

# The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America at Columbia University

ITALIAN ACADEMY

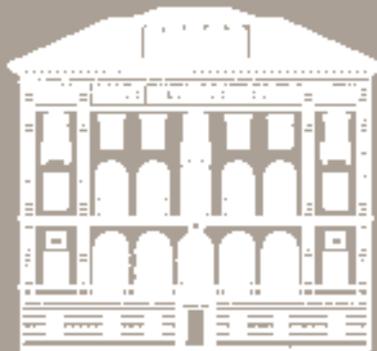
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICA

Annual Report 2003-2004

ITALIAN ACADEMY  
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICA

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## Annual Report 2003-2004



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Advanced Studies in America  
at Columbia University

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NEW YORK 2004

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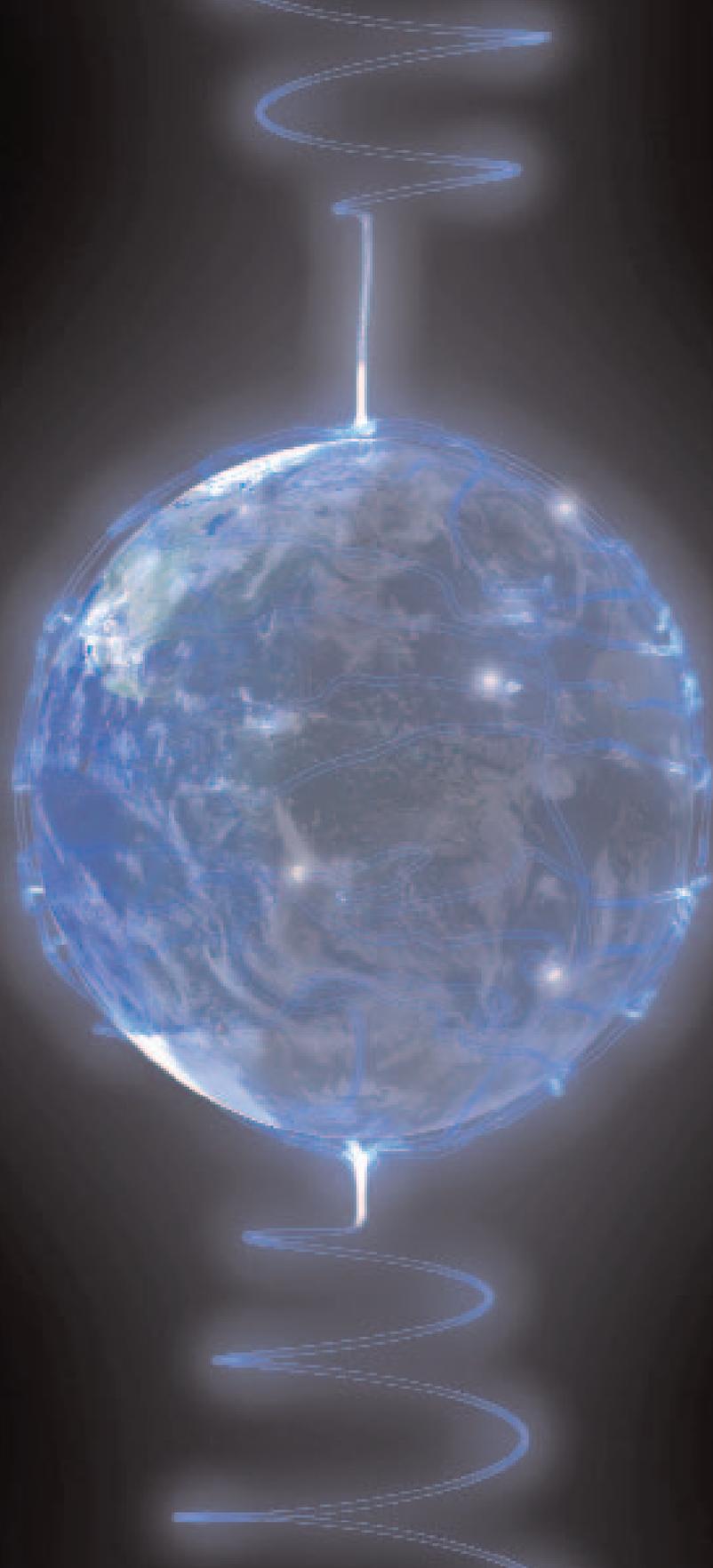
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## THE MISSION OF THE ITALIAN ACADEMY

**F**ounded in 1991 on the basis of an agreement between the Republic of Italy and Columbia University, the Academy sponsors advanced research in all areas relating

to Italian history, science and society; presents distinguished examples of Italian culture and art; and promotes academic, cultural and scientific exchange at the highest level.

## ABOUT THE ACADEMY

**A**t the core of the work of the Italian Academy lies its Fellowship Program. Fellowships are open to senior scholars at the post-doctoral level and above, who wish to devote a semester or a full academic year to genuinely innovative work in all fields relating to culture, cultural memory, and the relations between culture, the sciences, and the social sciences. The most advanced part of the Fellowship Program is the Academy's ongoing Project in Art and the Neurosciences, in which scholars in both the humanities and the sciences work together in assessing the significance of the latest developments in genetics and the neurosciences for the humanities – and vice-versa.

The Academy also serves as the chief reference point in the United States for all links between the worlds of higher education in Italy and the US. Thanks to its

prestige and its location in New York, it has also become a critical site for meetings between distinguished members of the Italian and American business and political communities. Its theater, library, and other public spaces offer important locations for a variety of concerts, exhibitions and films reflecting the finest aspects of cultural relations between the Republic of Italy and the artistic and academic communities of New York and the United States.

McKim, Mead and White's 1927 Casa Italiana, beautifully reconstructed in 1993, is the home of the Academy. It provides exceptional offices for the Academy's Fellows, as well as housing a library and a magnificent theater in Neo-Renaissance style, in which major academic, theatrical and musical events regularly take place.



## Annual Report 2003–2004

# Board of Guarantors

2003–2004



**APPOINTED BY  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

**Barbara Aronstein Black**

*George Welwood Murray Professor of Law,  
Columbia University*

**Daniele Bodini**

*Chairman, American Continental Properties,  
New York, NY*

**Jon Elster**

*Robert Merton Professor of Social Sciences,  
Political Science, Columbia University*

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Clarence Levi Professor of Computer Science,  
Columbia University*

**Jeffrey Schnapp**

*Director, Stanford Humanities Lab, Stanford  
University*

**Fritz Stern**

*University Professor, Columbia University*

**APPOINTED BY THE MINISTRY OF  
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*Director, Italian Cultural Institute, New York,  
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*Former Deputy Foreign Minister of Italy,  
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**Alessandro Schiesaro**

*Professor of Latin Language and Literature,  
and Head of Department of Classics, King's  
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**CHAIR**

**Alan Brinkley**

*Provost and Allan Nevins Professor of History,  
Columbia University, from June 2003*

# Staff



David Freedberg, *Director*  
Olivia D'Aponte, *Assistant Director*  
Elisabetta Assi, *Assistant Director*  
Shila Maghji, *Business Manager*  
Robert Kulesz, *Events Coordinator*  
Allison Jeffrey, *Administrative Assistant*  
Jenny McPhee, *Film Program Curator*  
Rick Whitaker, *Theater Manager*

## WORK STUDY STAFF

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Erika Gibson  
José Nater  
Kristin Soraya Batmanghelichi  
Marc Felezzola  
Monica Mecca  
Julia Morelli  
Surag Mungekar  
Emily Reeves  
Akin Salawu  
Matthew Sohm  
Dan Zafros

## VOLUNTEER STAFF

Deborah Norzi

## PART-TIME STAFF

Paolo Parigi  
Eric Johnson  
Constance Stellas

# Director's Report



2003-2004 was a remarkable year at the Academy. For the first time I felt that we had begun to achieve the chief objectives I had set myself upon taking up the directorship in July 2000. Our Fellowship Program was clearly thriving. After the initial years of planning, this was our second year with a full complement of Fellows. Our program of events was fuller than ever before, and represented, I think, the fullest and most serious contribution in New York to the promotion of Italian culture in the United States.

The highlight of our year was undoubtedly the visit on November 15 of the President of the Republic of Italy, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. We were enormously honored and encouraged by his presence at the Academy. His visit stands as a token of the support enjoyed by the Academy at the Quirinal and at every level of the Italian Government. Above all, it symbolizes the strength of the bond that joins our two nations together, and the commitment to the belief that this bond rests on the highest achievements of culture, education, and

science. That all the hopes now embodied in the Academy should be thus expressed at the highest possible level in the Republic and at the same time repose in a Columbia institution, namely the Italian Academy, does the University an immeasurable honor. Of course it represents a challenge of the highest order, which we shall strive to meet in the coming years.

In his speech to the Academy (published in a separate book entitled *Viaggi negli Stati Uniti*, along with my own welcoming remarks), President Ciampi began with a spontaneous response, both witty and profound, to my citation of two words that came up frequently in our successful conference on Machiavelli a few weeks earlier (see below). I noted how lucky we at the Academy were that *fortuna* had brought us the President in person, and how the notion of *virtù* was incarnate in the President as leader of the Italian people. The President then brilliantly spoke of his own recollection of the relevant passages in Machiavelli, and set both notions in their original historical

context. In this way the President was able tacitly to recall the constant relevance of the past for the present.

President Ciampi spoke eloquently of the importance of the Academy as a center for advanced study, uniting Italians and Americans in the context of one of the most prestigious American universities, and of the role of the Academy in assuring the continuity of the critical dialogue between our two nations. In his supportive letter to me following the visit of President Ciampi, Ambassador Puri Purini, Chief Diplomatic Counsellor to the President (and a stalwart supporter of the Academy from its beginnings), observed that “I risultati di questi ultimi mesi indicano che la strada imboccata e’ quella giusta affinche’ l’Academy possa costituire, come ha sottolineato il Capol dello Stato nel suo intervento, *un foro di alto livello, per l’approfondimento di temi complessi, di spessor globale e multidisciplinare.*”

This year we had 10 Fellows in the Fall term, and 9 in the Spring (as well as two winners of the Premio New York for the year). These were stellar groups, with Fellows in fields that ranged, in addition to the dominant humanistic ones, from mathematics to economics. Moreover, the two winners of the Premio New York, Sarah Ciraci and Alessandra Tesi, fully contributed to the life of the Academy this year. Their common-sense approach to the quotidian problems of life in New York and at Columbia, as well as the

splendid directedness and focus of their work, made them a pleasure and an inspiration to have at the Academy.

Let me make a few remarks about arrangements relating to the academic Fellows this year as well.

In the Fall term, we were fortunate enough to have one Fellow – Setrag Manoukian, the distinguished young anthropologist from the University of Turin – who came here at the proposal of Columbia’s Department of Anthropology, and who was able to be here without subvention. Manoukian made a substantial contribution to our discussions and the general collegiality of the group. The Fellowship we awarded for the Fall term to Fabrizio Luccio, the distinguished computer scientist from Pisa, was jointly funded by the Academy and the School of Engineering, while for the Spring semester, the distinguished mathematician from the Sapienza, Enrico Arbarello, was awarded a Fellowship that was funded by a similar joint arrangement with the Columbia Department of Mathematics. These are exactly the kinds of joint arrangements that work not only to the financial benefit of the Academy, but also represent the new spirit of collaboration that exists between the Academy and the rest of the University. This has been noted by many, and represents a sea change from the old days in which the Academy was perceived as a kind of fortress isolated from the rest of the campus.

This integration of the Academy with the rest of the University was also represented by the success of our events and ongoing cultural programs held at the Academy this year. We had an extraordinarily dense and full program of events in the Fall. As an indication of a new level of cooperation with the world of business and enterprise, on September 24 we held a well-attended reception, suggested and enabled by our Guarantor Stefano Parisi, Director General of Confindustria, for the Hon. Francesco Frattini, Foreign Minister of Italy, and for Antonio D’Amato, President of the Confindustria. At this event, also attended by members of the Diplomatic Corps, including the new Consul-General in New York, Antonio Bandini, and the new Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Marcello Spatafora, we set the ground for what I hope will be a new era in the relationship between the Academy and the world of business. We continue to be fortunate not only in having Stefano Parisi as a Guarantor, but also to enjoy close links with the very active GEI (*Gruppo Esponenti Italiani*) in New York, the most prestigious group of high-level Italian businessmen in the US.

On October 24, we held a conference dedicated to Machiavelli, entitled *Machiavelli Revisited: New Approaches to his Political Theory*. Convened by myself and Pasquale Pasquino, Directeur de Recherche at the CNRS and Professor of Political Science at NYU, the conference

drew a much larger crowd than I had anticipated. Our theater was packed, thanks not only – I think – to the timeliness of the topic, but also to the high level of speakers, who included the noted historian from UCLA and Bologna, Carlo Ginzburg, the distinguished Professor of Law from NYU Stephen Holmes, our own Nadia Urbinati from the Political Science Department at Columbia, Sharon Holmes from the University of California at San Diego, and Quentin Skinner, Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge. Many of the attendees commented on the exceptionally high quality both of the interventions and the responses.

