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Edited by Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile
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DANTE IN CONTEXT

In the past seven centuries Dante has become world renowned, with his works translated into multiple languages and read by people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. This volume brings together interdisciplinary essays by leading international scholars to provide a comprehensive account of the historical, cultural, and intellectual context in which Dante lived and worked: from the economic, social, and political scene to the feel of daily life; from education and religion to the administration of justice; from medicine to philosophy and science; from classical antiquity to popular culture; and from the dramatic transformation of urban spaces to the explosion of visual arts and music. This book, while locating Dante in relation to each of these topics, offers readers a clear and reliable idea of what life was like for Dante as an outstanding poet and intellectual in the Italy of the late Middle Ages.

ZYGMUNT G. BARAŃSKI is Serena Professor of Italian Emeritus at the University of Cambridge and Notre Dame Chair of Dante and Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

LINO PERTILE is Carl A. Pescosolido Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, and Director of The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti, Florence.

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For Maggie and Anna

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> x
<i>List of maps</i>	xii
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	xiii
<i>Chronology</i>	xx
<i>Abbreviations and note on translations</i>	xxiv
 Introduction	 I
<i>Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile</i>	
 PART I: POLITICS AND SOCIETY	 7
1 Empire, Italy, and Florence	9
<i>William Caferro</i>	
2 Economy	30
<i>William R. Day, Jr</i>	
3 Law	47
<i>Sara Menzinger</i>	
4 Justice	59
<i>Giuliano Milani</i>	
5 Men and women	71
<i>Holly Hurlburt</i>	
6 Church and orthodoxy	83
<i>George Dameron</i>	
7 Heresy and dissidence	106
<i>David Burr</i>	

viii	Contents	
8	Daily life <i>Edward D. English</i>	119
PART II: INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS		135
9	Philosophy and theology <i>Andrea A. Robiglio</i>	137
10	Moral philosophy <i>Luca Bianchi</i>	159
11	Natural philosophy <i>Edward Grant</i>	173
12	Medicine <i>Michael R. McVaugh</i>	189
13	Islamic and Jewish influences <i>Luis M. Girón Negrón</i>	200
14	Cosmology, geography, and cartography <i>Theodore J. Cachey, Jr</i>	221
PART III: LINGUISTIC AND LITERARY CULTURES		241
15	Linguistic Italy <i>Mirko Tavoni</i>	243
16	Education <i>Robert Black</i>	260
17	Rhetoric, literary theory, and practical criticism <i>Ronald L. Martinez</i>	277
18	Classical antiquity <i>Robert Black</i>	297
19	Religious culture <i>Peter S. Hawkins</i>	319
20	Visions and journeys <i>Eileen Gardiner</i>	341
21	Historical and political writing <i>John C. Barnes</i>	354

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

	<i>Contents</i>	ix
22	Vernacular literatures <i>Paolo Cherchi</i>	371
23	Popular culture <i>Jan M. Ziolkowski</i>	389
	PART IV: VISUAL AND PERFORMATIVE CULTURE	399
24	Illumination, painting, and sculpture <i>Louise Bourdua</i>	401
25	Architecture and urban space <i>Areli Marina</i>	427
26	Music <i>Michael Scott Cuthbert</i>	448
	PART V: DANTE: LIFE, WORKS, AND RECEPTION	459
27	Life <i>Lino Pertile</i>	461
28	Works <i>Lino Pertile</i>	475
29	Textual transmission <i>Zygmunt G. Barański</i>	509
30	Early reception (1290–1481) <i>Zygmunt G. Barański</i>	518
	<i>Further reading</i>	538
	<i>Index</i>	565

