

Chronology of the poet's life and work. Brief bibliography. Index.

LD

Anthony K. Cassell. *Dante's Fearful Art of Justice*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: U of Toronto P, 1984. Pp. xiv + 186.

Cassell studies how the idea of the *contrapasso*, just retribution, functions in Dante's *Inferno*; how the figuration of the state of souls after death was designed by Dante to reveal God's justice, not through the establishment of a "hierarchy of punishment" but rather through the workings of a symbolic moral system in which punishment "is exquisitely apt and merited in each discrete case" (4). He also attempts to demonstrate how the representation of the damned, the relation of sin to punishment, is determined, to a great extent, by Dante's sources—not only classical, patristic, and scholastic but also "visual." (And, indeed, in at least three of his eight chapters he uses Christian iconography to help explicate the text.) Critically, Cassell locates himself within the Auerbach-Singleton approach to the *Commedia*, "which holds that the writer used both the biblical or theological system of fourfold allegory and the prefiguration-fulfillment pattern of history, the basis of which consisted in the various temporal epiphanies of Christ" (8).

The first chapter traces the concept of the *contrapasso* from Aristotle to St. Thomas and describes Dante's literary appropriation of this idea. The following chapters address specific episodes in the *Inferno*, including Farinata, Pier della Vigna, the *Gran Veglio*, the Idolators, Ulysses, and Satan. The chief aim in each case is "to discover the pattern which existed—that which joined sinner, sin, punishment, and imagery into an artistic whole" (5).

Extensive end-notes. Index. Thirty-four black and white plates of iconographic sources.

PR

Paolo Cherchi and Antonio C. Mastrobuono, eds. *Lectura Dantis Newberryana*. Vol. 1. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern UP, 1988. Pp. vii + 198.

The eight articles published in this volume were presented at the first two yearly series of the "lectura Newberryana" in Chicago, 1983–1985. The topics represent a variety of subjects and approaches.

Nicolae Iliescu demonstrates in "The Roman Emperors in *The Divine Comedy*" that from the standpoint not of human history but of revealed history the figures of the great Roman emperors function as instruments of the divine will. Mario Trovato proposes in "Dante and the Tradition of the 'Two Beatitudes'" that Dante's theories on the purpose of human

life expressed in both the *Convivio* and *De Monarchia* “must be located within the parameters set by Albert [the Great] and Thomas [Aquinas]” (27). By following the play of metaphor which centres around the contrast of *acerbo/maturo* (ripe/unripe), Davy A. Carozza traces “The Motif of Maturation in the *Commedia*.” In “‘Il cantor de’ bucolici carmi’: The Influence of Virgilian Pastoral on Dante’s Depiction of the Earthly Paradise,” Caron Ann Cioffi shows how Dante modifies classical pastoral in order to harmonize it with the sense of hope in God’s grace which accompanies Christian rebirth. In “Poetics of Renewal and Hagiographic Tradition in the *Vita Nuova*,” Vittore Branca relates the “itinerarium mentis in Dominum” of the Franciscans to Dante’s progress from *amore-passione* to *amore-carità*. Antonio C. Mastrobuono, in “The Powerful Enigma,” explores the significance of the “Velto” and the “Cinquecento diece e cinque” (which he proposes should be translated into the figure of a cross) in order to establish the Christian extent of Dante’s philosophy of history.

Two essays examine the role of Statius in the *Commedia*: “Virgil, Statius, and Dante: An Unusual Trinity,” in which Christopher Kleinhenz interprets Dante’s Statius as the author of the morally allegorical *Thebaid* (as interpreted in the Middle Ages); “Dante and the *Thebaid* of Statius,” in which Winthrop Wetherbee interprets Dante’s Statius as the author of his own *Thebaid*, a work which Dante perceives as arresting and transcending ongoing disaster with visionary moments and as exposing the inhumanity of traditional religion.

Notes after each essay. Illustrations after the essays by Cioffi and Mastrobuono.

CLM

James Dauphiné. *Le cosmos de Dante*. Paris: Société d’édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1984. Pp. 214.

James Dauphiné’s book (drawn in part from his 1981 doctoral dissertation) explores Dante’s concept of the universe, with particular emphasis on the *Divine Comedy*. His primary objective is to consider “l’oeuvre de Dante du point de vue particulier de ses implications cosmologiques” (7) in order to provide “une modeste contribution à la compréhension de la *vision poétique du cosmos* dans l’oeuvre dantesque” (8).

The first three chapters examine Dante’s classical, theological, and scientific sources with the intention of clarifying the relationship between the temporal and spatial structures of the journey, especially the process of the pilgrim’s ascension in the *Paradiso*. The final chapter, entitled “Poétique et imagination” deals with the creative act itself, with how imagination is transformed into language. Dauphiné sees Dante’s poem as an “aventure stylistique” in which the poet meditates on “le pouvoir des mots,” on the ability of language to make the spiritual domain accessible to man. The