For the visit of President Ciampi on November 15, the theater was fuller than it had ever been, as befitted the occasion. We were honored by the presence not only of Ambassadors Vento and Spatafora, and many other distinguished guests – as well, of course, as a full complement of members of the University community – but also of President Bollinger of Columbia and Enrico Bombieri, the mathematician from the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, who spoke of the importance of high-level scientific and cultural relations between our two countries, and of the role of the Academy in fostering them.

Our much-awaited conference on *Information and Democracy: Truth, Politics and the Press* was held on December 4. We are grateful to the Fondazione Corriere Della Sera, its Director Domenico

Biffi and its Deputy Director Roberto Stringa, not only for having encouraged us to put on this conference, but also for having provided a generous subvention. It was another well-attended event, and the discussion, moderated by Prof. Alan Brinkley, Provost of the University and Chairman of our Board of Guarantors, could not have been more lively. Both Alexander Stille, the new Banca di San Paolo Professor of Journalism, and Nicholas Lemann, the new Dean of the School of Journalism spoke, along with our interlocutors from Italy, Stefano Baia Curioni, Angelo Panebianco, Gianni Riotta and Roberto Zaccaria. All our events, like this one, received substantial press coverage. Indeed, in this context it is perhaps worth mentioning that the Academy received an unusual amount of coverage this year, whether in Italian or local newspapers, and we plan to include a section of press coverage on our new website, which we are just beginning to plan.

In addition to these highlights, we continued to hold our by-now usual Thursday evening Film Series under the curatorship of Jenny McPhee. In the first semester the theme of the series was *Visions of the South: Geography as Character in Italian Cinema* and it continued to be very well-attended, sometimes bursting to the seams. As in the past we offered refreshments prior to the film, and well-known speakers from the film community and at Columbia introduced each

film. We remain grateful to the Monte dei Paschi di Siena for their increasing level of support for this series. It should be noted, perhaps, that when we started our film series we offered gratis entrance to each of the films, but since last year we have been asking for an admission fee, and this has not abated the attendance, needless to say, at our films.

This year I handed over the organization of our concert series to our Theater Manager, Rick Whitaker. He has done an outstanding job in bringing contemporary Italian music to the Academy, performed by distinguished artists. While the audiences were initially small – as was only to be expected when it comes to serious contemporary classical music in a city already so rich in musical offerings as New York – the press coverage was excellent, ranging from listings in *Time Out* to first-rate reviews in the *New York Times*.

In addition to the above events, the Academy continued to host the conferences and lecture series organized by the University Seminar in Modern Italian History (details on our website) and by the very active Center for the Ancient Mediterranean, to whom we continue to grant an office at the Academy. On December 5, we hosted an exceptionally well-attended conference sponsored by the Department of Middle East and Asian Languages and the Center for Comparative Literature and Society on *US Imperialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*; the main objec-

tive of the conference was to critically examine both the strengths and weaknesses of the “war on terrorism” as a strategy for the US and the resistance it has generated. Amongst the various lectures held at the Academy, I would single out that given by our own Fellow, Marina Warner, “*My airy spirit*”: *ethereal metaphors and magical thought*, on November 24, which drew a large audience from a number of constituencies within the University. Exhibitions we held in our exhibition spaces included a show of photographs by Marina Berio and of paintings by Allison Jeffrey to accompany the visit of President Ciampi.

There is no question that the Academy has now become a center of intellectual and cultural life in the University and in the City as a whole. Once regarded as a closed outpost, separated from the rest of the University, we have now begun to secure our reputation as a place where exciting things happen on campus – to such a degree that a chair of one of the largest departments in the humanities remarked to me at the end of last term that the Academy had now become, as he put it, “the hottest place on campus”.

Fortunately for us, the pace of events was slightly less intense in the Spring. This was no bad thing, since the number of applications for our Fellowships rose to over 100 (up from 30 just three years ago), and we had our work cut out to have the applications appropriately juried and make

the necessary selections. Although we have devised a new software system to cope with the increasing and ever more diverse number of applicants (this time including many from England, Germany, Canada and some from Australia, France and other countries as well – in addition, of course, to the US), the process is still a long and difficult one. This will always be a term in which we will have to limit the number of conferences and other events we can hold, in order to ensure the smooth and most effective running of our Fellowship selection process, which involves not only intellectual and administrative hard work, but also serious financial planning – especially given our limited financial resources.

In the light of these pressures, we were slightly relieved (even though disappointed too) that our planned conference on the Italian economic model was postponed until the next academic year. After considerable planning discussions with Prof. Paolo Garonna, Director of Research at Confindustria, we made the decision to postpone the conference, in order to enable us to have more time to devise a more thoughtful and timely program – particularly at so critical a stage for the Italian economic model itself and when the Presidency of Confindustria was changing.

But this is not to say that we did not, even so, have a full calendar of events. On the contrary. Once more we hosted Giuliano Amato, ex-Treasury Minister and Prime Minister of Italy, and presently

European Commissioner for the Constitution of Europe, who gave the introductory lecture at a conference we jointly hosted with the Columbia International Law Society on the important subject of “*The Big Bang*”: *Member State Expansion and EU Competition Policy* on March 31. On April 5 we were fortunate to have as our guest the Hon. Letizia Moratti, the Italian Minister of Education, Universities and Research. She spoke to a good crowd about the new initiatives in the Italian and European universities, especially with regard to links between the universities and industry and technology. Given the just importance the Minister has paid to computer technology, we were happy that Prof. James Yardley, Director of Columbia’s Nanotechnology Center, was able to give a short speech on this occasion, along with Austin Quigley, Dean of Columbia College and our own most senior Fellow, Enrico Arbarello.

As always, the University Seminar in Modern Italian Studies continued to hold its seminars at the Academy, and the Center for the Ancient Mediterranean continued to have a very full program of the utmost relevance to Italy and the Mediterranean basin. On February 24 we hosted another thronged event of considerable political importance – whose Gramscian origins were always clear – chiefly sponsored by the Center for the Study of Women and Gender entitled *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History*

*of an Idea*, devoted chiefly to the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Of course, the Academy remains the location of choice for any number of other University events throughout the year, such as – perhaps most notably – the very important day of discussions by a number of distinguished scientists on the issue of sustainable development, which formed part of the major conference organized by Columbia’s Earth Institute on *The State of the Planet: Mobilizing the Sciences to fight Global Poverty*.

The Film Series in the Spring Term was entitled *Geography as Character: Visions of the North in Italian Cinema*. The Series continued at its usual sure and popular pace; while the Music Series became so popular that the concerts by Marilyn Nonken and by Lucy Shelton were to full houses, to my great pleasure and surprise. It is greatly to the credit of the musicians concerned, as well as the enterprise of our own Rick Whitaker, that concerts featuring music by such difficult composers as Berio, Dallapiccola, Nono, Scelsi and Sciarrino (to cite just a few of the composers whose work has been performed at the Academy this term) should have drawn such good audiences.

Once more, the walls of our exhibition spaces were rarely empty, beginning with a show of Marina Berio’s Staten Island Ferry photographs, and continuing with two multi-media exhibitions by the two winners of the Premio New York, Alessan-

dra Tesi and Sarah Ciraci. Tesi’s exhibition was accompanied by a special screening of *Glass Movie/Film di Vetro, the initial minutes of an endlessly running movie*, while Ciraci’s *Dimensional Jump* was accompanied by slide projections and sound by DJ Bill Coleman.

This year brought with it a number of significant changes in the Italian diplomatic corps in the US. It has always been a pleasure working with those many members of the diplomatic corps who have supported and encouraged us in all our activities, and it is always sad to see them leave their positions. First and foremost I must express my thanks to outgoing Ambassador Ferdinando Salleo for his constant friendship and stimulating suggestions for the future of the Academy; no Ambassador had hitherto taken so active an interest in all our activities and we are immensely grateful to him. Consul General Radicati in New York was also a staunch and ready friend of the Academy from the beginning of my tenure as Director, and I feel sure that we would not have achieved our profile in the Italian or Italian-American community in New York without his constant and enthusiastic support. We are grateful to him too, and wish him well in his new appointment as Ambassador in Prague. Ambassador Salleo was replaced by another old friend of the Academy, Sergio Vento, previously Permanent Representative of the Republic of Italy at the United Nations, and I look

forward to working closely with him in the furtherance of cultural and scientific relations between our two countries. As always the senior staff at the Embassy in Washington, most notably Prof. Giorgio Einaudi, Scientific Attaché, and Dr Pasquale Ferrara, Cultural Attaché, have been immensely constructive and full of useful and practical suggestions. From the moment he arrived in New York, Consul-General Antonio Bandini has been in close contact with me. We wish him well in his new post, and look forward to working together with him and his staff. At the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Paolo Riani was replaced by Claudio Angelini, who knows New York well as a Director of RAI, and had previously had many years of experience working as the head of the Press Office in the Quirinal. We look forward to working with him too, just as we do with Minister Blefari, the new head of the Direzione Generale per la Promozione e la Cooperazione Culturale at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, always a critical point of contact with official circles in Italy. She replaces yet another friend of the Academy with whom I worked closely over the years, Ambassador Francesco Aloisi de Larderel. We are grateful to him for his always keen interest in the Academy, and his many proposals for events and projects, and wish him well in his new post. We are also happy that yet another old friend of the Academy, and one of its strongest and

most innovative supporters, Umberto Vattani, has returned from the European Commission in Brussels (where he was Permanent Representative of Italy to the EU) to be Director General of the Foreign Ministry. It should be said that our relations with the Foreign Ministry remain, in my view, a model of how an educational institution such as Columbia University can work in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry of another country, in order to achieve common ideals of intercultural and cross-cultural understanding and the promotion of scientific achievement. It is a tribute to all concerned that these ideals have not been compromised, and that the Academy's high aims of advanced research have only been encouraged. In this respect I want to put on record my continuing gratitude to Ambassador Antonio Puri Purini, Chief Diplomatic Counsellor of the President of the Republic, for his unstinting support for the ideals and aims embodied in the disinterested pursuit of advanced research on issues pertaining to the history, art, literature, society and science of our two nations. He has also been eloquent in reminding us of the role that Italy plays in the larger affairs of Europe, and has thus enhanced our role in the furtherance of transatlantic relations more generally.

I am happy to add that thanks to the suggestion of Mario Baccini, Chief Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and a constant supporter of the

Academy), we have established a critical link with the Ministero dei Beni Culturali, who have agreed to help us rebuild our library, one of the major tasks still facing us at the Academy.

In principle, of course, the chief academic organization in Italy beyond the universities is the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, and I am proud to be able to mention in this report that I was asked to present my own history of the first Accademia dei Lincei (founded in 1603), entitled *The Eye of the Lynx: Galileo, his Friends, and the Beginnings of Modern Natural History* at the home of the Accademia in Rome in June, and introduce their quartercentennial conference on *I Primi Lincei e il Sant' Uffizio* a month later. I hope that these events contributed to the establishment of what I hope will be further collaboration between our two institutions.

A year as busy as this one would not have been possible without the combined efforts of my devoted staff at the Academy. I would like to express my appreciation to all of them, as well as to the many work-study students who serve us so well. Each one of them put up with long hours and were cheerfully tolerant of a huge number of enquiries and projects – some realized and some not – from both sides of the Atlantic. The engagement of our staff is testimony to their devotion to the ideals of cooperation between our two countries of which I have already spoken in this report.

This year also brought some changes to our Board of Guarantors. After a long and courageous struggle against a debilitating illness – that nevertheless never seemed to sap his strength or eloquence – Edward Said died on September 25, 2003. In addition to being one of the most distinguished faculty members at Columbia, Edward was one of our staunchest and most devoted Guarantors. He rarely missed a meeting and was always available for consultation, despite the endless press of his intellectual and political activities. He was a true friend of the Academy, from its foundation, and we shall miss him terribly.

We welcome two new Guarantors to our Board this year. As Director of the Istituto di Cultura, Claudio Angelini became an ex-officio member, appointed by the Foreign Minister of Italy; while the Provost appointed the distinguished businessman and Columbia alumnus Daniele Bodini to the group of six Guarantors nominated by Columbia.

Finally I would like to extend my thanks to Alan Brinkley, Columbia's new Provost, for his immediate engagement in all affairs related to the Academy and his deep commitment to our mission. His encouragement and support have meant a great deal to me this year, as well as to that of the Academy as a whole. We extend to him a warm welcome, and look forward to seeing him as frequently at the Academy as his onerous duties at the University allow.