Illustrations

14.1	Giovanni di Paolo (Siena 1398–1482), <i>The Creation of the World and the Expulsion from Paradise</i> , 1445. Robert Lehman Collection. Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art (www.metmuseum.org).	page 222
14.2	A schematic representation of the Ptolemaic universe.	228
14.3	Map of the earth, based on M. Musa's <i>Dante's Paradise</i> (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).	236
24.1	Gospel of Matthew, 'L' (<i>Liber generationis</i>) depicting the Tree of Jesse, <i>Bibbia sacra</i> c.1267 (Paris, BN, ms. Lat. 22, fol. 346r.). Reproduced courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France.	406
24.2	Gospel of Matthew, 'L' (<i>Liber generationis</i>) depicting the Tree of Jesse, <i>Bibbia vulgata</i> also known as 'Bible of Charles V', 1285–90 (Gerona, Cathedral chapter library, MS. 10, fol. 391r.). Reproduced courtesy of Gerona Cathedral.	407
24.3	Cimabue, crucifix, Santa Croce, Florence, before 1288. Reproduced courtesy of Quattrone Snc Di De Luise Alba E C. Fotografia Di Arte.	408
24.4	Giotto, crucifix, Santa Maria Novella, Florence, c.1290. © Photo SCALA, Florence.	409
24.5	Facade of S. Maria del Fiore, Florence, by Alessandro Nani, after a drawing by Bernardino Poccetti (Archivio dell'Opera di S. Maria del Fiore). Reproduced courtesy of Quattrone Snc Di De Luise Alba E C. Fotografia Di Arte.	416
24.6	Statue of S. Gemignano, tufo, Sant'Anastasia, Verona, 1290s. Reproduced courtesy of Louise Bourdua.	418
24.7	Tomb of Guglielmo Castelbarco, above entrance to the cloister of Sant'Anastasia, Verona, c.1320. Reproduced courtesy of Louise Bourdua.	419

List of illustrations xi

24.8	<i>Maestro del Redentore</i> , Votive portrait of Guglielmo Castelbarco, San Fermo Maggiore, Verona, c.1318. Reproduced courtesy of Louise Bourdua.	420
24.9	Anonymous master, <i>Procession</i> , tower of abbey of San Zeno, Verona, c.1260. Reproduced courtesy of Louise Bourdua.	421
24.10	Giotto, <i>Arrest of Christ</i> , c.1305, Arena chapel, Padua. Reproduced courtesy of Quattrone Snc Di De Luise Alba E C. Fotografia Di Arte.	424
25.1	Giovanni Toscani (Maestro della Crocifissione Griggs), <i>Procession of the Palio dei Barberi standards in Piazza San Giovanni</i> , from a now-dismembered <i>cassone</i> , Florence, c.1425. Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello. Photo: Scala/Art Resource, NY.	428
25.2	View of Florence, detail from the <i>Madonna della Misericordia</i> , fresco, Loggia del Bigallo, Florence, c.1342. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.	432
25.3	Palazzo dei Priori (or Palazzo Vecchio or della Signoria) and Piazza della Signoria, Florence, begun 1299. Photo: Scala/Art Resource, NY.	434
25.4	Domus Mercatorum, Verona, begun 1301. Photo: David Nicholls, 2003.	437
25.5	Detail of the Piazza dei Signori, Verona, c.1525, from Niccolò Giolfino, <i>Gaius Mucius Scaevola Thrusting his Right Hand into the Flame</i> , tempera on panel, c.1525–1550. Photo: Sotheby's; courtesy of Biblioteca Berenson, Fototeca, Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies–Villa I Tatti.	439
25.6	Detail, east wall fresco, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, <i>Effects of Good Government on the Town</i> . Siena, Palazzo Pubblico, Sala della Pace, 1338–39. Photo: HIP/Art Resource, NY.	445
25.7	Detail, west wall fresco, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, <i>Effects of Bad Government on the Town</i> . Siena, Palazzo Pubblico, Sala della Pace, 1338–39. Photo: Scala/Art Resource, NY.	446

Music examples

26.1	Examples of innovations in rhythmic notation arriving (a) c. 1200, (b) c. 1260, (c) c. 1300.	452
26.2	<i>Kalenda Maya</i> with two possible rhythmic interpretations.	454

