's highest priority. It also enhances our participation in the digital transformation of today's scholarship. In addition, the editorial energy of Richard Lansing and of his Board is closing the backlog in the publication of *Dante Studies*. You received your 2007 issue this past fall; 2008 and 2009 are nearing completion as I write. In coming years you can expect a number of engaging special issues.

On May 22 we look forward to hearing from Lino Pertile at our Annual Meeting. In October we will co-sponsor with Dumbarton Oaks an international conference on "Dante and the Greeks." Our Winter Meeting will feature Guy Raffa, Arielle Saiber, and Peter Hawkins discussing "Dante and the Popular Imagination."

Though our Society has not suffered dramatically in the recent financial downturn, our resource base always has been, and remains, limited. Our finances significantly improved during our still unfinished campaign (gifts are always welcome), helping to move our core "endowment" from about \$100,000 when we launched to about \$200,000 today. We remain careful not to spend these funds but aim rather to "take down" only about 5% annually in order to preserve the base for future generations. A modest contribution from endowment and a modest income from dues produce a tight budget, which we monitor carefully.

Periodically we must ask ourselves how we can better serve our purpose: to advance scholarship on Dante and to develop new generations of Dante readers and researchers. At our May meeting, I will urge the Council to join me in a year or more of planning for our future by assessing our expenditures, considering new initiatives, setting priorities, and continuing to pursue our agenda in a sustainable fashion. I would also hope to revisit with the Council our governance and administrative structures in the light of twenty-first-century needs.

I hope you will join me in this effort. Please e-mail your thoughts or observations to njvickers@brynmawr.edu and keep informed by reading the Newsletter, either on-line or on paper.

With best wishes to all,

Nancy Vickers

Dante Prize, Grandgent Award

As submissions to the current round of competitions begin to arrive, it is time again to urge members to encourage promising *dantisti* to compete. Submissions must be sent as e-mail attachments to dsa@dantesociety.org no later than June 30. For eligibility, size limits, and complete guidelines, please visit www.dantesociety.org/prizes.html.

The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Society will take place on Saturday, May 22, 2010, in the Carriage House of the Longfellow National Historic Site (105 Brattle Street,

Cambridge, MA 02138). The event will begin at 11 a.m., so as to enable out-of-town members to travel on the day itself.

After the business meeting Professor Lino Pertile of Harvard University will present a lecture titled "Hell and Poetry from Dante to Primo Levi." Refreshments will be served thereafter.

Spring Election

Enclosed you will find a ballot of candidates prepared by the Nominating Committee according to our bylaws.

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 no later than Wednesday, May 19th.

Vincent Pollina has agreed to present his candidacy for a third term as Secretary-Treasurer of the Society. The Nominating Committee (Rachel Jacoff, Dana Stewart, and Jan Ziolkowski [Chair]) has placed on this Spring's ballot the following nominees for membership on the Council:

Peter S. Hawkins (Ph.D. Yale, English) is Professor of Religion and Literature at Yale Divinity School. His work has long centered on Dante, most recently in *Undiscovered Country: Imagining the World to Come* (2009), *Dante: A Brief History* (2006), *Dante's Testaments: Essays on Scriptural Imagination* (1999), and *The Poets' Dante: Twentieth-Century Reflections* (2000), co-edited with Rachel Jacoff. His Dante essays have appeared in *PMLA*, *Religion and Literature*, *MLN*, *Annali d'Italianistica*, and most recently in *Dante's Commedia: Theology as Poetry*, eds. Montemaggi & Treherne (2010). His research on the history of biblical reception has produced chapters in volumes he co-edited: *Scrolls of Love: Ruth and the Song of Songs; Medieval Readings of Romans; and From the Margin: Women in the Hebrew Bible*.

ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, May 22, 11:00 a.m.,
Carriage House, Longfellow Historic Site,
105 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA.

The Longfellow House is a short walk from Harvard Square. Parking at the site is limited, but garages are available in Harvard Square.

Ronald L. Martinez (Ph.D., U.C. Santa Cruz) is Professor of Italian Studies at Brown University. Dante's *Paradiso*, the third volume of the *Commedia* translation and commentary co-edited with Robert Durling, will be published by Oxford in September 2010. In addition to three essays on Petrarchan subjects published this past year, Martinez has essays on Machiavelli's theater and on Renaissance spectacle forthcoming in Oxford companion volumes, and further studies forthcoming on Petrarch and Chaucer, on Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and on English Petrarchism. A substantial piece on Dante's appropriation of liturgy is also scheduled to appear in a Devers series volume (University of Notre Dame Press).

