At a Meeting of the Faculty of Vassar College held November fourteenth, nineteen hundred and seventy-nine, the following Memorial was unanimously adopted:

Mario Domandi, Professor of Italian on the Dante Antolini Chair, was born in New York City on February 5, 1929, the son of Santo and Filomena Domandi. Educated in the city's public schools, he took his undergraduate degree at St. John University College. He spent the 1950-51 academic year as a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Rome and then completed a Master's degree in history at Columbia University in 1952. After two years of military service, he resumed his studies at Columbia in European intellectual history. His dissertation on the German youth movement was supervised by Jacques Barzun. For Mario, Barzun represented the life of the mind at its best, urbane and elegant, yet humane and deeply serious.

Mario came to Vassar as an instructor of Italian in 1956. From 1958 to 1963 he served as House Fellow in Jewett dormitory and from 1961 to 1964, as Dean of Freshmen. His success as teacher and administrator and his productivity as a scholar were rewarded with early promotion to tenure. In May, 1964, he delivered the convocation address at the request of the senior class. Characteristically, he told his hearers that the result of their education "should be a refined sensibility and a civilized instinct. Just as the entirety of our personal experience is embodied in what we call our 'instinctive' reaction to a situation, so too our whole intellectual experience is contained in our instinctive judgments about art, politics, ethics, and the rest. If a college has done its job well, the instinct should be healthy, free of myths and prejudices." In 1965 Mario became chairman of the Italian department. In 1969 he became the second recipient of the Dante Antolini chair in Italian language and literature which had been given by Mrs. Julia Coburn Antolini in honor of her husband.

Mario maintained a lifelong interest in modern German history and culture, but at Vassar he soon turned to the field where he was to make his scholarly reputation: the translation of significant works on and of the Italian Renaissance from both German and Italian. His first translation was of Ernst Cassirer's The

Mario's special knack as a translator was his ability to convey difficult philosophical ideas and a tangled skein of events in clear, readable, and flowing English prose. This talent attracted the interest of Charles Single who enlisted Mario's aid as translator of Latin and Italian sources quoted in the commentary to Singleton's edition of Dante's Divine Comedy. This task kindled Mario's interest in the early Florentine chroniclers and for a time he toyed with the idea of providing in English a documentary volume on Dante Florence. But ultimately he abandoned this plan in favor of two large projects on Medicean Florence that were to lie unfinished at his death. One was a volume of the familial letters of Lorenzo de'S Medici and his circle done in collaboration with the Florentine paleographer Gino Corti. The second was a translation with notes and glossary of Giovanni Cavalcanti's Florentine Histories, a prime narrative source on the origins of the Medici regime, for which Mario received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

To his students Mario brought the same qualities of sound scholarship, his clear but never simple exposition, and the magic of his manner. Student flocked to his Renaissance classes especially because Mario's recreation of that civilization permitted students to discern some of the most humane aspects of the teacher himself. He would talk of Machiavelli and murder, of Ariosto and the poetic forms, of romance and history, of fortuna and virtù, but ultimately for Mario the Renaissance was best represented by a letter Lorenzo de'Medici wrote to his young daughter whom the family had left behind in Florence: "if everyone is gone, and the naughty ones left you alone, do not worry. I will come back purposely to stay with you, and will stay only with you." Mario used to comment, "He was a good daddy." This artificer of balance of power and of artistic excellence exemplified for Mario that virtue the Latins called "humanitas" and the Italian humanists
tried to revive. "Humanitas" is also the best word to describe Mario's Tega of more than twenty years as teacher and department chairman. It was impossible for anyone to remain indifferent to his warm, almost fatherly, ways and not to love him, immediately.

In 1952 Mario married Agnes Koerner who had come to the United States from Germany after escaping from the Soviet Zone. Their marriage ended in divorce in 1972. Their only child, Mary Charlotte, was born in 1961; his delight in her development was extraordinary. Mario and Agnes quickly became known for their hospitality and for the diversity of their friends. They bridged worlds easily, turning differences of opinion and taste into exhilarating conversation. Mario's pride in his own cosmopolitanism as a scholar never detracted from his pride in his Sicilian ancestry or in his father's success as a garment manufacturer. Who will forget the aphorisms he attributed to Uncle Luigi, such as "rich or poor, it's nice to have money. Who will forget the accordion on which he ranged with such zest from polkas to pop tunes to Protestant hymns?

In recent years his favorite form of party followed from an invitation to drinks at six o'clock. Unlike many such gatherings, Mario's parties customarily were occasions where a mixed group of people engaged in lively discussion on a wide range of topics, taking the key from their host who treated the party as an event rather than as a mechanical routine. It was not unusual for him to ask members of his classes and Italian majors to the parties; he deferred to them with the same cordiality that he extended to his friends from the faculty and from the community. It was the rare party that did not end with Mario in the kitchen making spaghetti al dente or some other preferred dish. But in between the coming and the going at the party, those invited to share it knew that they had a host who took seriously the mandate to honor guests. When a guest comes, Christ comes, Mario said, and he meant it.

Every part of Mario's life contained the other parts. His dying was part of his living. Learning that he had a large, malignant tumor which made survival improbable, Mario chose to deal directly with his fate. Defiant, he discovered that in Houston, Texas, there was a project experimenting with nuclear radiation therapy. In the face of uncertainty about the outcome, Mario went to a hospital there as a participant in the experiment. He was subjected to routines which, as he told his friends over the long distance phone, stirred in his mind passages from Dante's Inferno.

Mario underwent an operation in the Fall of 1978 which removed the tumor. He was
able to spend the next several months in Poughkeepsie, recuperating and preparing to reengage in his scholarly activities. On February 4, 1979 he was married to Ann Hedlund whom he had known for many years and who gave him the most loving support in his final months. When the cancer recurred, he first was hospitalized in New York. In lucid moments, he retained his geniality and his flair for telling a story. In the midst of pain, he remained gentle and considerate. He returned to Poughkeepsie and died here on July 8, 1979. He is buried in Little Compton, Rhode Island, where he had spent his summers for many years.

Respectfully submitted,

Clyer Gückle
Clyde Griffen, Chairman

Elizabeth A. Dansel,
Elizabeth Daniels

Benjann T. Kohl.
Benjamin Kohl

Hausei Padomi...
Housei

Manfredi Piccolomini