Maps

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|
| 1 | Historical map of Europe during the fourteenth century. From
<i>The Public Schools Historical Atlas</i> , edited by C. Colbeck, 1905.
Image courtesy of University of Texas Libraries,
University of Texas, Austin. | <i>page</i> 534 |
| 2 | Dante's Italy around 1300. | 535 |
| 3 | Walls of Florence from Roman times to 1333. | 536 |

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Notes on contributors

xv

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Notes on contributors

xvii

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Chronology

1250–1350

1250	Death of Emperor Frederick II.
1252	First gold florin coined in Florence.
1260	Battle of Montaperti. Banished Florentine Ghibellines defeat Guelfs.
1265	May/June Dante born in Florence. Charles of Anjou enters Italy.
1266	Battle of Benevento. Manfred killed. Guelfs return to Florence.
1289	Florence defeats Arezzo at Campaldino.
1270–73	Dante's mother, Bella, dies.
1274	May: first encounter with Beatrice.
1276	Guido Guinizzelli dies in Bologna.
1277	9 February: marriage contract with Gemma Donati.
1282	Dante's father, Alighiero di Bellincione, dies.
1282	War of the 'Sicilian Vespers': the Aragonese rulers (Spanish) replace the Angevin (French) in Sicily.
1283	Dante publishes first poem. Friendship with Guido Cavalcanti.
1285	Marriage to Gemma Donati.
1286–87	Dante writes the <i>Fiore</i> and <i>Detto d'Amore</i> .
1287	Dante in Bologna? Beatrice marries Simone de' Bardi.
1287	Birth of first child, Giovanni (?).
1289	Dante as horse soldier at the battle of Campaldino against Arezzo. Son Jacopo is born (?).
1290	Death of Beatrice. Son Pietro is born (?).

Chronology

xxi

- 1293 Ordinances of Justice.
 Dante writes *Vita nova*.
 Brunetto Latini dies in Florence.
- 1294 December, Pope Celestine V abdicates five months after his election. Boniface VIII becomes pope.
 Construction of Basilica di Santa Croce begun in Florence.
- 1295 Dante enrolls in the Guild of Physicians and Apothecaries and enters political life. From November he is a member of the Council of Thirty-Six.
- 1296 Dante a member of the Council of the Hundred.
 Construction of new cathedral (Duomo) begun in Florence.
- 1299 Daughter Antonia is born (?).
 Construction of Palace of the Priors (Palazzo Vecchio) begun in Florence.
- 1300 Easter week: Dante's fictional journey to the realms of the afterlife.
 April: Pope Boniface proclaims the Jubilee Year.
 May: Florentine Guelfs split into Blacks and Whites.
 May: Dante is ambassador to San Gimignano on behalf of the Guelfs.
 15 June–15 August: Dante serves as Prior; signs warrant sending Guido Cavalcanti into exile; Guido dies in the summer.
- 1301 April–September: Dante member of the Council of the Hundred.
 October: Sent on a diplomatic mission to Pope Boniface VIII in Rome.
 November: Charles of Valois enters Florence; Black Guelph *coup d'état*.
- 1302 27 January: While on his way back to Florence, Dante is fined 5,000 florins and excluded from public office for two years; refuses to pay fine.
 10 March: sentence confirmed; if caught, Dante will be burnt at the stake.
 Dante joins exiled White Guelfs in a leading position.
 Boniface VIII's bull *Unam sanctam*, proclaiming supreme authority.
- 1303 Dante in Verona, guest of Bartolomeo della Scala. Probably visits Treviso, Venice, and Padua. Begins *Convivio* and *De vulgari eloquentia*.