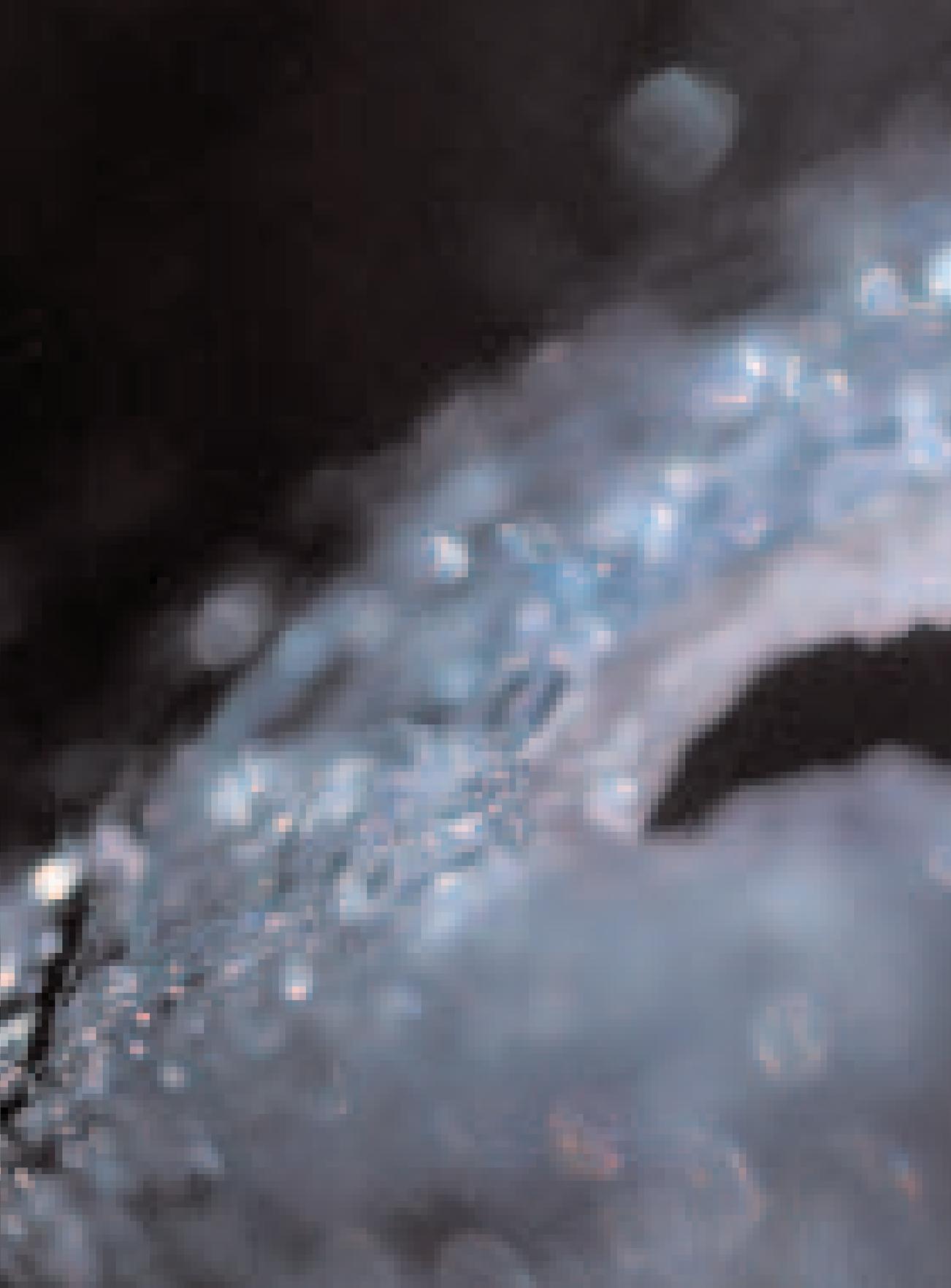
Before closing, I would like to reiterate the importance of raising funds in order to:

1. Sustain our Fellowship Program. In the last two years we have been able to develop a Program of great substance and coherence. I believe that the Fellowships at the Italian Academy have already acquired the prestige they deserve. But our resources at present only enable us to give 9 or 10 Fellowships per semester (excluding the winners of the Premio New York). We have space for 13 per semester, and we should therefore strive to fund another 4 Fellowships per annum (at a cost of roughly \$60,000 per Fellowship, including benefits).
2. Endow the library, and – even better – a librarian, who would occupy the space designated for this position adjacent to the library.
3. Build a garden in the space that belongs to the Academy adjacent to the theater.
4. Establish a fund to cover the costs of conferences and lecture series.

But these are only the chief priorities at the moment. As I stressed in last year's report, we need to be able to double our endowment (that is, to add roughly \$22 million to it), in order to fully realize the promise of what remains one of the most – if not *the* most – remarkable instances of cultural, academic, and scientific collaboration between a nation and a university.

DAVID FREEDBERG

April 7, 2004



## Fellows' Reports

During the period January 19–April 30, 2003 my scientific activity followed three main directions.

1. *Theta functions and non linear equations.*

A well known result, proved in the 80's, asserts that a  $g$ -dimensional, principally polarized, abelian variety  $(X, \Theta)$  is the jacobian of a genus  $g$  algebraic curve, if and only if its theta function satisfies the Kadomtsev-Petviashvili equation. Set  $z = (z_1, \dots, z_g) \in \mathbb{C}^g$  and let

$$\theta(z) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}^g} \exp \frac{1}{2} \pi ({}^t n \tau n + {}^t n z)$$

be the theta function of  $X$ , so that  $\tau$  is an hermitian matrix with positive definite imaginary part and  $\Theta = (\theta)_0$ . Let  $U, V$ , and  $W$  be vectors in  $\mathbb{C}^g$ , and assume that  $U \neq 0$ . Write

$$u(x, y, z) = \frac{\theta(Ux + Vy + Wz)}{\theta(Ux + Vy + Wz)}$$

To say that the function  $\theta$  satisfies the Kadomtsev-Petviashvili equation means that the following non-linear differential equation is satisfied

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial y^2} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \left[ \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2} \right]$$

It is important to realize that the Kadomtsev-Petviashvili equation can be expressed in terms of a system of ordinary

differential equations. To do so, consider the Baker-Akhiezer function

$$\psi = \psi(x, y, z) = \frac{\theta(Ux + Vy + Wz + \alpha y + \beta z)}{\theta(Ux + Vy + Wz)}$$

where  $\alpha, \beta$  and  $\gamma$  are suitable functions of  $z$ . Define differential operators  $L$  and  $A$  by setting

$$L = \left( \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \alpha \right), \quad A = \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial x} + \beta \frac{\partial}{\partial y} + \gamma \right)$$

where  $w$  is a suitable function which can be defined in terms of  $u$  and  $\psi$ . Then the Kadomtsev-Petviashvili equation is obtained by eliminating  $w$  from the system of ordinary differential equations

$$(1) \quad L\psi = \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial y}, \quad A\psi = \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t}$$

It can be proved that this system of ordinary differential equations, i.e. the Kadomtsev-Petviashvili equation, is equivalent to the assertion that there should exist constant vector fields  $D_1 \neq 0$ ,  $D_2$ , and  $D_3$  and a constant  $c$  such that

$$(2) \quad \frac{1}{2} D_1^2 u + \frac{1}{2} D_2^2 u + 2(D_1^2 + D_2^2)u + D_3 u = c u$$

Recently, I. Krichever conjectured that to characterize jacobian varieties among all principally polarized abelian varieties only the equation

$$L\psi = \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial y},$$

should suffice. We studied this conjecture and we arrived at the following preliminary conclusions. First of all, we showed that this equation is completely equivalent to the assertion that there should exist constant vector fields  $D_1 \neq 0$  and  $D_2$ , and a constant  $c$  such that

$$(3) \quad (D_1^2 + D_2)\theta_u \cdot \theta + (D_1^2 - D_2)\theta \cdot \theta_u - 2D_1\theta + c\theta_u \cdot \theta$$

When compared with the equation (2), one sees that this equation looks much simpler and moreover it does not involve the vector field  $D_3$ . The geometrical interpretation of the above equation is strikingly simple. In fact, assume that  $u$  is not a point of order two in  $X$ , and consider the Kummer map

$$\varphi: X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^{2g-1},$$

given by the linear system  $|2\Theta|$ . Consider the Kummer variety  $Y = \varphi(X)$  and set  $x = \varphi(u)$ . To say that equation (3) holds, exactly means that the Kummer variety  $Y$  admits in  $x$  an inflectionary tangent.

Our attempt to prove Krichever's conjecture is to proceed by contradiction, so that we may assume that equation (3) is satisfied, while equation (2) is not. In these hypotheses, we can prove that the following situation arises. There must exist a subvariety  $W \subset \Theta$  which is invariant under both the  $D_1$  and the  $D_2$  flows. So, what we need to complete the argu-

ment is a lemma analogous to the lemma proved by Shiota in his proof of the Novikov conjecture, where it is shown that, under certain conditions, such an invariant subvariety does not exist.

## 2. Ample cone in the moduli space of curves.

Let  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$  denote the moduli space of  $n$ -pointed, genus  $g$  stable curves. A conjecture due to Fulton, states that a divisor in  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$  is ample if and only if it has positive intersection with all 1-dimensional strata of the boundary of  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$ . Recently, A. Gibney, S. Keel and I. Morrison reduced this conjecture to the following conjecture about moduli spaces of rational curves.

We consider the boundary divisors  $\Delta_S$  of  $\overline{M}_{0,n}$  and we are using the following convention: if  $S$  is a subset of  $\{1, \dots, n\}$  of cardinality at least equal to 2 and not greater than  $n-2$ , then  $\Delta_S$  denotes the boundary divisor whose general point corresponds to a rational curve which is the union of two components one of which contains the points  $p_s$ , with  $s \in S$ , while the other contains the points  $p_s$ , with  $s \in S^c$ . We denote by  $\delta_S$  the class of  $\Delta_S$  in the rational cohomology of  $\overline{M}_{0,n}$ . Moreover, we set  $\delta_{\{i\}} = -\psi_i c$ . The classes  $\delta_S$ 's, with  $S \in \{1, \dots, n\}$  generate  $H^2(\overline{M}_{0,n}, \mathbb{Q})$  with the following relations:

$$\delta_S = 0, \quad \text{if } S = \emptyset, \quad \text{or } S^c = \emptyset, \\ \delta_S = \delta_{S^c}.$$

For each triple of distinct indices  $i, j, k$

$$\delta_{\{i\}} + \sum_{i \in S, j, k \in S^c} \delta_S = 0$$

where, in the sum, both  $|S|$  and  $|S^c|$  are strictly bigger than 1. For each quadruple of distinct indices  $i, j, k, l$

$$\sum_{i, j \in S, k, l \in S^c} \delta_S = \sum_{i, k \in S, j, l \in S^c} \delta_S = \sum_{i, l \in S, j, k \in S^c} \delta_S$$

where again, in all sums, both  $|S|$  and  $|S^c|$  are strictly bigger than 1. Fulton's conjecture has been reduced to the following.

Set  $P = \{1, \dots, n\}$ . Let

$$D = \sum_{S \in P} b_S \delta_S$$

Assume that for each partition  $P = I \sqcup J \sqcup K \sqcup L$ , with non-empty  $I, J, K, L$ , the following inequalities hold

$$(4) \quad b_{I \sqcup J} + b_{I \sqcup K} + b_{I \sqcup L} \geq b_I + b_J + b_K + b_L$$

Then

$$(5) \quad D = \sum_{S \in P} c_S \delta_S$$

with

$$(6) \quad c_i \geq 0 \quad \text{and} \quad c_i \geq -\frac{1}{2} c_S,$$

for all  $i$  and  $S$ .

We studied this conjecture both from the combinatorial and the geometrical point of view. The procedure we are trying to follow in order to solve this conjecture is to use induction on the number of punctures of the rational curves involved. The idea is to restrict the divisor  $D$  to all codimension-1 strata of the boundary of  $\overline{M}_{0,n}$ . In fact, restricting the divisor  $D$  to each codimension-1 boundary component of  $\overline{M}_{0,n}$ , we obtain a divisor in  $\overline{M}_{0,n-1}$  satisfying condition (4). We can therefore write this divisor as in (5) and (6). The various restrictions can then be compared

in the common intersections. With this method, we can check the first few cases of this conjecture.

## 3. "Geometry of algebraic Curves Vol. II"

In the mid 80's the first volume of the book *Geometry of Algebraic Curves* (which I am co-authoring with Maurizio Cornalba, Phillip Griffiths and Joe Harris) appeared. We are now in the process of writing the second volume of this book. This second volume is devoted to the theory of moduli of curves. This is a subject which finds itself at the crossroads of many fields in mathematics and theoretical physics. The connections range from algebraic geometry to number theory, topology, symplectic geometry, the theory of nonlinear differential equations of KdV type, mathematical physics, gauge theory, conformal field theory and string theory.

