

## Award of Travel Bursary Accounts

Funds awarded for:

For travel and associated costs of travelling to Florence and Rome to examine manuscripts of l'Ottimo Commento. The second redaction is found in ms. Riccardiana 1004 (n.10), and the third in ms. Barberiniano Latino 4103. Neither of these redactions are available entirely in printed form.

### Accounts:

<b>Expense Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Travel	January 11, 2014	Edinburgh	Rome	£137.90 (cost of return flight)
	January 11, 2014	Rome Fiumicino	Rome Termini	£13.00
	January 15, 2014	Rome Termini	Florence	£38.50
	January 18, 2014	Florence	Rome Termini	£38.50
	January 18, 2014	Rome Termini	Rome Fiumicino	£13.00
Accommodation	January 11-14, 2014	Rome		240.00 (euros)
	January 15-17, 2014	Florence		153.00 (euros)
<b>Total Expenses:</b>				<b>£240.94 + 393.00 (euros)</b>
<b>Funds Awarded:</b>				<b>£300.00</b>

## Research Report

My thesis, entitled ‘Reading Paul and Dante in the Fourteenth Century’, involves a close reading of Dante’s *Commedia* and the Pauline epistles, as well as the fourteenth-century commentaries on the *Commedia*. The purpose of my research is two-fold: first, I am examining where commentators include Pauline material because it relates directly to the Dantean text. For example, in *Paradiso* II, Dante describes his journey through the heavens, and states that he is unsure whether he made the trip in the flesh or out of it (*Par.* II, 37-39), clearly reminiscent of Paul’s own uncertainty regarding his bodily state when he was brought into the third heaven (II Cor. 12.2). I will be able to determine not only the presence and influence of Pauline thought on the *Commedia*, but also how a fourteenth-century Italian audience read Paul in Dante. Secondly, the commentators often quoted Paul even when the passage did not stem directly from the text of the *Commedia*, therefore reading Paul *into* Dante. Even when the use of Paul in the Dante commentaries appears tangential to the section of the poem being examined, this demonstrates how reading Dante may have triggered readers into recalling Pauline passages. This provides insight into how these writers were reading Paul, whether by identifying similar themes between the apostolic works and the epic poem or simply by relying on Paul as an authority for particular lines of argument. In addition, this approach allows me to show how well these commentators knew the Pauline material and what aspects of it they emphasized. Overall, I aim to analyse medieval (specifically fourteenth-century) readings of Paul’s writings in relation to Dante’s *Commedia*. This will contribute to our understanding of how the Bible was read and used in fourteenth-century Italy, as well as presenting an in depth look at the works of both Paul and Dante. Furthermore it will fill a lacuna in Dante studies as to the relevance of the theology of Paul to the *Commedia*.

As my research centres around the 14<sup>th</sup>-century commentaries on the *Commedia*, I have become familiar with all of these sources, particularly the major commentaries, one of which is that known as “l’Ottimo Commento”. This commentary exists in three different redactions, yet only the first redaction has been printed in completion: *L’Ottimo Commento della Divina Commedia: Testo Inedito d’un Contemporaneo di Dante*, ed. Alessandro Torri, ristampa con prefazione di Francesco Mazzoni, Vol. I-III (Bologna: Forni Editore, 1995). Recently the commentary on *Inferno* from the third redaction has been published (*L’ultima forma dell’Ottimo Commento: chiose sopra la Comedia di Dante Alighieri fiorentino tracte da diversi ghiosatori: Inferno*, ed. Claudia di Fonzo (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 2008).

I have created a database that lists every reference to St. Paul throughout the commentaries, which will be included as an appendix in my thesis. In order for this to be exhaustive, and in order to determine the true extent of how this fourteenth-century audience used the writings of the Apostle, I must examine the second and third redactions of l’Ottimo Commento. These redactions are found in ms. Riccardiana 1004 (n.10) and ms. Barberiniano Latino 4103, respectively, as they may contain further Pauline references, or may perhaps omit Pauline allusions that were included in the first redaction. Because of this trip, I was able to complete my overview of Pauline references in the Trecento commentaries on the *Commedia*.

Thanks to the support of the Society, I was able to travel to Italy for a week in January in order to consult the above mentioned manuscripts. On January 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, I consulted ms. Barb. Lat. 4103 in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. There are some occasions where references to Paul appear in the same locations as the first redaction, but on the whole it differs quite a bit from its predecessor. There are additional Pauline references (for example in *Inf.* II, VII, and *Purg.* XXV) and many previously used passages are omitted. For example, the first redaction contains three Pauline references in the interpretation of *Purg.* X, whereas the third redaction contains none. In general, I found that, compared to the first redaction, this version of l'Ottimo contains far fewer references to any outside works at all, and was therefore less dependent on the support of authoritative sources. This is particularly interesting for the aspect of my thesis that focuses on reading practices in the Middle Ages.

From January 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, I consulted ms. Ricc. 1004 (n.10) in the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence. Although this manuscript is not part of the collection they normally allow people to consult, I was able to see the actual manuscript after difficulties with microfilm and digital reproductions. Many of the omissions found in the third redaction originate from the second. That being said, the second redaction follows the first redaction much more closely, as well as the commentary of Jacopo della Lana. Aside from Pauline references, what also interests me about the Trecento commentaries is the manner in which they read the *Commedia*, and by extension the works of Paul. A *proemio* noted by Luigi Rocca that explicitly explains the author's intentions was unfortunately not part of this particular manuscript.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Luigi Rocca, chapter 5, 'L'Ottimo Commento', in *Di alcuni commenti della Divina Commedia composti nei primi vent'anni dopo la morte di Dante* (Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1891), pp. 232-342 [p. 252].