Remembering Charles T. Davis

Charles Davis, President of the Dante Society of America from 1991 to 1997, died on April 10, 1998. His first book, *Dante and the Idea of Rome* (1957), is a classic of Dante scholarship, but his many important essays on medieval Italy and Italian political theorists and historians, some collected in *Dante’s Italy* (1984), have also changed and enriched our views of fourteenth-century Florence and Italy. His just-completed book on Giovanni Villani is eagerly awaited. He was professor of history at Tulane for over forty years, elected a fellow of the Medieval Academy and member of the American Philosophical Society, holder of many fellowships and member of many boards. He served the scholarly community, whose presence he so enhanced, with generosity, wit, elegance of thought, and enormous erudition.

What follows are a collection of thoughts about Charles from friends and colleagues, beginning with those who knew him longest. However different in detail, they have in common an overpowering sense of respect and gratitude and love for the extraordinary man we were privileged to know. I have taken the liberty of quoting a few remarks from letters of those contacted, because I think they convey so well how inadequate we all felt to the task of expressing our feelings for Charles:

From Marjorie Reeves: “We [the Oxford Dante Society] recalled how Charles came regularly to Oxford in the summer when his mother was living here and was a guest at several of our meetings as well, of course, as giving an excellent paper at one meeting. I remember him as a delightful man, always so kind and generous in his hospitality, and, of course, I
admired his scholarship greatly. But my closeup memory has—alas—faded. By one of those curious quirks of memory what I remember most vividly was a splendid dinner full of fine food and drink and good talk which he gave in one of those celebrated New Orleans restaurants! So I am afraid I cannot contribute anything worthy of him to your memoir. I regret this very much because he is so worthy of celebration.”

From William Bowsky: “I wish that I could write that my fondest memory of Charles was ascending Mt. Ventoux together. Instead I only can lament the passing of a dear friend of some four decades, not only an outstanding scholar, but at least as important, one of the sweetest men I ever knew.”

From Anna Chiavacci Leonardi: “Sarò ben lieta di mandare un breve ricordo della mia lunga amicizia con l’illustre collega, caro a quanti lo hanno conosciuto per la sua signorile cordialità e apertura d’animo verso chiunque lo avvicinasse, celebre o sconosciuto che fosse.”

Joan Ferrante
*Columbia University*
*New York, New York*

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I had the good fortune to meet Charles Davis in Florence, in 1952, and thus to enjoy the friendship of an exceptional man and scholar over almost half a century. We were both staying in the home of the widow of the Admiral who had directed the Accademia Navale di Livorno and who had lost his life in a naval battle with the British fleet during World War Two. A third guest was an ex-G.I. who had come to study Italian art in Florence. He had recently acquired an Italian *fidanzata* from Siena, who invited the three of us to come to take part in that upstart, the July Palio (junior by a number of centuries to the medieval Palio, run on August 16). The night before the great event, I was taken ill and had to stay in bed. Charles went, saw and conquered: not only did he witness that wonderful spectacle but he also took part in the wild celebrations that followed—for he was an honored guest of the *contrada* that won the race that day. That, for me, is emblematic of Charles’s life: full of tradition, color and spectacle, reflecting his catholic interests and deep humanity.
The first time I saw Charles after he had been deprived of his sight is one of my most treasured memories. We met in another home—this time, of dear friends in New York, in October 1994. The apartment overlooked the Hudson River; but what made the evening unforgettable was our hosts’ warmhearted generosity: after dinner, Joan Ferrante and her husband Carey were kind enough to perform Beethoven’s Spring Sonata for us. As in Florence, I was happy to feel inferior to Charles, for his sense of hearing and appreciation of music had surely been enhanced by the terrible loss he had sustained. It was a magical moment, “e anch’io distilla / nel core il dolce che nacque da essa.”

Some year previously, we had met in Florence. Charles invited me to go out into the Tuscan countryside in an old Volkswagen. We made a sentimental Dante pilgrimage to the Casentino under the shadow of the Conti Guidi and as far as St. Romuald’s Camaldoli, admiring on the way there and back “Li ruscelletti che d’i verdi colli / del Casentin discendon giuso in Arno.” About ten years before, I had had the unique experience of being Charles’s guest at a symposium on “Sin in the Middle Ages” (having reached the statutory number of years, I felt quite an expert on the topic). Others will recall, like me, the warmth and breadth of his hospitality. In particular, I remember a visit to a house in New Orleans built in the nineteenth century by a French architect: it was typical of Charles that he had remembered my French ancestry and brought me to see this fine building (where I spent the morning gazing at museum pieces that struck the American audience with awe on account of their antiquity, but which had been a familiar part of my childhood).