The second volume of *Geometry of Algebraic Curves* will contain the following chapters:

1. Hilbert schemes
2. The theory of nodal curves
3. Kuranishi families of stable curves
4. Construction of the moduli space  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$  of  $n$ -pointed, genus  $g$  stable curves
5. Hodge bundle and its positivity
6. Projectivity of  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$
7. Teichmüller theory
8. Level structures and  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$  as quotient of a smooth complete variety by a finite group

9. The theory of quadratic differentials and their trajectories

10. Cellular decomposition of  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$  and first results on its homology

11. Cycles on  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$

12. Witten theory of intersection of cycles in  $\overline{M}_{g,n}$  and Kontsevich's theorem

13. The proof of the Petri-Brill-Noether conjecture

14. Hurwitz scheme and Severi varieties.

Chapters 1 to 9 have been written essentially in final form. Chapters 10, 11, and 12 have to be written from scratch. We have a first (old) version of 13 and 14.

During the period covered by this report, I completed Chapter 9, and started a first version of Chapter 10. Here we gave a substantially simplified proof of a well known theorem of Strebel asserting the existence and uniqueness of quadratic differentials with closed trajectories on compact Riemann surfaces. This theorem is then used to give a cellular decomposition of the open part of the moduli space of curves. This decomposition, which is the main subject of Chapter 10, is then used to obtain vanishing results on the low-dimensional rational homology of the open moduli spaces.

## CARLA BENEDETTI

With the term *stylization of daily life* I refer to that process by which a particular experience, one formerly limited to the sphere of art, invades the wider context of life. By virtue of stylization, any object, including the most banal objects of use, can gain an additional aesthetic value and be approached as a work of art. An interesting case is Design, with its capacity to transform even a coffee maker into a unique piece.

This phenomenon is also called the *aestheticization* of quotidian life, but this definition seems to me rather misleading. Stylization of life does not mean that everything has become art, or that art spreads its own alternative potential into the world of life, but, more to the point, that the peculiarities of every individual and of every culture can be *translated* into and communicated as *differences in style*. The “aesthetic experience” does not simply overflow into the quotidian but also intertwines itself with the lifestyles and the *construction of the identity* of individuals or groups of individuals. In the wake of Simmel, I therefore prefer to speak of “stylization,” understanding by my use of this term not only the aestheticization of commodities but also the fact that individuals are often induced to communicate their own identity through their

clothes, comportment, gestures, as happens with designer label fashions, street styles, and also with the so-called “subcultures”, from punk to drag queens.

Between the late twenties and early thirties American industry—perhaps seeking to recover from the Depression—discovered the decisive role of styling in the commercial success of a product. Producers and advertisers began to theorize about the necessity of giving objects design, color, and beauty, as a sort of “added aesthetic value”. One of the most widespread styles of those years was streamlining—that is, aerodynamic design, with its tear shapes, wings, and speed stripes that were meant to suggest motion. It was used in the design of all types of objects, from automobiles to toasters. In its reference to the magic of speed, this style was loosely inspired by Futurist poetics.

“It’s difficult to produce something new today,” an Italian designer said, introducing her new collection. “I prefer to get inspiration from the clothes of the past, to revisit styles of the past, reinterpret them using new materials.” The impossibility of the new—the postmodern credo—has thus become a commonplace even in the sphere of the production of goods.

The *differential value* is in fact not nec-

essarily produced by new, never before seen forms. Thanks to the revival, which is more an aesthetic than a market phenomenon, even what has been passed by can be a bearer of difference and reused again, as fashion—or, rather, as a style, a sort of timeless fashion frozen in a stylistic difference.

Revival, return, remake, retrieval, revisiting, reproposal, recycling, restyling, repackaging.... In the late eighties and most of the nineties, the strongest trend was that of reviving—by quoting, wearing, and consuming—signs that come from the past. In an epoch in which many things change and are consumed with extreme velocity, it may appear strange that we are so eager to return to the past, to the traces of our own history, in order to quote them, represent them, hybridize them. But it is precisely in this way that modernity, through that grand, melancholy elaboration that was the postmodern, has tried to react to its own “exhaustion”: an exhaustion that in art has lasted for almost a century by now, and has taken the form of a blockage, a sort of double bind in the face of history and tradition.

The same weariness is felt in industrial

design and fashion: if culture is saturated, so is the market, and so we reuse forms and styles of the past, reinterpret them, revive the fifties, sixties, seventies . . . nothing really grows old, everything returns; nothing dies, and thus—one could also say—nothing is born.

As literature and art in the late modern period have begun to be perceived as fundamentally self-referential processes (writing that goes back for difference to earlier writing, style that goes back through difference to other styles, etc.), so also styling has begun to be perceived as something that serves only to produce a differential value, and no longer conceals that it is, fundamentally, a restyling. Thus not only do the styles of the past return but restyling itself has gained in aesthetic dignity. No longer looked at disdainfully by designers and architects, it achieves a sort of relegitimatization: it no longer seems an operation of simple aesthetic repackaging (after the stylistic novelty of the object is worn out), but a way of *producing differences*, even at the cost of seeking them in the past—and not only our past but also that which is represented by “other” cultures.

## GABRIELE CIFANI

My project at the Italian Academy dealt with the archaeological heritage of Rome and cultural identity in post-Fascist Republican Italy.

Roman culture and identity have been at the heart of Italian national ideology since unification in 1861, as indeed they were in the pre-unitary period; it is well known that under Fascism the concept of “Romanitas” was emphasized and used to define the dictatorship and its imperialism.

The nationalism of the young Italian state (1861–1911) used Roman heritage as a strong element of cultural identity, and archaeology played an important role in legitimizing political theories on the basis of scientific research. The majority of the population was ignorant of many aspects of the classical world; despite this the myth of the Roman Empire was the basis first of nationalistic and imperialistic projects (e.g. for Italy’s colonial activity in Libya) and later, after the First World War, of Fascist ideology.

During the Fascist period in particular, the archaeological rather than the

literary heritage created a strong sense of cultural identity, and Roman archaeological heritage became very popular as a result of a careful system of propaganda and publicity. The principal archaeological contexts (e.g. the imperial *fora* in Rome) were excavated and incorporated into new urban planning, in order to transmit this new identity by means of a system of sites of memory. The defeat of Fascism in Italy marked the end of a cultural identity based on the myth of “Romanitas” and imperialism, and this had important effects on cultural memory and the perception of archaeological heritage.

My project at the Italian Academy aimed to re-establish the role of the archaeological heritage as part of cultural memory during the five decades from the end of the Second World War to 1992.

For example, after the defeat of Fascism and the end of nationalism, while the main archaeological sites continued in many ways to play the role of time-markers and places of memory, Roman archaeology in Italy is no longer a

legitimation of imperialism, but became a shared sense of self-identity within the concept of nationhood, co-existing with a sense of regional identity based on a long tradition of local cultures.

The case of Italy could be a model for European communities, where archaeological heritage might play a decisive role in defining a European identity based on localism. Here one might define the research into three main historical periods.

The first period, from 1945 to 1950, marks the end of the Second World War, during which the first results of the Marshall Plan became more evident in the economy. This phase highlights previous political and cultural evaluations of the management of archaeological heritage, and the important role attributed to cultural heritage in the Republican Constitution.

The second period, from 1950 to 1970, leads up to the attempt to renew Italian archaeology, which began in 1967, with the school of Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, and concentrated around the periodical *Dialoghi di Archeologia*. Here one sees the evolution from a neo-idealistic approach to Marxian theories and its link with the social and economic development of the country (e.g. the effects of dramatic urbanization on the perception of cultural heritage in new urban planning projects.)

The third period will covers the decades from 1970 to the early 1990s, with the enlargement of access to public universities and high schools, the progressive devolution of power from the State to local agencies, the emergence of regional identities in modern Italy, globalization phenomena and the political rise of the European Community.

Finally, the research addresses the role played by archaeological heritage in contemporary Italy in determining cultural identity, and its potentiality and limits in terms of cultural memory and its transmission.

During my Fellowship I was able to conduct my research at Butler Library and Avery Library of Columbia University. In addition, many instructive criticisms were also offered by the other Fellows at the the Italian Academy.

During my stay at the Italian Academy I was invited to present a lecture on archaic Rome at the Center for the Ancient Mediterranean, "A revisionist view of archaic Rome", and another at the "Istituto di Studi etruschi ed italici" conference, "The Etruscans and the others: Rrecent work on archaic Rome."

I was also invited to work as part of a project, coordinated by Professor Larissa Bonfante, to publish of the antiquity collection at New York University. For this project I studied the collec-

tion of *bucchero* vases from Etruria.

The Italian Academy Fellowship has been an interesting and instructive pro-

fessional endeavor, and has greatly supplemented my efforts toward developing a scientific project for publication.



The research I conducted during my Fellowship at The Italian Academy aims at understanding how Italian food (i.e., the food represented, perceived, and sold as “Italian”) has been constructed as a cultural commodity in the postwar United States, and delineating the meanings and values implicated in its consumption.

The history of the idea of Italian cuisine in America spans the twentieth century. It is embedded in a continuing transnational flux of goods, people, practices and images between the two sides of the Atlantic. It is a history internal to the West, but that, all the same, conveys narratives of modernity versus tradition, cultural colonialism and imperialism, authenticity and “mechanical reproduction,” exoticism and cosmopolitanism. Therefore, I believe that theories on historical change in the dynamics of consumption of the Other may fruitfully be “tested” by this research topic.

I focused on the recent social theory on consumption, which makes the case for a radical change in consumption patterns occurring over the final three decades of the twentieth century. Scholars like Harvey, Jameson, Appadurai, Ewen, Featherstone and Giddens all frame the change in the transition from Fordism to a “flexible regime of accumulation”; and from “cul-

tural territorialism” to the deterritorialization of culture induced by rapid transport and new media technologies. Just as most studies deliver the portrait of a “postmodern consumer” who “plays” with meanings and styles, continuously recreating her or his identity, the “postmodern eater” emerges as one that doesn’t evaluate foods only for their taste, appearance, nutritional and gastronomic value, convenience and price, but also for what they communicate in terms of “authenticity,” “tradition,” “novelty,” “environmental sustainability,” and so on.

I then concentrated on the history of consumer culture in America. Historians of post-WWII US consumption (L. Cohen, Cross) insist that the 1970s was the historical turning point during which de-industrialization, the segmentation of the market, the increasing commodification of difference and culturalization of consumption coincided. Both the analyses of social theorists and historians helped me to set in a wider frame the “cultural turn” that emerged in the American consumption of Italian food in the 1970s—to fully come into being during the 1980s and 1990s.

I analyzed the recent literature in American Studies which focuses on the domestic (i.e., pertaining to the familial

household, and in particular to middle-class women as consumers) side of American imperialism. Within the international, anti-exceptionalist turn in the study of US history, A. Kaplan and others have identified consumption in the private arena as a companion to the American military, diplomatic, and economic expansion of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

The consumption of Italian and other “foreign” dishes in American middle-class homes, fostered by cookbooks and other media, is described as a way for women to participate in a far-reaching network of international commerce and cultural exchange; as a means to construe differences and hierarchies (in a sort of popular ethnology); and as a media of geographical knowledge. I rely on this theoretical framework to discuss when and how, in the case of Italian cooking, such a form of cultural colonialism has been challenged and contested, and how it persisted.

Finally, I explored the literature on the deterritorialization of food cultures in the face of globalization. Rather than concentrating on the familiar viewpoints that see globalization as a homogenizing process or insist on the local reworking of “global food” through hybridization or creolization, I have been attracted by the cultural geographers (notably, Cook and Crang) who invite us to take into account, in the study of consumption practices, the geographies of mobility—of people, goods, and ideas. In the case of the consumption of exotic food, they suggest that the val-

ues and meanings that consumers attach to those foods depend on their position with respect to the multiple images and representations about food “origins”, “destinations” and “travels.”

Much of this literature, more concerned with “cultural translocality” than with the center/periphery paradigm or the local perspective in the study of culture, stresses that the production of difference has become the crucial job of the cultural industry under late capitalism. On the global scale, the result is an “integrated diversity”: differences are not erased (rather, they are promoted) but are more mutually intelligible to actors utilizing an increasingly common code of communication.

After the construction of such a complex theoretical framework, I began to sort and examine primary sources.

In the 1950s, popular magazines mostly discussed Italian food in terms of a rational “costs and benefits” pattern. They insisted on a few readily available Italian foods—mostly produced on a mass scale by national industries—and on the role of Americans of Italian descent as reliable “cultural intermediaries.” The process underlying the representations was one of appropriation, regulation, and rationalization of cultural difference.

