

NewsLetter Dublin 2007

My apologies, first of all, for not having been in touch with you now for some time, but I felt that there was little justification for burdening the membership with literature if there was nothing particular that needed saying, and hitherto there has really not been much. There are various informational services that the Society can provide, but they are best posted on the website, which I commend to your attention once again.

One feature of the website, I regret to say, has not yet achieved its purpose, and that is the Members' Forum. This is partly because it has been 'colonized' by a remarkable number of alien bodies of the 'spam' variety, and the expertise to purge them from it, and to bar future ones, has regrettably not yet been applied. I have hopes, however, that this will be rectified soon. At that stage, I would urge all members with any activity or publication to report, or any query to raise, to make full use of it. I would hope that in future years this will become in fact the chief on-going service that the Society can provide to the world of Platonic studies - along, of course, with our electronic journal.

Without wishing to duplicate other services available on the web, we can perhaps be useful in the future by posting up relevant reviews from other electronic sources, such as the Bryn Mawr Classical Review -- e.g. Suzanne Obdrzalek's extended review of the study of *Plato's Lysis* by Terry Penner and Christopher Rowe (Cambridge, 2005), at *BMCR* 20026.11.35, which I commend to you.

Members can find below details of the arrangements for the VIII Symposium, so I will not discuss that further here, except to say that we are hoping to extend to as many of you as possible an Irish welcome. The fact that Trinity College occupies a site in the centre of the city (while enjoying extensive grounds of its own) is a feature that has many advantages from the point of

view of sight-seeing and entertainment – though, of course, as Platonists, we should be above such things!

1. Selection of Abstracts and Arrangement of the Programme.

We are glad to report that the onerous task of selecting papers for the 2007 meeting, and the arrangement of the programme, has now been completed, and letters sent out to all concerned. We were in receipt of 140 abstracts in all for the session, which may be a record, so, even with the decision to open up three parallel panels, at least on the Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, it has been sadly necessary to turn down nearly a third of them, and this was no easy decision. In many cases we were forced to choose between papers of potentially equal value, and only the degree of specificity and focus of the abstracts made the difference. The decision in favour of three panels rather than two was not an easy one either, since it increases the complication of moving about from one to another, but we felt that providing an opportunity for as many members as possible to speak was a paramount consideration.

Apart from that, we have given much thought to the social aspect of the symposium, since that has rightly been a notable feature of Platonic gatherings in the past – indeed, Würzburg will be a hard act to follow in that regard! We will begin on Monday evening (July 23rd) with a reception in Dublin Castle, sponsored by the Minister of Education, followed by the keynote address of Prof. Dorothea Frede. On Tuesday evening, we hope to have a reception hosted by Trinity College Library, with a display of early books on Plato and Platonism from the Library's collections. On Wednesday we have a series of afternoon excursions arranged, one to the prehistoric site of Newgrange on the river Boyne to the north, another to the mediaeval monastic site of Glendalough, in the heart of Wicklow, the 'Garden of Ireland', to the south; and on Thursday we will hold the Symposium Banquet, in the historic Dining Hall of Trinity College, to the accompaniment of some traditional Irish music. Other than that, since we are in the middle of the

capital, there will be a choice of concerts and dramatic performances available for those who want to slip away for an evening!

Travel Arrangements.

It would be wise to make early bookings for Dublin, in view of the fact that we will be at the height of the tourist season. Accommodation will be available in College, but it is limited to 100 single rooms (en suite), so it would be advisable to book early for those. Otherwise, we will be suggesting a range of neighbouring hotels and guest houses (this will be a necessary option for couples, in any case), and we will post this information on the website.

There may well be some who wish to come a little earlier and/or stay a little later, We have reserved a few rooms (again single) in College for the preceding and following Saturday nights, in case anyone would like to avail of that option, but otherwise you will naturally need to make your own arrangements.

Submission of Completed Papers.

For inclusion in the information packet of the Symposium itself, all we are requesting is 'extended abstracts' (2 pages, c. 600 words) of the papers, as a full publication so many would not only be highly expensive but also more or less unmanageable for carrying around. The receipt of these abstracts is requested by April 15 at the latest, to give time for collation and printing.

The lack of complete texts is perhaps regrettable, but we think inevitable. It is to be hoped that these summaries will at least give a good idea of the speaker's argument for those not fluent in the language concerned. Of course, for those who wish to give copies of their papers to particularly interested colleagues, we will have xeroxing facilities available, and assistants ready to oblige with copying.

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A call for full texts of papers for those who wish to have them considered for the publication of the Proceedings will be issued nearer the time of the Symposium, but it is envisaged that early autumn (c. Oct. 1) will be chosen.

John Dillon

