

Dante Society Newsletter

Volume 18, Number 1

November 2011

Annual Meeting, May 2011

The Dante Society of America's 129th Annual Meeting took place on May 21, 2011, at the Longfellow House – Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site in Cambridge, Massachusetts. At 11 a.m., Site Manager and Museum Curator Jim Shea welcomed the members to the Longfellow estate. In the course of the proceedings, clouds and haze gave way to radiant sun.

At the conclusion of the business meeting, President Nancy Vickers saluted two officers who were concluding their terms of service: Todd Boli (Vice President, 2008-2011) and Vincent Pollina (Secretary-Treasurer, 2008-2011).

Dr. Boli had last been recognized when he stepped down as Secretary-Treasurer (2003-2008); see "The DSA Thanks Todd Boli," *Dante Society Newsletter*, Fall 2008, p. 2, at <http://dantesociety.org/N2008f.pdf>.

To Professor Pollina, President Vickers presented a ten-inch blown-glass Paul Revere bowl bearing the following inscription: "Vincent Pollina / Secretary-Treasurer / 2008-2011 / With Gratitude From / The Dante Society of America."

President Vickers then introduced William P. Caferro (Professor of History, Vanderbilt University), pictured below, who addressed the group on "Contextualizing Dante's Reading of Byzantium and Empire." A stimulating question-and-answer period ensued. After adjournment, the audience enjoyed refreshments in the formal garden.



Spring Election Results

Last May the membership of the Dante Society elected Joseph Luzzi and Vittorio Montemaggi to the Council for 2011-14. Vincent Pollina, having respectfully declined the nomination to stand for a fourth term as Secretary-Treasurer, nonetheless agreed to continue in office until a successor was named. In the summer, Albert Ascoli was elected Vice President by the Council for a term of one year.

Winter Meeting

The Dante Society will meet at the 2012 MLA Annual Convention in Seattle on Saturday, January 7, 2012, from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m., at the Sheraton Hotel, Redwood A and B. Justin Steinberg (University of Chicago) will lecture on "Naked Pacts and Poems Dressed: Genre, Gender, and Contract Law in Dante." Nancy Vickers will preside. All MLA attendees are invited to join us.

Longfellow Birthday Party

The Longfellow House – Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site and the Dante Society of America will co-sponsor a celebration of Longfellow's 205th birthday and of the publication of *Dante Studies* 128 (2010), "Longfellow and Dante," on Saturday, February 25, 2012, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Story Chapel of Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA. The program will include a lecture, discussion, reception, and a walk to the Longfellow gravesite for a brief poetry reading. Watch the "Events" page of the DSA Web site for further details.

Next Annual Meeting Set for May 19

The Dante Society of America will hold its Annual Meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on Saturday, May 19, 2012, at 11:00 a.m. Rachel Jacoff (Wellesley College) will address the group. Details will follow in the Spring 2012 Newsletter and on the "Events" page of the DSA Web site.

Dante Sessions at Kalamazoo

The Forty-Seventh International Congress on Medieval Studies will be held at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May

10-13, 2012. The Dante Society is sponsoring the following series of sessions, arranged by Editor Emeritus of *Dante Studies* Christopher Kleinhenz (University of Wisconsin–Madison). For further information, visit <http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress>.

Dante I: Dante and Intertextuality

Organizers: Tristan Kay (Dartmouth College) and Francesca Southerden (Wellesley College)

President: Albert Russell Ascoli (University of California–Berkeley)

Julie Van Peteghem (Columbia University): Contextualizing Ovidian Intertextuality: The Vernacular Roots of Dante's Reading of Ovid in the *Divina Commedia*

Kara Gaston (University of Pennsylvania): Between Text and Gloss in *The House of Fame* and *Inferno* III

Laurie Shepard (Boston College): Dante, Cavalcanti, and Intertextual Authority

Dante II: Perspectives on Dante's *Paradiso*

President: Santa Casciani (John Carroll University)

Francesca Galli (Università della Svizzera Italiana): Words of Light: Dante and Bartolomeo di Bologna

Francesca Braida (Université de Paris X Nanterre): Opacity, Brightness, and Gravity of the Body in Dante's *Divine Comedy*

Valentina Atturo (La Sapienza Università di Roma): The Eyes of the Skin: The Fixed Gaze and 'ad-miratio' between Richard of St. Victor and Dante

Dante III: Critical Perspectives on Intertextuality in Dante's *Comedy*

President: Vincent Pollina (Tufts University)