Only from the late 1960s have popular magazines recognized Italian cuisine as a structured gastronomic culture. The process involved the partial detachment of the cuisine from its previous owners, the immigrants and their descendents. The biographies of foods became much

more far-reaching, heterogeneous and detailed in time and space: Italy became the main point of reference for narratives. Diversity became an uncontested value, and popular magazines actively engaged in the production of difference.

Other sources I utilized extensively were the Italian cookbooks published in the US between 1945 and 2000. Cookbooks, directed primarily to a middle-class audience engaged in the exploration of the culinary Other, or to an Italian-American public involved in some form of negotiation of its hyphenated identity, have offered their audience—along with practical cooking advice—lessons on Italian civilization, ideologies of domesticity, history and geography. Over time—with the late sixties again being a turning point—the “culinary stereotypes of the ethnic Other” have become increasingly

varied and authenticity-driven. With all the emphasis on the regional cooking, however, cookbooks continued to convey the idea of a national cuisine which is suitable for a cosmopolitan arena. The format of the meals is typically proposed as the overarching structure that binds together—and makes sense of—a fragmenting variety of cooking cultures.

Within the Columbia community I was able to discuss my work with Professor Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson. Professor Ferguson introduced me to the “Feast & Famine Seminar Series” at the New York University Department of Nutrition and Food Studies, where many food studies scholars in the New York area congregate on a bi-weekly basis. On May 4<sup>th</sup> I presented some preliminary results of my research at The John D. Calandra Italian American Institute (Queens College/CUNY).

## ANNALISA COLIVA

The semester I spent at the Italian Academy proved a wonderful opportunity to develop my research on the topic of self-knowledge, namely the distinctive way adult human beings know their own mental states. This is not only a central topic in contemporary philosophy of mind, but is also fundamental to a better understanding of ourselves and our place in nature. The capacity for such knowledge is what arguably draws the line between adult human beings on the one hand and infants and higher-order mammals on the other.

I arrived at the Academy after working on this topic for about two years, particularly during a previous visit to the Philosophy Department at Columbia, as a Fulbright scholar. Having done most of the fundamental readings and having begun to see the directions I wanted to pursue in my own work—thanks also to constant interactions with some members of the Department, such as Akeel Bilgrami, Carol Rovane and my former PhD supervisor Crispin Wright—what I needed was the time and focus to develop my own ideas. The Academy provided the best possible environment to such an end.

I condensed the results of my intellectual ruminations in the paper I presented at the Fellows luncheon. On that occa-

sion, I took the liberty to engage the audience in a distinctively philosophical talk, making nearly no concessions to the fact that it was mostly composed of non-philosophers. To my delight, the number of challenging questions that came up in discussion testified both to the fact that, after all, it is possible for philosophers to reach a wider audience without trivializing the topic, and to the fact that the collegiality of the group promotes professionally fruitful interactions amongst the Fellows.

I challenged the *Zeitgeist* that infuses the project in Art and the Neurosciences, according to which a serious study of the mind cannot be conducted without taking into account what science—and, in particular, neuroscience—tells us about it. In the paper, I examine a number of scientific and naturalistically oriented accounts of self-knowledge and I find all of them wanting for principled reasons. The moral to draw, I take it, is that science can take care of the enabling conditions of thought, in general, and of self-knowledge in particular, but cannot fully explain these phenomena, as they are irreducibly normative in nature. Of course many would disagree, but it has been a real pleasure to see that those who were in attendance and had opposite views—first

and foremost the founder of the project, Professor David Freedberg—took up the challenge of engaging with such an uncongenial point of view.

The ideas I have been developing in these few months will—no doubt—need refinement, but they will certainly remain at the core of my future specialized work in this area. The expected outcome will be a state-of-the art review, a paper on my own proposal regarding the grounds of self-knowledge and their metaphysical implications and, finally, a paper on Moore's paradox, which has been commissioned for a collected volume on *Concepts* (edited by Professor Paolo Leonardi, Bologna). I will contribute the paper on self-knowledge to the conference "Self-Knowledge and the Self", organized by myself for August 2004 in Switzerland, in which a number of internationally and well-known philosophers will participate (including Akeel Bilgrami, Tyler Burge, John Campbell, Jane Heal, James Pryor and Crispin Wright).

I have also made a start on a new academic article on the self and first-person thoughts, entitled "Which 'key to all mythologies' about the self? A note on where the illusions of transcendence come from and how to resist them". After five years of intense and specialized work in this area, I needed to step back and define my own perspective on this topic that lies at the intersection of philosophy of mind, epistemology and metaphysics.

The idea that I have begun to develop is that philosophers such as Descartes,

Hume, Kant and Wittgenstein (at least in some moods) have felt compelled to propound outrageous metaphysical views about the self—identifying it with a mental substance, a mere condition of possibility for experience and thought, or even denying its existence—because they have all somehow been misled by certain features that are characteristic of first-person thoughts. Failing to understand them properly, they felt compelled to endorse extravagant metaphysical views that seemingly offered relief from the initial difficulties.

My sense is that the interesting philosophical work in this area consists, therefore, in identifying the phenomena that led philosophers astray, and in showing that a proper explanation of them does not mandate any revision of the ordinary intuition that selves are identical to human beings with intrinsically physical and psychological properties. This latter view is nowadays known in philosophical circles by the name of—alas—"animalist" conception of the self. My overall suggestion, therefore, is that "animalists" would be better off if, instead of producing arguments in favor of their views, they pursued the quietist line of showing why there is no need, after all, to embrace any revisionist conception of the self.

In addition, I completed an academic paper on G. E. Moore's "Proof of an external world", entitled "Moore's *Proof*: neither transmission-failure, nor question-beggingness, or dialectical ineffectiveness. Just mere irrelevance", which

has been accepted for presentation at the Joint Session of the Mind and Aristotelian Society, Canterbury (Kent), July 9-12 2004, and has been submitted for publication in a scholarly international journal.

Moreover, I worked on two pre-existing projects: firstly, the edition (together with Professor Eva Picardi, Bologna) of a book on the significance of Wittgenstein's philosophy fifty years after his death, entitled *Wittgenstein Today* (Il Poligrafo, Padova, 2004). I wrote the introduction to this volume and contributed a paper on Moore's *Proof*; and secondly, (together with Professor Alex Miller, Macquarie) a 2-volume *Festschrift* in honor of Crispin Wright, accepted for publication by Oxford University Press (and scheduled for 2007). Finally, I pursued the collaboration with the Philosophy Department I began last year, by leading some graduate seminars on the philosophy of John

McDowell and by having regular discussion group meetings on self-knowledge and the self.

In *The Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf claims that what a woman needs to be an intellectual is a room of her own and a legacy of some substance—the three guineas whence the title of her 1931 essay—which could give her the ease to pursue her interests and to grow as a thinker. What is obviously amiss in Woolf's characterization of the necessary ingredients for intellectual growth is what she, as a member of the Bloomsbury group, took for granted: a congenial intellectual atmosphere, where people are free to experiment with ideas and gainfully interact with each other's. The Italian Academy at Columbia provides both the material and the intellectual support that allows one—if only for the time being—to reach such a "state of grace".

During the Fall semester 2003 at the Italian Academy, I focused on the analysis of an important puzzle: the contemporaneous low labor-market participation of women and low fertility in Italy and the rest of Southern Europe. In all European countries, the growth in female labor-market participation has been accompanied by a marked decline in fertility coherent with microeconomic predictions. Because women typically supply substantial amounts of time to childcare activities, an increase in their wages increases household demand for child quantity and quality through an income effect, but decreases in demand result from increases in her time cost of childcare.

One of the main implications of microeconomic models of time allocation in the household is that increases in the wage rates of women should lead to increasing female labor-market participation rates and decreasing fertility rates. While there still is some debate in the profession regarding the appropriateness of examining non-traditional applications using the standard tools of neoclassical analysis, there has been a steady stream of empirical and theoretical studies of fertility decisions, both in static and dynamic frameworks.

The novelties of the approach developed in my research are several. First of all, the jointness of fertility and labor-market par-

ticipation decisions of women is explicitly addressed here. The two decisions are recognized as the joint result of the maximization of household expected lifetime utility under budget and time constraints. The desired participation status and the desired number of children depend on the whole sequence of prices and wages (which themselves may be endogenous) and on household preferences. The two types of decisions are therefore simultaneous in the sense that they are the solution to a common constrained maximization problem.

Second, I use an explicitly dynamic framework. By specifying the entire sequence of exogenous characteristics and the unobservable individual characteristics, our model is able to generate a distribution over possible sample paths of fertility and labor-market participation outcomes. Comparative statistic exercises can be performed by changing elements of choice set and examining the resulting change in the distributions of these events. Given the dynamic nature of the phenomena, it is unlikely that we will be able to obtain analytically unambiguous results. For example, a simple change in the unobservable which appears explicitly in the birth decision, has the direct effect of increasing the likelihood of a birth in any period, and hence should result in an increase in the expected level of completed fertility for the

household. However, the strength of the relationship in part depends on the feedback effect of past fertility on the current utility yield from a new birth, and the time path of the exogenous sequences. It is for this reason that dynamic theoretical models of fertility and participation decisions are likely to be of limited interest and the only available method for examining these phenomena in a realistic manner is through estimation and simulation which the research strategy followed here.

The increasing use of panel data allows us to take into account the dynamics involved in the relationship between births and work status of women. Moreover, it allows the inclusion of important factors such as fecundity tastes and other individual and marriage-specific traits. These are important factors in explaining fertility decisions, but are unobservable and often omitted by the researcher. The methodological approach is based on a fixed effect estimator which allows us to take into account the unobserved individual specific components.

Differently than in most analyses of household economic theory based on a unitary approach in which household income is pooled, I consider household behavior as the result of interaction between family members: fertility, as well as women's labor supply, is the object of a bargaining process between the spouses. This choice is quite crucial for policy issues: public transfers (taxes and transfers) do not have a neutral effect on distribution within the family, but influence demand for goods in

a different manner, depending who the beneficiary is. If women have higher income they also have greater control of resources and more bargaining power over the allocation of family resources, and the household choices reflect the women's preferences more closely. The results show that women with more bargaining power prefer to increase their own leisure consumption and have more children, while the opposite is true for the husbands.

Finally, I will analyze the effects also of the social and economic environments that the individuals face. With the increasing availability of household panel data, particularly in developed economies, much current work on fertility has focused on the impact of "environmental" variables on household fertility decisions. This is a natural development, since even in Western Europe, in which virtually all countries enjoy a high standard of living, we see very large differences in fertility and labor-market participation patterns. While some of these differences may reflect cultural attitudes regarding gender roles, some may be produced by systematic differences in choices faced by citizens.

European countries have in fact adopted different combinations of social and labor-market policies and this allows us to compare similar families that are subject to different policy environments. This comparison across countries shows there are important trade-offs in terms of wage differentials, career perspectives, labor-market attachment, and children's welfare. If policies are to be evaluated in terms of

the resulting levels of female participation and fertility, our results indicate that the “best option” is a combination of part-time employment, childcare, and parental leave immediately following the birth of the child (a combination offered in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, where in fact both fertility and female employment are high). This solution allows women to continue working during their childbearing years, enabling them to remain attached to the labor-market, while directly taking care of their children, at least part-time. It must be recognized that even this “first best” combination of part-time work and part-time motherhood can have a negative impact on the career perspectives and wages of young mothers, but empirical tests suggest that this impact is limited.

Finally, the policy mix chosen by other countries makes it more difficult to combine work and childrearing. When full-time jobs are the only available entry into the labor-market, fewer women choose to participate in the labor force, even if they typically enjoy rather stable careers and high earnings. However, this comes at the cost of lower fertility and lower participation rates, especially in the absence of available and affordable childcare (as in the case of Italy and Spain). Here, cultural attitudes need to be considered, too: it is a fact that informal childcare (grandparents and/or other relatives) is often preferred by a significant proportion of households, even when formal child care is available and affordable.

Our results suggest that in countries

where female labor force participation is low, reaching the Lisbon target of 60% female employment by 2010 requires a policy mix that lowers the costs of labor-market participation, especially for those women whose return to work is also lower, i.e. the poorer and less educated. Social and labor-market policy should be aimed at facilitating the use of flexible work arrangements.

Fiscal systems should be modified in the direction of lower marginal tax rates for low and average income levels, and also the introduction of a minimum income scheme should be given serious consideration in those countries that still lack it. This combination of policies would allow poorer families now excluded from the labor-market to pay for the costs of labor-market participation of women with children.

I benefited greatly from the suggestions and comments given by my colleagues at The Italian Academy. The School of Social Work, The Center for Income and Wealth (CIW), and The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies at Columbia University also provided other important inputs and data for my research.



DANIELA DEL BOCA

## ELLEN J. ESROCK

My goal for the 2003-4 year at the Italian Academy was to investigate specific issues in the theory of imagination and memory, topics which I pursued through scholarly study, conference travel, as well as participation in a Columbia graduate seminar in Art History. Although I completed a number of research projects, the primary outcome of this period was the articulation of a distinction between two uses of bodily awareness in reading, which I applied to a short story by Italo Calvino. The implications of this analysis extend beyond the genre and medium.

