Studi americani su Dante. A cura di Gian Carlo Alessio e Robert Hollander; introduzione di Dante Della Terza. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1989. Pp. 358.

This collection of fourteen essays on Dante, entirely in Italian but by North American scholars, has appeared as No. 43 in the series *Studi e ricerche* of the University of Calabria, where one of the editors (Alessio) was teaching at the time. It is the remarkable product of an editorial collaboration between two leading Dantists on opposite sides of the Atlantic. Although Hollander at Princeton University and Alessio, now at the University of Venice, happen to share a personal interest in Dante's relation to classical literature, their collection is not limited to that vein of *dantistica*. It represents instead a quantum leap forward in the communication of current New World scholarship to the community of Italian *dantisti*, as well as a record of the state of the art in Dante studies, an obligatory reading for anyone working in the field anywhere on the planet.

Given the serene antiquity of the Italian tradition of reading the founder of their own literature, it is inevitable that communication on Dante to date should have been heavily one-way. Dante scholars everywhere depend upon Italian editors, commentators, critics, historians and philologists: centuries of work encapsulated in the priceless six volumes of the *Enciclopedia dantesca* of 1970. Nevertheless, as Della Terza notes in his introduction to this volume (11), Charles Singleton's chief pieces on the *Comedy*, collected under the title *La poesia della Divina Commedia*, have been known directly to Italian readers since their publication in Italian translation at Bologna in 1978. It could perhaps be regarded as a westward message in return that three of the fourteen papers printed in the volume that Aldo Bernardo and Anthony Pellegrini prepared in Singleton's honour in 1983 were sent by Italian *dantisti*: Ezio Raimondi, Aldo Vallone and Giorgio Petrocchi. Since 1978, the eastward stream of communication from North America has widened but slowly. Two books by Hollander appeared first in Italy, one in English and one in Italian: *Studies in Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 1980) and *Il Virgilio dantesco: tragedia nella "Commedia"* (Firenze: Olschki, 1983). Amilcare Iannucci modified and expanded five of his previous articles to produce the collection *Forma ed evento nella Divina Commedia* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1984). And, as Della Terza notes (20), the anthology of John Freccero's life work that recently appeared in English as *The Poetics of Conversion* (ed. Rachel Jacoff, Harvard UP, 1986) has now been published in Italian translation by a house in Bologna.

In view of the maturity and independence of the three scholars last named and the existence in America of centres of Dante research largely exempt from Singleton's influence—Newberry, for example—one might wish to take issue with the emphasis implied in the title of Della Terza's introduction, "La critica dantesca in America: La lezione singletoniana" (7). On the other hand, Singleton's is probably the American name best known to Italian scholars, appropriately invoked as password for this crossing of the Atlantic; and it is true that all the writers represented in this volume can claim Singleton as their spiritual father—or "grandfather," perhaps, given the wide reach of Freccero's influence as a teacher. Although she is not represented in this collection, Della Terza takes pains to praise the work of Marguerite Mills Chiarenza, for example (19), whose filiation to Singleton is precisely of the latter kind.

What Della Terza does succeed in demonstrating is the remarkable individuality and diversity of the 'Singletonian' progeny. He both chides the effervescence of some, taking William Stephany to task for turning the poet/pilgrim distinction into a dichotomy (16), and also insists that the evermaverick Richard Kay be taken seriously (13): heresy may have orthodox foundations. While there is something of an apology for the dogmatic style some Americans adopt when writing on Dante—they are all, like their progenitor, committed visionaries (10)—Della Terza himself promotes the one point of Singleton's overall interpretation that is least likely to find favour in Italy, namely the allegory of the leopard as fraud (15). On the whole, no better person could have been found to introduce this collection: an emigré from Italy himself, Della Terza moves easily in both worlds. He can recall his own organization at Harvard in 1979 of a conference on Singleton's work between American and Italian scholars, with the author present; and he gives an admirably frank and generous account (the only one I know of in print) of the controversy he provoked by reducing Singleton's thesis on the allegory of the theologians to the findings of earlier European scholarship, notably the ideas of Erich Auerbach (21). The introduction is richly anecdotal, biographical and autobiographical, genealogical and even political, just the story to engage and excite its intended readership.

