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978-1-108-42129-4 — The Cambridge Companion to Dante's 'Commedia'
Edited by Zygmunt G. Barański, Simon Gilson
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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO DANTE'S *COMMEDIA*

This newly commissioned volume presents a focused overview of Dante's masterpiece, the *Commedia*, offering Dante's readers of today wide-ranging insights into the poem and its core features. Leading scholars discuss matters of structure, narrative, language and style, characterization, doctrine, and politics, in chapters that make their own contributions to Dante criticism by raising problems and questions that call for renewed attention, while investigating contextual concerns as well as the current state of criticism about the poem. The *Commedia* is also placed in a variety of cultural and historical contexts through accounts of the poem's transmission and reception that explore both its contemporary influence and its continuing legacy today. With its accessible approach, its unstinting focus on the poem and its attention to matters that have not always received adequate critical assessment, this volume will be of value to all students and scholars of Dante's great poem.

Zygmunt G. Barański is Serena Professor of Italian Emeritus at the University of Cambridge and Notre Dame Professor of Dante and Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Among his publications are '*Sole nuovo luce nuova*'. *Saggi sul rinnovamento culturale in Dante* (1996), *Dante e i segni* (2000), '*Chiosar con altro testo*'. *Leggere Dante nel Trecento* (2001) and, with Lino Pertile, *Dante in Context* (Cambridge, 2015).

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For our children, Anna and Ed, Lauren and Sofia

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ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

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

Bible *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. R. Weber and R. Gryson, 5th edn. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

The New Jerusalem Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1990).

Commedia *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. G. Petrocchi, 2nd edn., 4 vols. (Florence: Le Lettere, 1994).

The Divine Comedy, trans. J. D. Sinclair, 3 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1981); slightly adapted.

Conv. *Convivio*, ed. F. Brambilla Ageno, 3 vols. (Florence: Le Lettere, 1995).

Dante's Il Convivio (The Banquet), trans. R. H. Lansing (New York: Garland, 1990).

Detto *Il Fiore e il Detto d'Amore attribuibili a Dante Alighieri*, ed. G. Contini (Milan: Mondadori, 1984), pp. 483–512.

The Fiore and the Detto d'Amore, A Late 13th-Century Translation of the 'Roman de la Rose' Attributable to Dante, trans. S. Casciani and C. Kleinhenz (University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), pp. 509–39.

Dve *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed P. V. Mengaldo, in Dante Alighieri, *Opere minori*, 2 vols. (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1979–88), II, 1–237.

De vulgari eloquentia, trans. S. Botterill (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

ED *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, 5 vols. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970–78).

Ecl. *Egloge*, ed. G. Albanese, in Dante, *Opere*, 3 vols. (Milan: Mondadori, 2011–), II, 1593–783.

P. H. Wicksteed and E. G. Gardner, *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio* (Westminster: Constable, 1902).

Ep. *Epistole*, ed. C. Villa, in *Opere*, II, 1417–592.

Dantis Alagherii Epistolae: The Letters of Dante, ed. and trans. P. J. Toynbee, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966).

Four Political Letters, trans. C. E. Honess (London: MHRA, 2007).

Fiore *Il Fiore*, pp. 1–467.

The Fiore, pp. 35–499.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

- Inf.* *Inferno*.
Mon. *Monarchia*, ed. P. Shaw (Florence: Le Lettere, 2009).
Monarchy, trans. P. Shaw (Cambridge University Press, 1996).
Par. *Paradiso*.
Purg. *Purgatorio*.
Questio *Questio de aqua et terra*, ed. F. Mazzoni, in *Opere minori*, II, 693–880.
A Question of the Water and the Land, trans. C. H. Bromby, in A. Paolucci (ed.), *Dante beyond the Commedia* (New York: Published by Griffon House Publications for The Bagehot Council, 2004), pp. 1–32.
Rime *Rime*, ed. D. De Robertis (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2005).
Dante's Lyric Poetry, trans. K. Foster and P. Boyde, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).
Vn *La vita nuova*, rev. ed. M. Barbi (Florence: Bemporad, 1932).
Vita nova, 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.

CHRONOLOGY 1250–1340

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.
1277	9 January: marriage contract with Gemma Donati.
1282	Dante's father, Alighiero di Bellincione, dies.
1283	Dante publishes first poem. Friendship with Guido Cavalcanti
1285	Marriage to Gemma Donati
1287	Dante in Bologna? Beatrice marries Simone de' Bardi
1286	Dante writes the <i>Fiore</i> and <i>Detto d'Amore</i> (?)
1287	Birth of first child, Giovanni (?)
1289	Dante at the battle of Campaldino against Arezzo. Son Jacopo is born (?)
1290	Death of Beatrice. Son Pietro is born (?)
1293	Ordinances of Justice. Dante writes <i>Vita nova</i> . Brunetto Latini dies in Florence.
1294	December, Pope Celestine V abdicates five months after his election. Boniface VIII becomes pope.