Another memory: in 1986, Charles sent me the obituary from the London Times marking the death of Alessandro Passerin d’Entrèves, who had been our Professor at Oxford. The anecdote that amused us both immensely recounted the arrival of the British Eighth Army. D’Entrèves, who had been a leading figure in the organization of the Italian partisans, had just become mayor (podestà) of Aosta. He greeted the English officer who came to interview him with: “I was at Balliol, where were you?”

The last offprint I received from Charles (only a few weeks ago) is of an article he wrote on “Kantorowicz and Dante,” published in Stuttgart in 1997. On re-reading it, I am—as always—amazed by the exquisite depth and balance of Charles’s scholarship. I also treasure the shafts of humor and occasional, gentle irony that were so characteristic of this great scholar; and I should like to share one or two with you. For example,
Kantorowicz’s version of the line from *Purgatorio* vi (“non donna di province, ma bordello”) as “No empress of kingdoms, but madam of a shabby little whorehouse”—which was judged by Charles “the best rendering of the line that I have encountered and think Dante might even have agreed.” On the same page, while referring to Kantorowicz’s article on Dante’s Two Suns, Charles points out that the German scholar “made no effort to locate Dante’s exact source (showing, indeed, both here and elsewhere an on the whole commendable lack of interest in such problems’: so much for Quellenforschung! Later, commenting on Kantorowicz’s discovery of the “three world forces” pulsing through Frederick II’s state and Dante’s *Monarchia*, we find the pithy comment: “This assertion [. . .] implies [. . .] also that Dante had studied Frederick’s propaganda as carefully and believed it as devoutly as Kantorowicz himself. This may be so, but Kantorowicz makes little effort here or elsewhere to prove it.”

In our correspondence by e-mail, I had mentioned to Charles my scruples about a book I had to review by a younger scholar. He chastised me for “mild reactions” to his “bloodthirsty proposals” and reminded me of my duty to speak out “e lascia pur grattar dov’è la roagna,” adding: “Soon nobody intelligent will be willing to read books of this sort any more, and the field of literary criticism will be deserted. Publishing some sprightly and savage reviews might delay the coming of this not altogether undesirable day.” Irony of this kind was also turned against himself. When I told him that I had to give a lecture in June on *Inferno* xxiii and asked him whether he had any thoughts on the role of irony in the Middle Ages, he replied: “I have very little to say. As an Anglo-Saxon, I am afraid I wouldn’t recognize irony if it came walking down the street straight in my path.” Perhaps this is what critics mean when they compare Ariosto’s irony to God’s cyc: the searching, loving, gaze that encompasses and places in its proper context l’aiuola che à fa tanto feroi: feroci NOI, ma tu, Charles, MAI! You truly reflected Terence’s words: “Homo sum: humili nihil a me alienum puto.” As historian and scholar, as husband and father, as friend and inspirer, you were truly one of Nature’s gentlemen. Thank you for what you were, Charles, and thank you for what you are as you live on in our memories.

John Scott

*University of Western Australia*

*Perth, Australia*
Charles Davis’s intelligence and mind, although complex, were distinct and particular. His qualities and talents were a very specific gift to his friends: his subtlety, his humor, his learning, his generosity, and his Mississippi-ness with its echoes of Eudora Welty. I was last with Charles in New Orleans this February (1998). I spoke at Tulane about Salimbene. As always when I spoke before Charles, and particularly about anything Italian, he knew more about what I talked about, had viewed it from many more angles, than did or had or could I. And that was, as usual, a source of pleasure, of pleasant funniness, for both of us, as he sat three feet in front of me at Tulane. He knew exactly my limitations, accepted them with humor, allowed me to accept them with humor, too, and delightfully encouraged me to do the best I could within them, without of course ever explicitly talking to me about what they were. The distance between us was a constant joke that we could both appreciate.