My purpose was to formulate the concept of using one's bodily processes for what I call a *reinterpretation*, which involves the processes of the somato-viscero-motor (SVM) systems. By SVM, I refer to the *somatosensory* system, which includes our tactile sensations on the body's surface (touch), and from deeper inside, our *proprioceptive sensations*, those detecting vibration and spatial position, as well as the kinesthetic senses of bodily movement and balance. Additionally, I include the *visceral functions* of the autonomic nervous system, those involving the regulation of the heart and lungs, the intestines, the blood vessels, the stomach, the skin, and with the *motor system* as it pertains to the operation of the muscles in

all systems throughout the body. These bodily systems have multidimensional, sensory input into the brain, and there are also brain representations of these systems.

A reinterpretation, the locus of my theoretical work, is best described by contrasting it with another kind of reader response that is more familiar, though not discussed extensively in literary studies, which I call a *simulation*. With a simulation, (1) the reader activates many of the bodily components that might be activated were she to experience in real life what was described in fiction. A reader might *simulate* the actions performed by characters or the emotions felt by the characters or narrator: the Frankenstein monster gestures, and the reader experiences the motor activations of a similar gesture. Furthermore, (2) the reader *projects* this experience into the text, that is, she experiences this simulation as a property of something that does not originate in her own body but as a property of the fictional construction—its characters, objects and landscapes, as well as the formal and material features of the literary work itself—its narrative structure, rhythmic devices, and spatial layout.

Take as an example of a simulation the common experience of falling, which forms the backdrop of Calvino's fictional

world. The reader who forms a simulation will draw either upon his autobiographical memories of falling, e.g., a real-life episode in which the reader tumbled down the snowy hill as a child, or to a fund of general, semantic knowledge of what falling is like. Both episodic and semantic memories of falling would be distributed throughout the brain and recombined to form a simulation in response to textual descriptions of sledding, slipping, and so on. The reader's simulations would entail either the on-line activation of bodily components involved in falling or the activation of brain maps.

This is only one kind of simulation. Motor activations and associated somatic and visceral sensations might also contribute to the process of simulating the emotions of a fictional persona. Attridge (*Poetic Rhythm*, 1995) explains that there is a physical basis for the expression of emotions through breathing, which can be translated into poetic rhythms:

The choice of a particular rhythmic form can also imply a certain emotional coloring. Though the association of rhythmic qualities and emotional states is no doubt in part a matter of cultural condition, it seems likely that there's a physiological connection as well, since emotions manifest themselves directly in the way we expend muscular energy. When we speak, we impart to our words a rhythmic quality expressive of our feelings—light and rapid, heavy and slow...what's unusual about verse is that it has the capacity to *build in* these qualities, so that they become an inherent feature of the lines. (p.14)

In effect, by reading certain lines of poetry aloud or silently and thus experiencing a sense of muscular energy and the tactile dimension of its rhythms, a reader might form bodily images that contribute to the simulation of an emotion, which she attributes to something exterior to her own self—to a fictional character, a narrative voice, or some other supervening emotional tone of a poem.

In a reinterpretation the reader does *not* activate the same bodily components that might be activated were she to experience in real life what is described in fiction. Rather, the reinterpretation deploys other SVM components to function as the bodily counterpart to the text. Although the two parts of a simulation could be easily described independently of one another, with a reinterpretation it is a bit more complex. In a reinterpretation, the reader (1) becomes aware of some component of the SVM systems and redescribes, or *reinterprets*, it as something that corresponds to a component of the fictional construction. Furthermore, (2) upon the reader's reinterpretation of this correspondence, she projects the reinterpretation of her own SVM systems into the fictional construction—the world of characters, actions, objects, and landscapes created by written signs—as well as the physical qualities of the material object that supports the inscription. As a result of the reinterpretation process, the reader creates and experiences the reality of the fictional world and its material construction by using the very substance of the reader's

own body. Our belief that we *lose* our bodies in reading may very well reflect the fact that we have reinterpreted them as non-bodily—as part of the verbal reality.

Another way of explaining this reinterpreted body state is through Damasio's notion of a background emotion. Although Damasio locates these background emotions within a broad typology that has been said to underemphasize the role of motor processes as the prime mover of the system (Panksepp and Watt, *Neuro-Psychoanalysis*, 5 (2), 2003), I suggest that we can use this concept of the background by foregrounding the role of action. Damasio argues that these background emotions are constituted by one's ongoing awareness of the somatosensory system, which he defines in broad terms that include the visceromotor system. Although the brain continually receives feedback signals from these autonomic processes to form a *composite* of the various bodily readings, we can also become aware of a particular component of this bodily state, such as racing heart or hot face (*Looking for Spinoza*, 2003, p.87). This feedback provides us with a constant background awareness of our body's somatosensory system: 'The background body sense is continuous, although one may hardly notice it, since it represents not a specific part of anything in the body but rather an overall state of most everything in it' (*Descartes Error*, 1994, p.152). He restates this in other terms: 'It may be quite inaccurate to say, as we often do, that the neural signaling that goes on in

the brain stem and hypothalamus is never conscious. I believe that part of it is continually made conscious in a particular form and that it is precisely what constitutes our background feelings' (p. 126).

In short, both a simulation and a reinterpretation involve a projection of something bodily into the fiction construction, but they differ in terms of what is being projected. With the simulation, it is something like a bodily approximation of what might be happening in the text were it real life, while in the reinterpretation, there is not this imitative configuration of the reader's body but some use of the somato-visceromotor systems that functions as a correlate to the text.

Simulations seem a more straightforward response to text than reinterpretations, so why might reinterpretations occur? I suggest that if we think of the reader as an actor and not a passive recipient of language, and the text (constituted by its opportunities) as something that permits the reader to engage in some kind of desired encounter, then the reasons for reinterpretation will be more comprehensible. Whether our active engagement with the textual world is motivated by the genetically primitive emotions instigating play, exploratory behavior, or social attachment to the reality of the fiction (Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, 1998) or involves a regression to a more developmentally primitive state of pleasure seeking, we might conceive of the reader as moved to engage in some kind of motor action that brings about fulfillment of his

textually focused desires. In reading, however, most of these behaviors will not culminate in any kind of real, deliverable action—we do not slay a dragon or embrace a fictional lover—and thus what begins as a motor preparation to act might appear in consciousness, instead, as a motor image. Alternatively, the motor preparation might be so rudimentary that it is not discernable as an image but, rather, contributes to a network of other connections, parts of which might become conscious. As a basic motivation,

then, we have the reader seeking some end through motor action and associated somatic and visceral functions.

On the basis of this research I shall further pursue the development of more sensorily-specific models of response to literary and artistic works. Ultimately, such investigations might enrich our understanding of both how we engage literature, the visual, and the performing arts and how we form connections to other human beings with whom we share a common space.

## GIOVANNI GIORGINI

The perfect setting offered by the Italian Academy allowed me to pursue my research project, which focused on the importance of civic pedagogies in order to create good citizens in a multicultural liberal society. My first step was to research extensively at Butler Library, looking for books and articles essential for my research unavailable to me in Italy. I pursued two lines of research, one more historical, the other more theoretical and interpretative. The current debate about values and coexistence of different peoples in liberal societies often seems to be inconclusive because it has at its foundation a profound disagreement about the notion of the human being and of human nature. My readings led me to believe that a similar disagreement presented itself in the past, in classical Greece: it is no wonder that many contemporary authors (as diverse as Martha Nussbaum, Leo Strauss and Alasdair MacIntyre) rely heavily on the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle in order to present us with a view of the good human being and the good citizen. However, Plato's and Aristotle's doctrines can be viewed as responses to the challenge posed to traditional Greek values by the Sophists and by the experience of continued exposure to different cultures, which became typical in the Fifth Century

BCE. The Sophists emphasized the man-made nature of laws and political arrangements, which previously were viewed as a reflection of a divine cosmological order, and brought the issue of diversity to the center of the political debate: arguing that there is no objective standard by which we can 'measure' the truth-value of moral and political ideals, they resorted to a 'pragmatic' notion of truth to overcome a seemingly inevitable relativism. Their positions, I came to realize, seem to be mirrored in the contemporary debate about multiculturalism. Here we find advocates of post-modern positions that appear to endorse the Sophistic argument of the relativity of all values. Their occasionally good-hearted defense of alien cultures often issues in the toleration of practices and traditions that are repulsive to our eyes. Some contemporary political theorists therefore resorted to the Aristotelian and Stoic view of the shared capacities (for rational thinking, compassion and so on) that unite human beings across barriers of space and time, and that enable us to speak of a 'commonality' among human beings and of an existing human nature.

I explored these themes in the first paper I delivered at the Fellows' seminar. On this occasion I examined the views of

two of the most interesting contemporary political philosophers (Nussbaum and MacIntyre), who are also the most prominent advocates of an Aristotelian approach in solving the problem of how to create good human beings in a multicultural society. After reviewing their conclusions, I focused instead on the viability of an Aristotelian approach centered on the education in the constitutional values of a specific State. I maintained that, whereas we should not give up the liberal ideal of having good citizens living happily together inside a democratic State, as MacIntyre would want us to, the philosophical attempt at eliciting a notion of 'human nature' that is not tainted by local bias has proven to be unsuccessful. I concluded that the best course left to us is to consider history, and to identify the good that human beings have always pursued, and the evil they have always tried to avoid. These are the values that have historically enabled citizens to live well in a State, and those that made States head for disaster (the example of totalitarianism in the twentieth century is illuminating.) It is thus possible to identify goods and values that have historically proven to be 'good' throughout places and times, which enables us to go beyond relativism. It is then the task of the governments to try to educate citizens according to those values.

A cognate theme pursued by many authors is the relative importance of rational faculties, feelings and sentiments in prompting human beings to act. Typically, liberal authors emphasize the role of

reason and are wary of other factors entered in the explanation of our actions. Recently this approach has been questioned by authors such as A.J. Wingo, in his *Veil Politics in Liberal-Democratic States* (Cambridge, 2003). During my stay at the Academy I explored the implications of his approach in a paper that was accepted and published in the journal *Politeia*: "Under the Veil: Reasons for Acting and Forbearing" in *Politeia* 19 (2003) n. 71, pp. 108–114. Whereas Wingo maintains that citizens in liberal States are prompted to act by emotional and irrational reasons, and this fact should be exploited in order to establish and support liberal regimes, I tried to show that what appear to be 'irrational' actions often turn out to be perfectly rational, once we have a correct notion of rationality that does not equate it with means-to-end reasoning. Accordingly, I emphasized the importance for liberal theory of having a theory of action that, while not shunning the significance of emotions, does not label them as 'irrational.'

One of the most common criticisms leveled at neo-Aristotelian authors is that their notion of human nature is too abstract, too far removed from the local, specific features that real human beings necessarily possess. The enterprise of eliciting a number of core features that would identify 'human nature' –it is typically argued- gives us an idealized vision that abstracts from all the negative aspects human beings have displayed throughout history. I tackled this line of objection by

recurring to history and to an acknowledged 'realist' author: Machiavelli. His notoriously pessimistic view of human nature is matched by his reliance on the importance of educating both citizens and statesmen in order to have a well-ordered society where human beings can live peacefully and happily. The sinister fame still surrounding Machiavelli's works forced me to argue elaborately for my 'urban' portrait of the Florentine secretary as a supporter of the all-importance of education. I devoted my second Fellows' seminar paper to Machiavelli and his view of the role of the good citizen to avoid the establishment of tyranny.

An offshoot of this part of the project is a paper I wrote on the role of the tyrant in Machiavelli's political thought and that I was invited to deliver at the Columbia Seminar in Political Thought. Here I focused on the figure of the tyrant that looms over Machiavelli's picture of politics, and that represents an ever-recurring possibility of all political arrangements.

Far from being a supporter of tyranny or a counselor to tyrants, Machiavelli tries to instil in citizens and statesmen alike those values that will make them seek a regime where everybody lives in freedom.

Another offshoot of this part of the project is a paper I wrote on the causes and consequences of anarchy according to Machiavelli, which I delivered at a conference held at the University of Bologna. I revised the paper, which is currently in press in the proceedings of the conference.

Finally, besides attending the always stimulating Fellows' seminars at the Italian Academy, I participated in the meetings of the Columbia Seminar in Political Thought and attended some conferences in Classics. Also, being in such a vigorous intellectual environment as Columbia, I took this opportunity to confront my views on how to create a common 'liberal' identity in a multicultural society with colleagues in the Philosophy and Political Science Departments, such as Akeel Bilgrami, David Johnston and Nadia Urbinati.

