The research project of the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR), “Dante Hier et Aujourd’hui en France” (DHAF, 2021 - 2025) is born in the French academy, on the occasion of Dante’s anniversary (1321 – 2021), thanks to Prof. Philippe Guérin (Uni. Sorbonne Nouvelle). The consortium brings together four universities (Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle, Rennes II, Grenoble Alpes, Nice Côte d’Azur), each of them responsible for a part of the investigation that aims at an exhaustive study of Dante’s presence and reception in France, from its origins to the present day, https://dhaf.hypotheses.org. The Université Côte d’Azur is responsible for the study of dantesque visualisations in France, in the French-speaking world, and in works of art preserved in French institutions. With the support and collaboration of the Società Dantesca Italiana and of its President, Prof. Marcello Ciccuto, the investigation into Dante and the fine arts from the French point of view began with a conference held at Villa La Stella, in the hills of Florence, on the 6th and 7th of December 2021. Dante e l’arte, the Catalan journal, published by the Universitat de Barcelona, which over the last decade has largely contributed to making more and more visible, online and on an international scale, the studies on Dante’s reception in all artistic forms (visual arts, including comics cinema, theatre, music, etc.), is the ideal scientific venue for the dossier of the 2021 conference. The DHAF project bearers sincerely thank Prof. Rossend Arquès Corominas, and the entire scientific and editorial team of the journal, for welcoming the Dante e l’arte’s 2023 issue, the thematic dossier “Dante et la France, le point de vue des arts / Dante e la Francia, dal punto di vista delle arti / Dante & France, from an artistic point of view”, which includes papers presented in Florence in December 2021, as well as new ones. The dossier opens with a text by Carlo Alberto Girotto (Uni. Sorbonne Nouvelle) on bibliophilia and Dante collecting in France and Italy between the 19th and 20th centuries. Marcello Ciccuto (Uni. Pisa) follows the traces of the French presence in Dante’s text itself, investigating Dante’s dialogue with Alain de Lille. 19th-century art is capital in the French reception: Michèle Hannoosh (Uni. Ann Arbor, Michigan), Lorenzo Bartoli (Uni. Autonoma de Madrid), Sophie Dutheillet de Lamothe (Lille, Palais des Beaux-Arts) and Silvia Argurio (Uni.
Sorbonne Nouvelle) investigate four cases. Delacroix (Hannoosh) explores dantesque material for more than forty years, from the 1820s to the 1860s, both in his works of art and in his writings. Frédéric Loewe-Marchand (Bartoli) presented The Soul of Myrrha at the Salon des Champs Élysées in Paris in 1892, and the following year at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The Soul of Myrrha was also presented by Jean Clair at the Scuderie del Quirinale’s Inferno exhibition in Rome, on the occasion of the 700th anniversary. Eugène Deully, altogether painter and director of the Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille in the late 19th century, painted Francesca da Rimini in 1897, a painting Sophie Dutheillet de Lamothe takes out of the museum’s reserves and gives back to public appreciation. Dante’s statue by Jean-Paul Aubé placed in front of the prestigious Collège de France in Paris, emblematic of the official celebration of Dante, is studied by Silvia Argurio together with, and in opposition to, another interpretation of Dante in the late 19th and early 20th century, that of the esoteric network and of the Rosicrucians. Approaching the 20th, and even the 21st century, Salvatore Sansone (ISIME, Rome) traces the publishing history of Guattuso’s Dante, while Chiara Portesine (SNS, Pisa - Uni. Bologna) shows how Gianfranco Baruchello becomes an imitator of Gustave Doré in his work as a cartoonist. Finally Eva Ponzi (Uni. Salento) presents her pioneering work in the field of digital humanities, with the exhibition Viaggiare con Dante (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana), a model for the digital humanities content (database and virtual exhibition) of the ANR DHAF under construction, on Dante in France. The research project lasts a total of four years (2021 - 2025), and this is the opening dossier on Dante, France and the arts. We keep exploring new avenues of research on this topic and plan on offering, at the end of the journey, a synthesis overview on the subject. Buona lettura!

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