



SPUNTI E RICERCHE

Dante and the human body

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Foreword

For several years now Miss Mary Dwyer (University of New England) and Dr Diana Modesto (University of Sydney) have organised, biennial Dante conferences in Sydney. These have been held with a minimum of superstructure and hype and have been characterised by a truly cordial atmosphere, a genuine enthusiasm for the field of Dante studies on the part of participants, and the active participation of students as well as academics.

It was with this example as our inspiration and with the encouragement, not to mention active participation, of our New South Wales colleagues that the first La Trobe University Dante conference was organised in September 1994 by Flavia Coassin and myself. The conference, which had as its theme "The Representation of the Human Body, Physicality and the Senses in The Divine Comedy" was opened with an address by His Excellency Dr Mario Alberto Montecalvo, then Italian Consul General of Melbourne, and both then and now, in his current posting at the Italian Embassy in Canberra, a good friend to Italian academic studies.

It would not have been financially possible for this journal to publish all fourteen papers offered in the two days of the conference, nor indeed did all participants wish to offer their work for publication. A final choice was made on the basis of reports by an anonymous referee. To him go our particular thanks for undertaking rapidly and efficiently the lengthy task of reading and commenting on papers submitted.

Even minimalist conferences can generate an enormous work load and particular gratitude must here be expressed to Mrs Consuelo Di Leo, Administrative Officer of the Department of Italian Studies at La Trobe, for the cheerful professionalism which was freely offered and upon which we presumed to count.

Antonio Pagliaro