The nature of chance has been the subject of deep philosophical as well as mathematical speculation since antiquity. In modern times the issue grew in importance, and was satisfactorily settled in the 1960s when Kolmogorov in Russia, and Solomonoff and Chaitin in the USA, arrived independently at similar conclusions that developed a sound mathematical theory of random phenomena. According to them *a sequence of arbitrary characters is random if it does not have a generating rule that can be described with a sequence shorter than the original one*. Thus, randomness was linked to the properties of a given phenomenon (or sequence), rather than to the properties of the source generating the phenomenon itself, so that there is no contradiction in a random source generating a non-random sequence, as for example a roulette stopping on 5 one hundred consecutive times.

The theory behind this fact is quite sophisticated, lying somewhere between probability calculus and computational mathematics. The main consequence, however, is simply stated: the most economical way of describing a random sequence is to write it down, while a non-

random sequence can be reconstructed in full from a shorter definition. In particular randomness implies the impossibility of *compressing* a sequence, an operation of paramount importance in data transmission.

In an effort to find some common rules, I began a dialogue with the other Fellows and with scholars at Columbia, seeking to learn how the concepts of randomness and compactness appeared in their own fields of study. I initiated these exchanges with a speech on randomness, given at the Academy in September 2003, and continued with a series of informal meetings among several Fellows; my particular motive was to investigate the role of randomness in the cognitive sciences, and in art and literature.

As a computer scientist, I actively participated in the Columbia University seminar series dealing with the theory of computation, and in another on quantum computing; I myself gave a presentation on the role of randomness in mathematics and computation, to colleagues from Columbia University and from New York University.

A notable outcome of these discussions has been the decision to organize a multi-

disciplinary workshop on randomness, to be held at the Italian Academy in October 2004. Together with professors Carla Benedetti, Giorgio Einaudi, and David Freedberg, Director of the Italian Academy, I organized the conference and selected topics and speakers.

As with most research, many of the original questions that I posed to myself are still open, if not amplified by my studies. Among these questions:

- The mathematical theory of data shows that the higher the probability of occurrence of a given item in a stream, the shorter the sequence of characters must be for its efficient encoding. This also seems to happen in natural languages, where common words tend to be short. Is this a general rule? How did the morphology of words evolve in human languages?
- How “efficient” were the signs selected in the development of phonetic alpha-

bets? And what happened in non-phonetic writing systems?

· DNA sequences seem to be scarcely compressible; still, we are reluctant to accept that our genome is a random sequence. How does this comply with the mathematical theory of sequences?

· The theory asserts that a random sequence contains the maximum amount of information compared with the ones of same length. But how does our culture, or the surrounding environment, or even our genetic heredity, influence the amount of information that a message adds to our knowledge? Are we not inclined to discard a random message as being meaningless?

To answer these questions I shall need the active involvement of scholars in many different fields. It is my hope that the continued workshop on randomness will provide a forum for advancement.

In the course of a three-month stay at the Italian Academy I worked on my book, *City of Knowledge, Culture and History in Contemporary Shiraz*, in which I discuss the production of knowledge in the city of Shiraz as a way of understanding contemporary Iranian society.

Newspapers, magazines, radio and TV in Europe and the United States often discuss the relevance of intellectual engagement among the new generation of Iranians and their response to the present political and social situation. Social theorists and analysts of different persuasions and positions, Iranian (Soroush, Kadivar) as well as foreign (Habermas, Popper and Foucault), are avidly read and discussed.

The attention of the media, however, is largely devoted to immediate political concerns and focused almost solely on the city of Tehran, the megalopolis that seems to contain all of Iran in itself. What receives less attention is the degree to which such debates and confrontations are caught up in questions about the limits and possibilities of “culture”, a word that began to be used in Iran early in the twentieth century with an anthropological meaning and a prescriptive bent. These days the concept is particularly resilient in official discussions as well as

in informal settings. Culture (*farhang*) encompasses a broad spectrum of practices, intersects with religious and political trajectories, and is crucial in reflections about identity and the nation. I am interested in understanding how this field came to be constituted, what the conditions are for its production and the forms of knowledge that implement it.

As anthropologists often do, I chose to study these dynamics in a specific city, Shiraz, which since its foundation in the eighth century CE has been an important cultural center, so much so that it is often called the “City of Knowledge”. In the twentieth century the city became more and more identified as the site of “classical Persian culture” in opposition to modern and bustling Tehran. During the Pahlavi monarchy, the discourse of Shiraz as repository of Persian culture connected the main ruins of the Achaemenid empire (which are in large part in the region surrounding Shiraz) with two of the major poets from Shiraz, Sa’di and Hafiz. The pre-Islamic imperial past and poetry were mobilized to celebrate a racialized and nationalized vision of culture. The revolution of 1979 reversed this discourse by rejecting the monarchy’s interpretation of the past, substituting it with a religious paradigm. As several scholars have noted,

however, national trajectories loomed large in the emergent state and now, more than twenty years after the revolution, several of the elements of “Persian classical culture” are emerging anew, in a transformed constellation. The municipality and other institutions in Shiraz are promoting a vision of the city as the “cradle of Islamic-Iranian civilization” while reinterpreting the Achaemenid empire according to the limits of acceptability of public state discourse. These initiatives are paired with a growing attention to the amelioration of public space, and the production of a public through spectacles for entertainment.

For an ethnographer such as myself, studying the production of knowledge does not stop at tracing the genealogy of certain discourses; rather, it implies spending time with people who are engaged in this production. During my many stays in Shiraz, I became more and more interested in the ways in which the discourses mentioned above are articulated in people’s lives. In my conversations I came to realize how history and poetry functioned as different modalities in the reproduction of what people called the

“culture of Shiraz”. Fragments of national and local history combined with poetry to produce a less uniform and more conflicted version of “culture”, in which comments about the dire economic situation and the price of books mixed with a vague nostalgia or a particularly evocative verse. While history with its embedded quest for truth remained more elusive and conflicted and was seen as mostly untrustworthy, poetry constituted a more secure ground, one that depended less on the political situation of the day and afforded more recognition. University professors, shopkeepers, students and local intellectuals relied on poetry as a more stable imaginary, as something that could dispense answers to the large and small questions of social and personal life. It is this poetic power of recognition—the result of the particular location of Shiraz within the national imagination implemented through the cultural policies of the monarchic and Islamic states—that makes poetry the dominant discourse of culture, a discourse that crosscuts differences on religion and politics and constitutes a particularly effective modality of power.

My research on *LIFE* magazine and the “Atlantic community” [AC] as a Cold War construction can be summarized as follows: During the first month of my stay at the Italian Academy I focused on the origins and the development of the idea of AC from its first formulation during World War I to its definitive articulation during and in the aftermath of World War II. While Walter Lippmann was its most forceful and authoritative proponent, he was by no means an isolated voice. An extensive examination of the literature on history and international relations allowed me to trace the complex web of intellectual currents and historical experiences that brought about the emergence of the Atlantic outlook: the longterm Anglo-American rapprochement in international affairs, the interaction among American and British diplomats at the Versailles Conference (1919), the foundation of twin organizations dedicated to create a forum for the discussion of international politics in the inter-war years (Chatham House, the Council for Foreign Relations) and, finally, World War II and the German challenge to Anglo-American interests and political culture. The war added an ideological dimension to the Anglo-American alliance, which now was articulated in

terms of “culture” and “civilization” at least as much as in terms of “national interests.” For its advocates, AC came to provide a re-definition of “Western civilization” updated to the total challenge posed by totalitarianism.

Such a geographical/geopolitical expression of the idea of “civilization”, I argue, was strongly ideological. In this preliminary inquiry on the genesis of AC I have been able to explore its strong religious underpinnings (AC as a Christian bastion against godless totalitarianism) and was an expression of an implicit racialized outlook (AC as the white core of world civilization). It was the reformulation of old assumptions about Anglo-Saxon superiority, now reinforced by the encounter with the Catholic Church. American Catholics played an important role in the development of AC., e.g., the Columbia historian and U.S. Ambassador to Spain Carlton Hayes among others. At the same time, Pius XII became an indispensable ally in the construction of a Western/Atlantic world including North American and Western European countries, which supposedly shared political and economic principles and institutions (liberal democracy, individual rights and the rule of law, free market and free trade), cultural tradi-

tions (Christianity and, more generally, “Western civilization”) and, consequently, national interests.

To sum up, AC emerged as a hybrid combination of Anglo-Saxonism, liberal internationalism, geopolitical realism, and Catholic conservatism.

The second phase of my research focused on *LIFE* magazine as a relevant tool for the construction and dissemination of AC ideology in the 1940s. As a consequence, I dealt with a variety of methodological issues.

First of all I tested my assumption about *LIFE* being a legitimate choice for a study of the cultural dimension of Euro-American relations. On the one hand, the literature on the history of American journalism clearly singles out Time Inc. as a case study of great interest for its path-breaking influence in the development of mass circulation periodicals. Among Time Inc. publications, *LIFE* was specifically aimed to be an all-purpose magazine ranging from entertainment to hard news and targeting the emergent post-Depression American middle-class. As the quintessential middlebrow magazine, *LIFE*, unlike more sophisticated publications, can be seen as an indicator of widespread cultural and political orientations. On the other hand, far from being a neutral record of the twists and turns of American public opinion, the magazine was informed by the strong entrepreneurial and intellectual leadership of its publisher, Henry R. Luce. While hardly unique as a mass circulation magazine (the circula-

tion of *Look* and *Saturday Evening Post* was remarkable), *LIFE* was peculiar as it expressed the urge for an American “mission” in world politics and, consequently, turned out to be a major advocate of what Luce himself defined as “the American Century”.

However, my concern with *LIFE* is not limited to its major role in the history of American journalism. I studied *LIFE* as a general interest newsmagazine whose appeal is mostly visual, as it relies on photographs as much as on text. I dedicated the third part of my research to the theoretical implication of the visual transmission and reception of news.

The “realist effect” traditionally associated with photographs has been crucial in the advent of pictures in the printed media, and particularly in the tabloid newspaper of the 1910s and 1920s. Photojournalism reached its full potential in popular magazines like *LIFE* and its European antecedents of the inter-war years: the purported ability of photographs to “record” reality make them a very effective tool in the creation and popularization of ideology; pictures as sources of news portray as “natural” what is indeed artificially and intentionally constructed as “reality.” A semiological study of the relation between photographs and text (captions, articles, advertisement) allows us to deconstruct the supposed objectivity of photojournalism and reveal its political, racial, and gendered assumptions; it also exposes the contradiction between the emotional impact of

photographs on the observer and their supposed status as objective proof.

In the specific case of foreign news, maps as well as photographs play a major role. American involvement and, after December 1941, direct participation in the war implied, among other things, a reconsideration of America's place in the world. The end of "hemispheric isolationism" not only led to a rediscovery of the cultural and historical ties with Europe, it also reshaped ideas of boundaries geography. I argue that *LIFE* was a primary vehicle of the rise of popular cartography during the war years. Mapmaking, far from being an objective record of geography, molds and reflects our "geographical imagination"; it is a graphic expression of our sense of "situatedness". *LIFE* maps now emphasized that the United States were part of an Atlantic, Euro-American space which was shrinking considerably thanks to the technological progress in the construction of ships and planes.

The final part of my research focused on the place of Italy in the AC. I assumed that a middlebrow magazine like *LIFE* could provide a telling picture of Italy's marginal political and cultural role in the Atlantic context. Indeed, the textual and visual analysis of *LIFE* coverage of Italian

politics and society offer abundant evidence of how pre-existing American assumptions about Italy merged with the postwar urge to include it in a "family of nations" with shared traditions, values, and interests.

The study of the Italian case also allows us to draw more general conclusions regarding AC as a cold war construction. The "invention" of an Atlantic identity implied a reconsideration of American history and the search for a usable past. America re-discovered Europe in the 1940s and while, on the one hand, it assumed the political and economic leadership of the Western world, on the other it relied more than ever on Europe as the repository of symbols and traditions. Italy played a crucial role in this respect thanks to both the rise of the Catholic Church as a key player in the Cold War ideological warfare and the inclination of the American establishment to see the United States as "the new Rome". The reception of AC in Europe and particularly Italy was half-hearted, however: nationalist resentment merged with old assumptions of cultural superiority, thus leading to a mixed reaction toward the increasing American influence in postwar Europe.

## ANDREA PINOTTI

My research project at the Italian Academy dealt with collective and social memory, as handed down through images. Belonging both to the artistic and to the non-artistic realms, images are the concrete sedimentation of the past experience of anonymous subjects. Even when they are the product of noted individuals, images share with an anonymous community a collective way of perceiving which is expressed and preserved in the images themselves. The traditions of morphology as conceived by Goethe, and of an "art history with no names" as developed by the German-speaking *Kunstwissenschaft* between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, constituted the background of my research and its general conceptual frame.