CHRONOLOGY 1250–1340

- 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 member of the Council of the Hundred.
- 1299 Daughter Antonia is born (?).
- 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 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 5000 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*.
 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 *Convivio* and *De vulgari eloquentia* (?).
- 1305 Bertrand De Got elected pope with the name of Clement V.

CHRONOLOGY 1250–1340

- 1306 Dante in Lunigiana, guest of Moroello Malaspina. He starts writing the *Commedia* and continues until 1320/1.
- 1307 Dante in Casentino: letter and canzone (*Rime* CXVI) to Moroello Malaspina.
- 1308 Henry of Luxembourg chosen to be next emperor.
Dante in Lucca.
- 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 *Monarchia* (?).
- 1313 August: Henry dies of malaria in Buonconvento, near Siena.
- 1314 Pope Clement V dies. Dante writes open letter to Italian Cardinals urging them to elect an Italian pope. Conclave closes for two years.
- 1315 June: Amnesty offered to Florentine exiles; Dante rejects offer.
October: Florence reconfirms Dante's exile and extends it to his children.
- 1316 Conclave reopens in Lyons. Frenchman Jacques Duèse is elected pope as John XXII.
- 1317 Dante writes or begins writing *Monarchia* (?).
- 1318 Dante leaves Verona and settles in Ravenna as 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 on the night between

CHRONOLOGY 1250–1340

	13 and 14 September and is buried in Ravenna in the church of San Pier Maggiore, now San Francesco.
1322	Commentary to the <i>Inferno</i> in Italian by Jacopo, son of Dante.
1324	Commentary to the <i>Inferno</i> in Latin by Graziolo Bambaglioli, Bologna.
1324–8	Commentary to the full <i>Commedia</i> in Italian by Iacomo della Lana, Bologna.
1334	<i>Ottimo Commento</i> , full commentary in Italian.
1335–40	Commentary to <i>Inferno</i> in Latin by Guido da Pisa, Pisa (?).
1340	<i>Comentum</i> in Latin by Pietro Alighieri, Verona.