But, in spite of Charles’s distinctiveness, I found, when I was asked to think about my most sharply imaged memories of him, that they were all, or almost all, of Charles as part of a family with Caecilia, Bernie, and Frank, with my family, the nine of us together: parading up the via Garibaldi after Sunday Mass to eat lunch with Mrs. Davis, Charles’s mother down from Oxford and wearing gloves or, eating again, in the piazza Sforza Cesarini with Bernie and Frank running to get Roman water for us all, for our table, from a public fountain; or all of us somewhere in Lazio in a cave full of bats, which Bernie and Frank particularly relished, and the two of them debating which, St. Francis or St. Anthony, could beat the other up; or Frank, as we were gathered at an Overseas School fête saying he would beat up anyone who caused our youngest child any trouble; or finally, in a more limited group, Caecilia’s sparkling crystal reflecting the light of a Roman sunset, on a beautiful Roman table set finely to welcome our daughter to the dining of grown-ups.

These are all family memories, memories of a family in which Charles was the wise and droll father, a family which gave rich pleasure and support to other families. But one austere memory of Charles alone does stand sharply in my mind. It comes from the time when Charles last talked at Berkeley. After dinner we went to Charles’s room in the Durant where he established the room’s shape and dimensions. As I left I asked whether
he wanted the light on or off, and he said that to him it made no difference.

Robert Brentano
_University of California_
_Berkeley, California_

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I met Charles for the first time in Florence during the 1950s. It was at the Bar Archivio, just a short distance away from the hallowed Archivio di Stato. I was having coffee with Rosemarie Devonshire Jones, and he joined us at the table. The conversation featured the chronicle of Dino Compagni in which I was much invested. Patiently, and with great learning, Charles commenced to undermine my confidence by reviewing the extensive nineteenth-century German literature on the topic. After about a half hour, I was much less sure of its authenticity, and Rosemarie was much impressed with Charles's knowledge of esoteric German scholarship. After that, we met regularly and both of us were equally moved by Charles's ability to mix martinis. His parties were legendary and it was no easy accomplishment to make the five floors down from his domicile.

My favorite reminiscence is Charles's story of the circumstances under which he achieved his post at Tulane. Returning to the United States from Oxford, he had no American academic contacts. He traveled the circuit in the South seeking employment. At Tulane he met with the chair of the History Department who advised him that there was no opening at this time. Leaving the interview, the chairman, in an effort to be polite, asked the Rhodes Scholar what he was intending to publish? Charles replied that Oxford had accepted his monograph on _Dante and the Idea of Rome_. Such was the job-searching tactic of an innocent who had been abroad.

Marvin B. Becker
_University of Michigan_
_Ann Arbor, Michigan_

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The work of Charles Davis will be recognized by all who encounter it as that of the greatest American historian—dantista of the twentieth century, a scholar who wonderfully located the work and thought of a great poet in the intellectual, ecclesiological, and devotional context of his age. But those of us who experienced the pleasure of his company know other things about him that are not necessarily evident in the work, and these, too, should be memorialized by us who remember them, fondly and sadly.

At least half of the definition of true nobility that Dante attributed to Frederick II—elegant bearing—was certainly true of Charles, in his case, in the fascinating combination of a Mississippi gentleman and a familiar of the academic worlds of Oxford and Italy, honed, I suspect at least in part by his Oxford teacher, Alessandro Passerin d'Entrèves, another natural—and in d'Entrèves' case, legal—aristocrat. Charles's great courtesy, friendliness, sense of humor even concerning matters dantesque, and willingness to help other scholars—developed and demonstrated at Oxford, Tulane, and Florence—was always, for me, one of the joys of life in this profession and outside of it.

Did a young scholar around 1970 need to be taught both the obvious and the subtler protocols of the early Kalamazoo conferences? There was no better or more trustworthy guide than Charles, who not only chaired sessions as if to the chair born, but also knew that a single bottle of bourbon could miraculously provide hospitality to all and sundry for an entire weekend, and usually provided it. Ten years ago I was able to return the old favor on top of a dry academic plateau in Tennessee, and once again a table was filled up for several hours into the night by Charles Davis, Skip Kay, and a panva curia talking, as usual, about Dante. A visit to Charles and Caecilia at Amelia Street or Pine Street encountered the same grand hospitality, as did, on a larger scale, the entire Medieval Academy, when Charles hosted one of its best meetings ever, in New Orleans—and invited what seemed to be the entire Academy to his home afterward.