Eleonora Stoppino (Ph.D., U.C. Berkeley) is Assistant Professor of Italian, Medieval Studies, and Comparative Literature at the University of Illinois. She has published articles on Erich Auerbach, Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, and the medieval Italian epic. She has also edited and translated a selection of Francesco da Barberino's conduct texts in the anthology *Medieval Conduct Literature* (University of Toronto Press, 2009). Her current projects include a study of the *Fiore* and a book on medieval intertextuality, gender, and dynastic politics in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*. She has received fellowships from the Villa I Tatti, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Mellon Foundation.

Heather Webb (Ph.D., Stanford) is Associate Professor of Italian at The Ohio State University. She is the author of *The Medieval Heart* (Yale University Press, February 2010), and has published articles on Dante, Catherine of Siena, and Giovanni da San Gimignano. She is currently a member of the Board of Editors of *Dante Studies*. If elected to the Council, she would resign from her functions at *Dante Studies*, and the President of the DSA would make an interim appointment to the Board of Editors. Projects in progress include a book-length manuscript that places Dante's thought at the center of a history of concepts of life, titled *Beginnings and Ends of Life: Medieval Concepts and Contemporary Debates*, as well as a co-authored book-length manuscript on Dante and theories of desire.

"Dante and the Greeks"

Members of the Society are cordially invited to attend a symposium to be held

BALLOTS AND PROXIES

must reach P.O. Box 1558,
Arlington, MA 02474-0023, no later than
Wednesday, May 19.

Results will be announced on May 22 at the
Annual Meeting.

on October 1–3, 2010, in Washington, DC, on "Dante and the Greeks." Co-sponsored by the DSA in collaboration with the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library & Collection, the event is organized by Jan Ziolkowski (Harvard University), director of Dumbarton Oaks. *Advance registration is required.* Topics and speakers are listed below. For further information, and a registration form, visit http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/doaks_symposium_dante_2010.html.

Theodore Cachey (University of Notre Dame), "Cartographic Dante: A Note on Dante's Greek Mediterranean"; *Elizabeth A. Fisher* (George Washington University), "Homo Byzantinus and Homo Italicus in Thirteenth-Century Constantinople"; *Vera von Falkenhausen* (Università di Roma–Tor Vergata), "Greeks in Italy in the Time of Dante"; *T.S. Brown* (University of Edinburgh), "The Influence of Ravenna and its Traditions on Dante's Life and Writings"; *William P. Caferro* (Vanderbilt University), "Dante, Byzantium, and the Italian Chronicle Tradition"; *Cary Nederman* (Texas A&M University), "Dante's Imperial Road Leads to... Constantinople? The Internal Logic of *De Monarchia*"; *Laura Pasquini* (Università di Bologna), "Byzantine Mosaics of Ravenna in Dante's *Divine Comedy*"; *Diego Sbacchi* (Macerata, Italy), "The Influence of the Pseudo-Dionysius on the Representation of Light in Dante's *Paradiso*"; *Giuseppe Mazzotta* (Yale University), "Dante's Trinitarianism and the Greeks"; *George Dameron* (Saint Michael's College, Colchester, Vermont), "Angels and Demons: Ancient Greek Legacies and Dante's Critique of the Church"; *Filippo Naitana* (Mount Holyoke College), "On the Wings of Wisdom: Dante, Boethius, and the Promise of the Greeks"; *Panagiotis Roilos* (Harvard University), "Dante's Homer, Cavafy's Dante: Exploring *Inferno* in Greek Contexts"; *Michele Trizio* (Thomas-Institut der Universität zu Köln / University of Bari), "From Anna Comnena to Dante: The Byzantine Roots of Western Debates on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics"; *Marcia Colish* (Yale University), "Acting against Conscience: Dante and the Stoic, Aristotelian, and Christian Traditions"; *Réka Forrai* (Central European University), "Greek Learning, Italian Culture: Change and Continuity in the World of Dante"; *Teodolinda Barolini* (Columbia University), "Dante's Humanism and its Vernacular Roots"; *Piero Boitani* (Università di Roma–La Sapienza), *Joseph Luzzi* (Bard College), *Lino Pertile* (Villa I Tatti / Harvard University), "Dante's Ulysses: A Panel."

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DANTE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Published twice each year by
the Dante Society of America and
distributed to members of the Society.

P.O. Box 1558
Arlington, MA 02474-0023

www.dantesociety.org