The worldwide importance of this collection is guaranteed in part by the fact that nine of its fourteen items appear here for the first time. Only five are translations (done by Luca Carlo Rossi and reviewed by the authors) of pieces that appeared earlier in English. William Stephany's 1982 article on Pier della Vigna's eulogy of Frederick II in *Inferno* 13 (*Traditio*, 38, 193–212) occupies pp. 37–62. Anthony Cassell's assembling of the theology for *Purgatorio* 13–4 ("The Letter of Envy," *Stanford Italian Review*, Spring 1984: 5–22) appears here with a new title in stronger rhymes: "*Il sapore dell'amore*," (165–83). (Why not "*La lettera dell'invidia*"?) Joan Ferrante's contribution to the Singleton honorary volume, a brief but deep study of the astounding neologisms in *Paradiso*, is translated on pp. 203–19. Charles Davis is represented here (267–95) by his contribution to another volume from SUNY at Binghamton (*Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P.A. Ramsey, 1982), a display of the variable values of Rome and Babylon in Dante's thought, with the significant point that the Church has two 'husbands' (*il suo Marito*, *Inferno* 19.111). Finally, Giuseppe Mazzotta's analysis of Dante's relation to the traditional art of rhetoric, "The Light of Venus and the Poetry of Dante," is translated on pp. 325–52. Since that was a contribution to another honorary volume, one celebrating Robert Kaske (*Magister Regis*, New York: Fordham UP, 1986), this collection indirectly informs Italian readers of a few other recent American collections.

Readers of *Dante Studies* will recognize that two of the essays in this collection have their doubles in that leading American journal. Teodolinda Barolini's masterful excavation of a moral level beneath the poet's literary invention of divine creations in *Purgatorio* 10, printed here as "Ricreare la creazione divina: l'arte aracnea nella cornice dei superbi" (145–64), is evidently the same as "Re-presenting What God Presented etc.," *DS* 105 (1987): 43–62; and "Il repubblicanesimo di Dante" by Hollander and Albert Rossi (297–324: the table of Dante's heroes from the Roman Republic) becomes "Dante's Republican Treasury" in *DS* 104 (1986): 59–82. No citation of a prior appearance in English is given in this edition for either piece, however, so these must be regarded as cases of nearly simultaneous or posterior publication in English (the volumes of *DS* being notoriously still quite behind the current year of issue).

Iannucci's topic (87) was given barely an announcement and only modest diffusion in oral form as the address to the annual meeting of the Dante Society of America in May 1984. It remains, therefore, that precisely half the essays in this collection are available only in the Italian of their publication here, and since the items previously available in English date no farther back than 1982, the volume is a kind of sampler of the best North American Dante research of the eighties.

Of the seven studies available only here, some focus on the suggestions of a single text, some take up a general theme, and some of course manage to do both. Michelangelo Picone discusses the significance of the comic style adopted in *Inferno* 21-2 (63-86). Rachel Jacoff discovers her own biblical namesake in a solidly documented typology for Beatrice that evokes the "*Rachel plorantis*" of Jer. 31.15 and the glosses (23-36), noting the problem of gender identity in the *Comedy* along the way (33-4). R.A. Shoaf's contextual analysis of the echo of *Georgics* 2.484, in *Purgatorio* 30.97, joins the current inquiry into Dante's ambivalence toward Virgil. The four remaining studies are of monographic scope; they open up an area so sweeping or a vein so deep that it can only be sketched out and not exhausted in the span of the essay. Richard Kay's thesis that the figure of Beatrice, by the date of her death as well as her name, is to be taken solely allegorically and not literally in the *Vita nuova* (243-65) needs a book the size of *Dante's Swift and Strong* for its defense. Iannucci's study of *musica instrumentalis* in the *Comedy*, and its absence, as a reflection of *musica mundana* (87-111) should be worked to its completion, exploring further Dante's knowledge of both secular and liturgical music. Margherita Frankel starts with Hollander's remark that Virgil is made into a 'loser' by the gaming simile of *Purgatorio* 6 (113-43), but ends with a full-length portrait of Virgil in Antepurgatory that cries out for the entire pattern to be reconstructed of 'Virgil in Purgatory,' complementing Hollander on Virgil in Hell. Finally, Jeffrey Schnapp's piece on the maternal Virgil and the military Beatrice (221-42) goes beyond the point Singleton already made of the masculine Christological language for Beatrice into a study of grammatical gender confusion and transsexuality in the *Comedy* that has the makings of a book both politically and theologically 'correct'.

Canadian scholars should take pride in the fact that McGill and Toronto are both represented in this collection (by Picone and Iannucci respectively), British Columbia involved by implication (Chiarenza), and two more contributions made by scholars of Canadian background (Cassell and Mazzotta), for a total of five names out of fifteen. The adjective in the title is meant to be geographical, not national, with the sense that would include Latin American scholars as well. The paragraph of presentation printed on the back cover of the book makes that clear with its repetition of "gli Stati Uniti e Canada." To demand an unequivocal adjective would be to ruin the rhythmic euphony of the title; to neglect the Canadian current would, on the other hand, take quite a substantial portion away from the wealth of New World *dantistica*.

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Linda L. Carroll. *Angelo Beolco (Il Ruzante)*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990 (Twayne's World Authors Series). Pp. xii, 145.

Questo volume rappresenta la seconda monografia in lingua inglese su una delle figure ormai riconosciuta fra le più rilevanti del Rinascimento e di tutta la storia del teatro