Charles seemed both surprised and delighted when I suggested collecting his essays into Dante's Italy, and after the book appeared, I invited Charles to lecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He arrived on the eve of the largest snowstorm in the city's history, graciously spoke to a smaller crowd than I would have liked, and rode with me through the city in a sturdy old station wagon, ploughing through or ricocheting off snow banks, passing stalled busses and cars, Charles crying, "Whee! Isn't
this wonderful!” all the while. When another opportunity to lecture at Penn arose, he wrote, wistfully, “Is there a chance of another blizzard?”

His sudden blindness some years ago changed nothing else about him. He could laugh, as always, and he could write eloquently, now with the help of his son Frank, also as always. At conferences in Sarasota or at the Dante Society’s meeting in Cambridge (Charles was a natural-born president), he remained the delightful, friendly scholar, expressing scepticism about some well-known Dante-truths and, as ever, polite respect for those who still clung to them.

The world held him below too little time. He gave heed to the foundation that Nature laid and followed it, his scholarship making us all better scholars and his humanity, I hope, making us all better humans. He was a now-lost source of innocent—and gracious and learned—merriment. And the fourth heaven is increased by one.

Edward Peters

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I first met Charles Davis in the summer of 1959; I had just graduated from Cornell and was spending the summer in Florence in order to learn the language of Dante. I think it was in the Pensione Bandini that I met Charles. I had already read Dante and the Idea of Rome, and was in awe of its scholarship and insight; I couldn’t quite believe that its author was taking me so seriously. I remember vividly his extraordinary courtesy and generosity, his interest in my work, and his encouragement. This first impression was reconfirmed in my many subsequent encounters with Charles. I particularly cherish the image of him during the conference on “Dante e la Bibbia” in 1986 whisking a group of us off to a favorite restaurant on the Via Guelfa; he was a delightful presence at all of the conference events, scholarly and social. His years as President of the Dante Society were marked by exemplary gallantry and generosity; his openness, his willingness to entertain various approaches, and his respectful consideration of others endeared him, I think, to all. However difficult his blindness must have been for him, he never made it difficult for anyone else. I worked with him on his essay for the Cambridge Companion to Dante
shortly after he became blind, and was amazed by how much he was able to do and to remember. His research on Dante has added much to our knowledge, and his personal courage and kindness are an inspiration. He will be sorely missed.

Rachel Jacoff
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Massachusetts

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When I first met Charles in 1967, he was already an established authority on Dante, and I was taking my first uncertain steps in the field; he gladly assumed the role of sympathetic mentor. Then and thereafter he seemed to know everyone in the field, both here and abroad; moreover, his reading was not only broad but deep, and he loved nothing better than to rehearse the pros and cons of a disputed question, say the date of the Monarchia. He was always ready to read my drafts, and his reactions managed to combine warm and encouraging appreciation with criticism and arguments that, though often to the contrary, were never hostile. Indeed, his efforts as a critical reader surpassed all expectation when, despite his blindness, he reviewed my translation and commentary on the Monarchia. in its entirety and responded with page after page of suggestions.

When I listed Charles’s academic qualities that impressed me, I was troubled because they seemed somewhat ordinary; eventually I recognized the reason: Charles in many ways attained and maintained the ideals that the rest of us only aim at: he was fluent in at least Latin, Italian, and German; widely traveled and acquainted; well read and current in the fields he cultivated; an intrepid researcher in archives and manuscripts; an expert whose opinions remained open to change; a devoted teacher with high standards, whose hard work set the pace for his students. As an historian, he was remarkable in his ability to combine detailed investigation with broad generalizations, as perhaps is best seen in his studies of Florentine education. Equally remarkable was the breadth of his interests as an intellectual historian: political theory, education, source criticism, Mendicants, and above all Romanitas in all its ramifications.

All this he did with a warm personal style that endeared him, not just
to me, but to innumerable friends. His manner was genial, his temperament jovial, and hence he was the best of companions. His cheerful good humor was without malice; even in affliction, kindness and consideration for others were never forgotten. Still more attractive, for me at least, was his underlying honesty and seriousness of purpose, which he pursued with exemplary fortitude to the end. We have lost not only a great scholar but a beloved friend.

Richard Kay
*University of Kansas*
*Lawrence, Kansas*

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The first Charles Davis whom I knew was a book, *Dante and the Idea of Rome*. That is a book that people still use with instruction and delight some forty years after its publication. Then one night in 1969 Professor Davis became Charles, the first guest in the house my wife and I had just remodeled. The next year we were both in Rome, and saw each other there, often over wonderful plates of food and glasses of wine. We always talked about the same thing. We never talked about those who practiced the art of Dante studies. I never heard Charles say a mean-spirited thing in all the years I knew him.