xxii	Chronology
	French troops humiliate Pope Boniface at Anagni. Death of Boniface. Benedict XI elected October 1303.
1304	July: Benedict XI dies. Dante in Arezzo. Letter to cardinal Niccolò da Prato on behalf of the Whites. Dante in Bologna, works on <i>Convivio</i> and <i>De vulgari eloquentia</i> (?). Francesco Petrarca born in Arezzo. 20 July: White Guelphs and Ghibellines defeated at La Lastra, near Florence.
1305	Bertrand De Got elected pope with the name of Clement V. Giotto paints the interior of the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua.
1306	Dante in Lunigiana, guest of Moroello Malaspina.
1307	Dante in Casentino: letter and <i>canzone</i> (<i>Rime</i> CXVI) to Moroello Malaspina.
1308	Henry of Luxembourg chosen to be next Emperor. Dante in Lucca. In this period he starts writing the <i>Commedia</i> and continues until 1320/21.
1309	Henry crowned emperor as Henry VII at Aix-La-Chapelle (Aachen). Clement V moves the papacy to Avignon, France, where it remains until 1377. Robert of Anjou, King of Naples.
1310	October: Henry VII in Italy. Dante in Poppi, near Arezzo, guest of Guido da Battifolle, writes an open letter to rulers and people of Italy urging them to welcome Henry.
1311	Henry VII crowned in Milan. 31 March: Dante writes letter urging the Florentines to open the city to Henry VII. 17 April: Dante writes to Henry VII exhorting him to attack Florence.
1312	Henry VII crowned in Rome, but not in St Peter's. Dante settles in Verona as guest of Cangrande della Scala. He writes or begins writing <i>Monarchia</i> (?).
1313	August: Henry dies of malaria in Buonconvento, near Siena. Giovanni Boccaccio is born in Florence (or Certaldo?).
1314	Completes <i>Inferno</i> . Pope Clement V dies. Dante writes open letter to Italian cardinals urging them to elect an Italian pope. Conclave closes for two years.
1315	Completes <i>Purgatorio</i> . June: Amnesty offered to Florentine exiles; Dante rejects offer.

Chronology

xxiii

- October: Florence reconfirms Dante's exile and extends it to his children.
 Albertino Mussato crowned poet laureate in Padua.
- 1316 Conclave reopens in Lyons. Frenchman Jacques Duèse is elected pope as John XXII.
- 1318 Dante leaves Verona and settles in Ravenna as a guest of Guido Novello da Polenta.
- 1319–20 Dante writes two Latin eclogues to Giovanni del Virgilio and the *Questio de aqua et terra*.
- 1320 20 January: Dante reads the *Questio de aqua et terra* in a public lecture in Verona. Completes *Paradiso* between 1320 and 1321.
- 1321 Dante is sent on a diplomatic mission to Venice by Guido Novello. On his return, he dies of malaria in the night between 13 and 14 September and is buried in Ravenna in the Church of San Pier Maggiore, now San Francesco.
- 1322 Commentary to *Inferno* in Latin by Jacopo, son of Dante.
- 1324 Commentary to *Inferno* in Latin by Graziolo Bambaglioli, Bologna.
- 1324–8 Commentary to the full *Commedia* in Italian by Iacomo della Lana, Bologna.
- 1327 Milan: Biblioteca Trivulziana, Ms. 1080: first illustrated ms of the *Commedia*.
- 1328 The Dominican Guido Vernani writes the *De reprobatione Monarchiae*, a fierce attack on Dante's political treatise.
- 1329 According to Boccaccio, the *Monarchia* is publicly burnt as heretical in Bologna.
- 1333 Commentary to *Inferno* in Latin by Guido da Pisa, Pisa (?).
- 1334 *Ottimo Commento*, full commentary in Italian.
- 1335 The *Commedia* is banned by the Dominican order in Tuscany.
- 1340 *Comentum* in Latin by Pietro Alighieri, Verona.
- 1341 Petrarch crowned poet laureate in Rome by Robert of Anjou, King of Naples.
- 1343 Death of Robert of Anjou and end of Angevin dynasty in Naples.
- 1343–50 Commentary on the whole poem in Latin by Alberico da Rosciate, Bergamo.
- 1347–50 Black Death.