MAP



Map 1. Dante's Italy around 1300

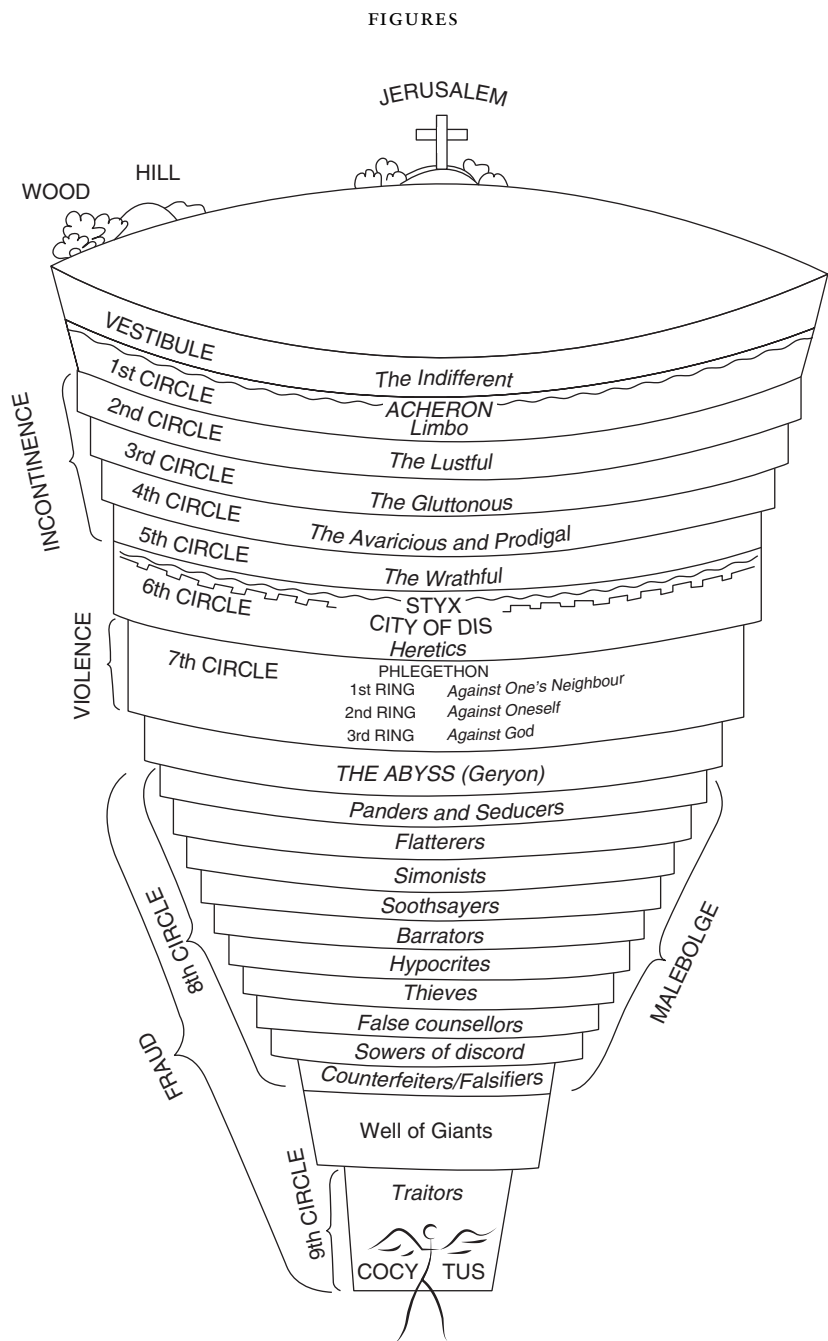


Figure 1. A Schematic Representation of Dante's Hell

FIGURES

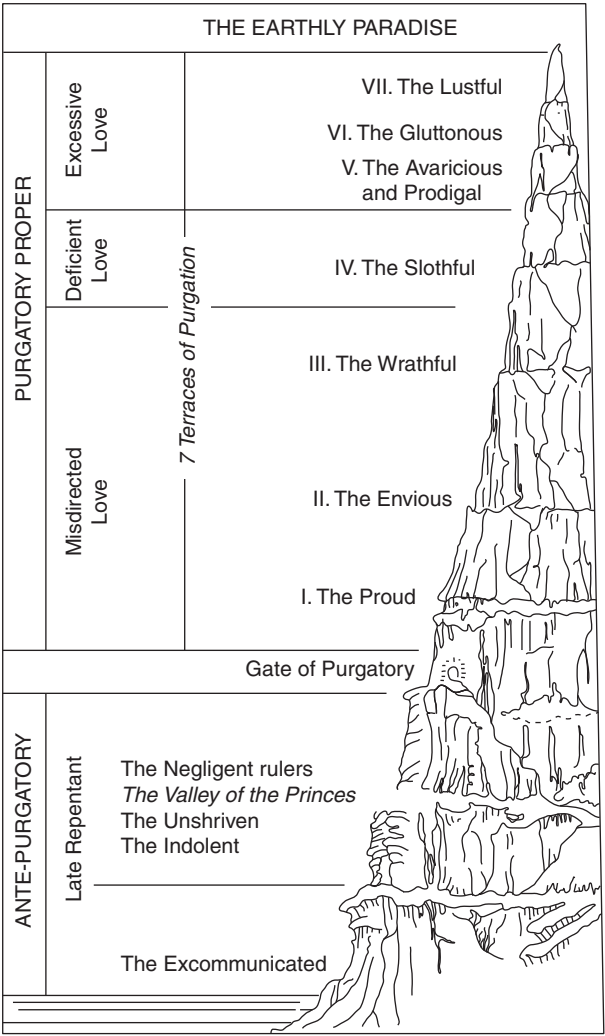


Figure 2. A Schematic Representation of Dante's Purgatory

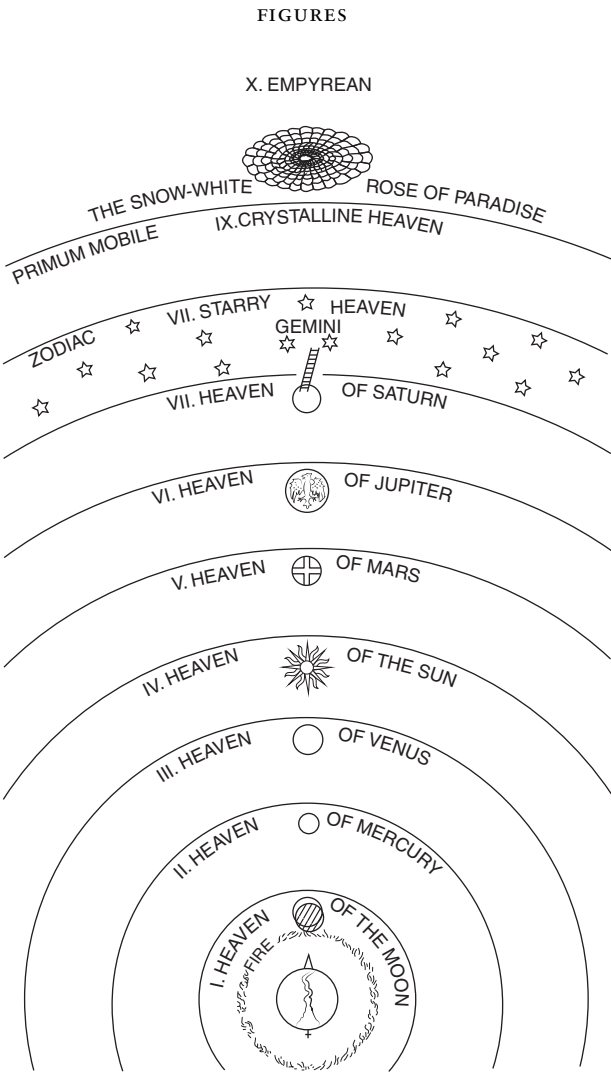


Figure 3. A Schematic Representation of Dante's Paradise

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