That this most admirable of human beings should have been afflicted as he was in his last years was painful to everyone who knew him. But to watch him deal with his blindness so gallantly was also an inspiration. I do not think I have ever known anyone who was as universally respected as Charles Davis. In his final years, because of his affliction, that respect turned into a mixture of awe and love. He was simply the best we had, and we all knew it.

Robert Hollander
*Princeton University*
*Princeton, New Jersey*

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Like so many of us, I knew Charles first from *Dante and the Idea of Rome*, which I admired not only for its scholarship, but as one of the rare
treatments in English of a very important aspect of Dante’s thought. That common interest continued to unite us in conversations, reviews, panels, and most recently in a stimulating (for me) e-mail exchange about our papers for a Dante seminar. Illness kept him from attending the seminar, but he had of course written and submitted his own paper and read the others and as always had sharp, penetrating, learned, generous, and witty criticism to offer. He was the audience I envisioned for much of my work on Dante, and no attention was more rewarding than his. That he also could comment perceptively on my work in other areas was a sign of his catholic interests and broad knowledge of the medieval world.

When I spent a semester as a visiting professor at Tulane, I was privileged to spend time with Charles and Caecilia, formally in a medieval faculty seminar, and informally as a guest in their home, a model of hospitality, good food, and lively conversation. No one could have been a better cicerone to the culinary delights of New Orleans than Charles, indefatigable in pursuing the old and the new, sampling everything with what seemed to me Italian delight, and making extraordinary efforts to be sure I had experienced it all, including a special expedition out of town to get the best (and largest portions of) crawfish.

As a scholar, as a gourmet and gourmand, as inspired President of the Dante Society, as generous colleague and friend, and even as brilliant gossip, Charles was incomparable. His blindness had little effect on his public persona, though having lived half a century with a blind father I know what it must have cost him and his family to achieve that. But he did not miss a beat as President of the Dante Society. He never failed us, though I’m afraid I at least failed him, in the one job he asked me to do for the Society, to get a publications series started. His project was beyond my powers to realize, just as the standards he set for us, as scholar and noble human being, are just beyond reach.

Joan Ferrante
Columbia University
New York, New York

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If memory serves me well, I first met Charles Davis sometime in the early 1970s at Kalamazoo, which would become, in time, the preferred
meeting place for thousands of medievalists from all parts of the known world. Charles was, I believe, chairing a session on Dante’s Monarchia within the larger context of medieval political thought. I was awed by his presence and his erudition and by the easy but authoritative manner with which he guided the discussion that followed the presentation of the papers. I believe that one or more of his students were “performing” in the session, and I remember thinking at the time how wonderful it would be to have him as a teacher and mentor. For through Dante and the Idea of Rome and his numerous essays he had already shaped the way in which I and countless others would understand the Florentine poet.

That may have been one of the few times he went to the “‘zoo,’” for my more recent memories are of his presence at the annual meetings of the Medieval Academy of America and, of course, the twice-yearly gatherings of the Dante Society. During his tenure as President of the Society, members of the Council traveled—joyously—to New Orleans, where he was the perfect host and master of ceremonies—from the exquisite luncheons and receptions in his home to the Lucullian repasts in the French Quarter.

I vividly recall one extraordinary meeting that we had, in June 1986, in Florence, where Charles was directing an NEH seminar. Knowing that I would be passing through Florence, he had invited me to speak to his students on thirteenth-century Italian literature. I do not remember much of what I said to his students, but to have had the opportunity to meet with him in Dante’s home town, to walk with him along the streets in the medieval urban center, to converse with him about Dante over an espresso in a local bar—this was a very special and memorable moment, indeed.

We have lost an inspiring leader, an innovative scholar, an irreplacable colleague, and a kind and generous friend.