Abbreviations and note on translations

The following editions and translations are used throughout, unless otherwise stated.

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| Bible | <i>Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem</i> , ed. R. Weber and R. Gryson, 5th edn (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).
<i>The New Jerusalem Bible</i> (New York: Doubleday, 1990). |
| Commedia | <i>La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata</i> , ed. G. Petrocchi, 2nd edn, 4 vols. (Florence: Le Lettere, 1994).
<i>The Divine Comedy</i> , trans. J. D. Sinclair, 3 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1981); slightly adapted. |
| Conv. | <i>Convivio</i> , ed. F. Brambilla Ageno, 3 vols. (Florence: Le Lettere, 1995).
<i>Dante's Il Convivio (The Banquet)</i> , trans. R. H. Lansing (New York: Garland, 1990). |
| Detto | <i>Il Fiore e il Detto d'Amore attribuibili a Dante Alighieri</i> , ed. G. Contini (Milan: Mondadori, 1984), pp. 483–512.
<i>The Fiore and the Detto d'Amore, A Late 13th-Century Translation of the 'Roman de la Rose' Attributable to Dante</i> , trans. S. Casciani and C. Kleinhenz (University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), pp. 509–39. |
| Dve | <i>De vulgari eloquentia</i> , ed. P. V. Mengaldo, in Dante Alighieri, <i>Opere minori</i> , 2 vols. (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1979–88), vol. II, pp. 1–237.
<i>De vulgari eloquentia</i> , trans. S. Botterill (Cambridge University Press, 1996). |
| Ecl. | <i>Egloge</i> , ed. G. Albanese, in Dante, <i>Opere</i> , 3 vols. (Milan: Mondadori, 2011–), vol. II, pp. 1593–783.
P. H. Wicksteed and E. G. Gardner, <i>Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio</i> (Westminster: Constable, 1902). |

Abbreviations and note on translations

xxv

<i>ED</i>	<i>Enciclopedia Dantesca</i> , 5 vols. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970–78).
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistole</i> , ed. C. Villa, in <i>Opere</i> , vol. II, pp. 1417–592 <i>Dantis Alagherii Epistolae: The Letters of Dante</i> , ed. and trans. P. J. Toynbee, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966). <i>Four Political Letters</i> , trans. C. E. Honess (London: MHRA, 2007).
<i>Fiore</i>	<i>Il Fiore</i> , pp. 1–467. <i>The Fiore</i> , pp. 35–499.
<i>Inf.</i>	<i>Inferno</i> .
<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Monarchia</i> , ed. P. Shaw (Florence: Le Lettere, 2009). <i>Monarchy</i> , trans. P. Shaw (Cambridge University Press, 1996).
<i>Par.</i>	<i>Paradiso</i> .
<i>Purg.</i>	<i>Purgatorio</i> .
<i>Questio</i>	<i>Questio de aqua et terra</i> , ed. F. Mazzoni, in <i>Opere minori</i> , vol. II, pp. 693–880. <i>A Question of the Water and the Land</i> , trans. C. H. Bromby, in A. Paolucci (ed.), <i>Dante beyond the Commedia</i> (New York: Published by Griffon House Publications for The Bagehot Council, 2004), pp. 1–32.
<i>Rime</i>	<i>Rime</i> , ed. D. De Robertis (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2005). <i>Dante's Lyric Poetry</i> , trans. K. Foster and P. Boyde, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).
<i>Vn</i>	<i>La vita nuova</i> , rev. ed. M. Barbi (Florence: Bemporad, 1932). <i>Vita nova</i> , trans. A. Frisardi (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2012).

All translations from classical Latin authors, unless stated otherwise, are taken from the Loeb Classical Library. All other translations are noted in the individual chapters.