Gabriella I. Baika (Florida Institute of Technology): The *Testament* of Jean de Meun and its Relationship to the *Divine Comedy*

Bridget Pupillo (Johns Hopkins University): Geryon, al-Buraq, and the Apocalyptic Monstrous

Andrés Amitai Wilson (University of Massachusetts–Amherst): Dante's Chariot: Ezekielian Mimesis in Dante's Eden

Simone Tarud Bettini (Università di Bologna): Dante and the Lyrical Tradition: An Example of Intertextuality in the Vernacular, *Purgatorio* XV, 67-75

Dante IV: Politics, Law, Exile and Community in Dante's Works

Presider: Christopher Kleinhenz (University of Wisconsin–Madison)

Laurence Hooper (University of Chicago): 'Prendere loro desiderato porto': Exile and Rhetorical Closure in *Convivio* IV

Francesco Aimerito (Università del Piemonte Orientale): Medieval Law in Dante's *Purgatorio*

Maria Luisa Ardizzone (New York University): The Small Medieval Community and Its Role in Dante's Political Thought

Dante V: Interpretive Problems in Dante's *Inferno*

Presider: Stan Benfell (Brigham Young University)

Thomas J. Farrell (Stetson University): Unstable Meanings in 'il piè fermo'

Jason Aleksander (Saint Xavier University): What's Wrong with Heresy in *Inferno* X

Giuliano Milani (La Sapienza Università di Roma): Dante, the Bag and the Pictures

Leah Schwebel (University of Connecticut): 'Simile Lordura,' Altra Bolgia: Usurpation through Conflation in *Inferno*

Dante VI: Critical Perspectives on Dante's *Purgatorio*

Presider: Tristan Kay (Dartmouth College)

Filippo Gianferrari (University of Notre Dame): "Non vi meravigliate, ma credete" (*Purgatorio* III, 97): Resurrection Narrative in Ante-Purgatory

John Bugbee (Mount Saint Mary's University): Dante's Staircase and the Freedom of the Will

Stan Benfell (Brigham Young University): Defining Virtue in Dante's *Purgatorio*

Elizabeth Dolly Weber (University of Illinois–Chicago): Virgil, Dante, and Confession in the *Commedia*

Essay Prize Winners for 2011

The Dante Prize for the best undergraduate essay was awarded to Joshua Fox (University of Chicago) for "The Winds of the Earthly Paradise: The Importance of Growth without Seed on Earth." The Charles Hall Grandgent Award for the best essay by a graduate student went to Julie Van Peteghem (Columbia University) for "The Vernacular Roots of Dante's Reading of Ovid in the *Commedia*: Two Examples from *Purgatorio*."

Prize Committee members Albert Ascoli and Victoria Kirkham (Chair) judged the essays.

The amounts are \$500 for the Dante Prize and \$750 for the Grandgent Award. The deadline for submissions for the 2012 competitions is June 30th.

Hollander Celebrated

The Dante Society congratulates past president and Charles T. Davis Award recipient Robert Hollander on the recent ceremonial presentations of the Italian translation by Simone Marchesi of his commentary on the *Commedia*. Published by Olschki in recognition of the publisher's 125th year and of the 100th anniversary of Leo Olschki's monumental edition, the three elegant volumes are also intended to honor 150 years of Italian unification.

Hollander's commentary was celebrated on October 4th in the Salone del Duecento of Florence's Palazzo Vecchio and on October 6th in Ravenna's Biblioteca Classense. In Florence, colleagues Luca Azzetta and Lino Pertile praised the work; the presence of Mayor Matteo Renzi, who read greetings from the President of the Republic, marked the civic implications of the occasion. Academy-Award-winner Roberto Benigni – who had turned to the Hollanders' translation and commentary in preparation for the English-language performances of his "TuttoDante" – added humor and star power to the occasion.

The volumes from Olschki make Hollander the first American commentator published in Italy and in Italian. The distinction is highly appropriate given Hollander's respectful attention to the commentary tradition and his leadership of the Dartmouth Dante Project (<http://dante.dartmouth.edu>), which makes that tradition readily accessible to scholars.

The EBDSA

As the *Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America (EBDSA)* enters its eighteenth year of publication, the on-line journal continues to encourage the submission of brief articles on any aspect of Dante criticism. These are limited to 1500 words, and may be written in English, Italian, or French. The Board also accepts comments to essays posted on the site. To view the EBDSA, please visit the DSA Web site and click on "Publications."

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Ad Hoc Committee on Web Site

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