Christopher Kleinhenz
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

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Like many, I first came to know Charles Davis through his splendid book, Dante and the Idea of Rome. He was a historian, so we traveled
mostly in different circles. Our paths would not cross until the fall of 1988, when we both assumed positions on the Council of the Dante Society, he as Vice President and I as Secretary-Treasurer. But I would not really come to know him well until he became President of the Society, when its official business brought us into closer and fairly continuous contact, over a period of six years. That business he handled efficiently with quiet dispatch and, as in everything else he did, with elegance and humanity. One works with many colleagues over an academic career in carrying out various charges—departmental chairs, deans, presidents, colleagues on committees—but I think I can say I have never worked with a kinder, more decent person at any time. The least of it is he always accomplished what he set out to do. He was always unfailingly responsible; the Society’s tasks for him were a serious obligation. What is most memorable, however, was his character: his immense civility, his kindness, his gentle wit, his spirit of generosity. Some might say he was simply an example of a “Southern gentleman.” But this is to miss the uniqueness and trueness of his being: he was the most selfless person I have known. Fate did not treat him well, but he never uttered a word of complaint, never gave a hint of a sense of life’s unfairness. I always marveled that his personal charm and buoyancy of spirit underwent no change whatsoever after he lost sight in both eyes. And this loss did not deter him from accepting, at the Council’s request, a second term in office. Now one had to marvel at his prodigious feats of recall at the Society’s annual meetings, as he introduced a series of several speakers, citing large pieces of their academic achievements, all from memory. I knew him for six years, and hoped to have the continued pleasure of seeing him at the Society’s meetings, ex officio, as its immediate past president. That was not to be: he died just before he could attend the May 1998 meeting. Words fail, to sum up is impossible, but perhaps he or she comes closest who said of him not long after the meeting, “He was a magnificent human being.”

Richard Lansing

Brandeis University

Waltham, Massachusetts

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My fondest remembrances of Charles Davis are of our lively and lengthy discussions about classical Rome and its influence on medieval
and Renaissance culture. Charles was a most generous and fair-minded scholar whose interests extended to every facet of Dantean and medieval scholarship. His all-inclusive and wide ranging approach to scholarship was reflected in the type of fora he organized while President of the Dante Society of America, fora that were always informative, fair and representative of all aspects of scholarly inquiry. Charles was not only a superb scholar but also a marvelous human being and a gracious host. I shall cherish the memories of the Society’s charming and hospitable gatherings held at his stately New Orleans home. Given his decency, broad-mindedness and brilliance, Charles stood as a source of inspiration and as a beacon of hope in an academic community that is all too often marred with self-centeredness and opportunism.

Angelo Mazzocco
Mt. Holyoke College
South Hadley, Massachusetts

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Among the contributors to this memorial I am a newcomer, having met Charles Davis only in 1988, in the context of a Medieval Academy meeting that took place in Philadelphia. My first memory of Charles, my memory of that meeting, is one of my fondest. Bob Hollander and I were talking in the lobby of the conference hotel, when Bob interrupted our conversation by saying abruptly and spontaneously and loudly “Now THERE’S a REALLY nice person!” and making a beeline for the hotel’s front door, where Charles had just entered. Bob, who introduced me to Charles after he greeted him, was right, and I am grateful to him both for the introduction and for etching that moment so clearly in my memory.

Contini wrote that “Cavalcanti aveva salato il sangue a Dante,” and Charles just as certainly salted our medieval blood, adding a much needed New Orleanian flavor and piquancy. Always a gentleman, he was nonetheless never boring (thus, among other gifts, reminding us that the two categories do not exclude each other); his was a lively somewhat arch charm that stimulated the intellectual palate. Conversation with him was engaging and provocative, for Charles was one of those rare colleagues who did not shy away from discussing ideas, but pursued such discussions with vigor, precision and yet, too, with generosity. I treasure the letters
in which he responded to essays that I sent him, probing the implications of some points, querying others, complimenting me while—the part I enjoyed most—poking fun at me too. He offered the gift of authentic dialogue. His was a tolerant but incisive spirit, clearly imprinted, for instance, on his 1997 essay “Kantorowicz and Dante,” which lucidly but benignly illuminates Kantorowicz’s thinking—flaws and all.

“What,” Charles wrote me in a letter once, “is wrong with an honest disagreement between friends?” The lesson I learned from Charles was ultimately in the realm of human dealings: he taught forbearance, and showed that it could coexist with one’s awareness and critical judgment. I imagine him in the heaven of the sun, where, with his deft wit and exquisite forbearance, he sets the standard for a community of true scholars whose erudition does not preclude their practicing tolerance, inclusion, generosity, and friendship.

Teodolinda Barolini

Columbia University

New York, New York