I started from the German art historian Aby Warburg, and in particular from his unfinished project of the *Mnemosyne-Atlas* as a map of visual body formulae, in which Western culture expressed its emotions through centuries (the so-called *pathos-formulae*). I devoted my initial efforts to studying important sources for the elaboration of the concept of *Nachleben*, the survival or literally the "post-life" of imaginative structures. In Jacob Burckhardt, Warburg had a significant forerunner in the criticism of the history of artists (*Kunstlergeschichte*), which was

meant to be substituted by a history of the constant structures of artistic processes. On the other hand, Warburg found in the field of the neurophysiological approach to the question of memory – in Ewald Hering and Richard Semon above all – central issues concerning the foundation of a general theory of image-memory. In his famous lecture of 1870 entitled *Über das Gedächtnis als eine allgemeine Funktion der organisierten Materie*, Hering succeeded in transforming a subject that seemed specifically to belong to the field of neurophysiology into something that also appealed to the human sciences and philosophy. Hering's lecture would not only influence Warburg, but also a number of the major intellectual figures of the time, including Ernst Haeckel, August Forel, Bertrand Russell, Samuel Butler, Ernst Mach and Friedrich Nietzsche. Warburg was persuaded that the question raised by Hering's discourse had to be solved with the instruments of his library, the *Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek*, founded in Hamburg.

Hering's theory of memory, in which material traces inscribed on the nervous substance of the brain and transmitted through subsequent generations, was then expanded by Haeckel's pupil Richard Semon. In his chief work, *Die Mneme als*

*erhaltendes Prinzip im Wechsel des organischen Geschehens* (1904), Semon coined the neologism “engram” in order to characterize the material track that Hering had thought of as the physical condition of memory. Warburg was deeply influenced by such doctrines and imported their categories into his theory of visual culture, emphasizing the energetic aspects of the mnemonic transmission of imaginative structures. The engram thus became a dynamogram, that is, a trace or sign (*gramma*) that preserved a condensed amount of energy (*dynamis*).

These theories of memory were certainly fundamental to Warburg’s approach to the memory of images, but in emphasizing an “ancient event” as the material cause of the nervous effect (the “cerebral trace”) that is subsequently transmitted through generations, Hering and Semon also presented a number of difficulties for Warburg. He was more interested in the possibilities of images (schemes, *Urbilder*, *Formeln*) as transcendental structures than in the images in themselves. But how could a historically determinable concrete event be an *a priori* condition of possibility for a series of images conceived as variations on a never-given theme? In my research I tried to understand Warburg’s position within the context of the materialization of the *a priori*. I also compared his approach to the one developed by Jung in his theory of the collective unconscious and of archetypes, a theory which is similarly indebted to Semon’s *Mneme* and to

Burckhardt’s originary images (*Urbilder*).

As the cases of both Warburg and Jung make clear, central to the discussion of the human sciences in that period was the morphological concept of type (a never-given theme of infinite variations) and the method of comparative typology. I therefore decided to focus on two examples of typological analysis of the image realm, in order to verify applications of such a method to the history of images.

In the first semester, my investigation of how images relate to emotionally expressive body postures led to an analysis of the historical and formal link pointed out by Warburg between Manet’s *Dejeuner sur l’herbe*, Marcantonio Raimondi’s *Judgment of Paris* and a Hellenistic sarcophagus in the Villa Medici. This allowed me to reflect upon the meaning of the concepts of “model” and “origin”. In discussing Warburg’s discourse and its fruitful contradictions, I set a *historical* interpretation of such concepts against the *morphological-typological* one (this conceives the model as an *originary* theme of multiple, possibly infinite variations, and the origin as a non-chronological condition of possibility of historical figurative phenomena). The opposition of the original to the originary (Walter Benjamin’s distinction between *Entstehung* and *Ursprung*) implies a different way of understanding temporality and memory. In the historical model, the single derived phenomena are more or less close to the Prime Mover,

and consequently memories are more or less “faithful” to it; while in the morphological model, each historical manifestation is conceived as a variation of a theme which, in itself, is never given, and which never existed in a determined historical time. The theme exists in a mythical time and in this sense history is a constant variation of myth.

In the second semester I focused on another aspect of the typological-morphological paradigm: the question of how images tell stories. In this, I followed the lead of Franz Wickhoff (together with Alois Riegl probably the most important writer in the first generation of the Vienna School). Wickhoff articulated three main states of figurative narration: isolating, continuous and complementary. I examined the typological structures, or the conditions of possibility of such narration, along similar lines. Here, as is apparent from the so-called “art history with no names” (*Kunstgeschichte ohne namen*), personal issues in art history (who did what) yield to impersonal, anonymous modalities (how something is done, regardless of who did it first).

My investigation of Warburg’s typology for the visual representation of emotions as expressed by bodily postures (his well-known *pathos-formulae*) and Wickhoff’s typology for the figurative representation of narrative structures offered me a double opportunity. From an epistemological point of view, I could verify the possible application of the morphological-typological paradigm to specific historical issues. From the point of view of the history of ideas, I could analyse two critical representatives of the morphological tradition within the context of human sciences (and particularly art history and *Kunstwissenschaft*) in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. It became clear to me that Burckhardt and Warburg in the history and theory of images, Jolles, Propp and Benjamin in the history and theory of literature, Spengler and Frobenius in the philosophy of culture, Jung and Eliade in the history and psychology of religion, Cassirer and Wittgenstein in philosophy are all to be seen in terms of the survival and reelaboration of Goethe’s morphological thought in the field of the humanities.

The central portion of my study, and the idea with which I began, was the role of magnetism in early modern notions of communication. Because these beliefs did not, for the most part, result in any successful adaptations of electromagnetism to devices for communication, studies of them have been very few, and tend to cluster about either anthropological approaches to sorcery or historical analyses of the Inquisition and similar societal controls in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe. I began by examining the contexts of two contemporaneous notions of magnetism and communication, both well-entrenched in Northern Italy: the practice of baptizing magnets with *nomina barbara* in early modern love magic, and the supposed adaptation of the magnetic compass to an alphabetic dial for the transmission of long-distance messages. Before I came to the Academy, I imagined that these involved quite unrelated groups of society, and that they were representative, roughly, of magical and scientific beliefs. That is to some extent true, and I recently found an encyclopedic text, the *Musæum Francisci Calceolarii...* (Verona, 1622) that had a long and contemptuous description of the diabolical use of the magnet in rites of erotic coercion, and a rather brief depiction of

the use of the magneto-alphabetic dial by friends separated by great distances and even through prison walls, and strongly qualified by the ambiguous term *mirabilia*. But the fact that the earliest depictions of the pseudo-telegraphic dial specified that its function depended upon its baptism with *nomina barbara*, and the casual discovery of Holy Office records indicting several individuals with strong ties to a scientific community for dabbling (with unknown results) in love magic involving the baptized magnet convinced me that such distinctions were in many cases too tidy, and that it would be better to view the two practices as specialized subsets of a general theory of communication in which the magnet was at once the medium and the embodied ideal of economy, celerity, and secrecy.

What really interested me about the pairing of these two practices was the quite dramatic rehabilitation the magneto-alphabetic dial had undergone: how had it been so effectively transformed into something that looked like a precursor to the telegraph, when its original description—or the first known to me, Daniel Schwenter's *Steganologia & Steganographia aucta* (Nürnberg, 1600?)—explicitly linked it to *nomina barbara*? Some of the ready absorption

of the lodestone into the world of non-occult communication can be explained, I now realize, by the fact that the magnetic compass inherited the traditional associations of language with the wind rose; Seneca's observation in *Natural Questions* V. 17.1, for instance, that the existence of "defective nouns," those that cannot be declined in all six cases, had its parallel in those rare locales where the winds did not blow from all twelve quarters, is of this sort. To choose an early modern example of this sort of transference from a communicative wind rose to a magnetic compass whose information had nothing to do with messages sent by humans, in a letter of 1607 Johannes Kepler expressed some doubts about the use of the magnetic compass for those far out at sea, writing "Pilots amid the ocean waves *do not hear the voice coming from far away in the heart of the continent* clearly enough to guide themselves by it."

Such impressions of the talkative magnet tally with the early modern term for its needle, *lingula*, *languette*, and *zünglein*—the insistence on the diminutive being an implicit recognition of the very limited and predictable nature of the message—and would be the backdrop of what interests me here, the presumed adaptation of the magnet's expressive features to communication between humans. It strikes me as no accident that one of its earliest promoters, Famiano Strada S.J., chose to call the needle a *volubile ferrum* in order to signal not just its ability to turn but also the added measure of loquacity it

gained when employed in this manner. My sense that the magneto-alphabetic dial had undergone some sort of rehabilitation that distanced it from other rites involving *nomina barbara* was confirmed when I compared descriptions of its use to early depictions of the miraculous translations of the first five books of the *Old Testament* to Greek by seventy-two elders at Alexandria, for the physical particulars of both situations—isolation in stone cells, simultaneous letter-by-letter transmission, and a specialized clientele of priestly scribes—are always the same, though in the case of the dial, the motive force is not the Holy Spirit but a kind of terrestrial alternative, the wind rose.

Thus far, in a rather systematic search of texts involving magnetism and related phenomena from 1600 through 1800, I have found 19 different discussions of the device, clustering for the most part in the first half of the seventeenth century, and then peaking again in the late eighteenth century as interest in an actual telegraphic device rose. The occult origins of the device—its alleged dependence upon *nomina barbara*—are explicitly acknowledged by only four writers (Schwenter, Anselm de Boodt, Athanasius Kircher S.J., and Joseph Glanville) and their reasons for such allusions differ in motive. Despite what I see as rather remarkable parallels between the *mode d'emploi* of the magneto-alphabetic dial and the legend of the Septuagint, I have as yet found no text that sutures the two traditions together. It is my hope, however, that I

will encounter something of this sort when I begin to look more closely at the emergent theories of translation of the early modern period.

In the meantime (and to supplement what I see as a missing piece of the argument) I have added a third text involving magnetism and communication to the original pair, Bishop Ussher's bizarre allusion to the iron casket of Arsinoe, suspended forever in midair in a lodestone cupola in Alexandria, in the midst of his discussion of the support and awe Ptolemy (her husband and brother) had for the translation of the Pentateuch. I argue that this surd element, this thing that embarrassingly defies the project of successful cultural transmission embodied by the legend of the Septuagint, acts as what I would anachronistically term a kind of static, a resistance to the fiction of a translation reached by something other than discussion, strife, and eventual consensus, and altogether remote from the changing particulars of language. The model of translation implicitly adopted here, and in opposition to the miraculous model of the Septuagint, would be that of the King James Bible. To put the matter differently, the introduction of magnetism, and in the shape of something so poorly assimilated to a Judeo-Christian tradition, in a context devoted to translation and to the dream of the instantaneous but profoundly mysterious transmission of messages, seems to point to the conflation of the bogus alphabetic dial with that other and more powerful legend

underwriting human communication. I have done a search of the literature involving caskets suspended by magnetism—a regular motif in both medieval romances and travel literature of the early modern period, and even included in Benjamin Franklin's *Course of Experiments* in 1751—and have found, somewhat to my surprise, that the default setting for such allusions is Mohammed's tomb, suspended under a lodestone cupola at Mecha; the earlier and rarer instance is that of Arsinoe at Alexandria. While this means I do not have a wealth of information about cultural reactions to Ptolemy's simultaneous support for the translation of the Pentateuch and his monument to Arsinoe, it does convince me that Ussher's reference was hardly casual.

Because the much contested notion of translation—either from one language to another, or from word to signal—appeared a constant in my project, I decided to bracket this central focus with an opening chapter on *nomina barbara*, and a closing one on translating machines, the latter involving, of course, the lodestone. Thus far, I have found no early modern studies of the cultural function of *nomina barbara*, and those devoted to the appearance of such words in late Antiquity, apart from a crucial essay by Jan Assman, tend to show, through linguistic analysis, the occasional decipherment of the nonsense into semantic sense. I am much more interested in the fact that the vast majority of these words remain resistant to such scrutiny—they simply

cannot be decoded—and would prefer to show what they conveyed in a more global way to those who trafficked in them. Drawing upon three actual instances of their usage, and with the additional context provided by a passage from François Rabelais' *Quart Livre*, I have tried to present *nomina barbara* as a reaction to the dominant practices of Humanism, particularly as the intellectual goals of the latter were buttressed by the emergence of printing.

What I think the argument needs at this point is a more nuanced presentation of Humanism, one that relies more on early modern texts, and less on twentieth-century notions of what this movement involved, for if I am to show that the *nomina barbara* offered, *grosso modo*, a kind of resistance to it, I would like to be reasonably sure that a coherent and consistent set of Humanistic practices existed and, more importantly, was visible to an early modern population. I am especially interested in what Humanists, and anyone that I might identify as their opponent, have to say about translation in particular, and about the transportation of select aspects, mostly textual, of a Greco-Roman Antiquity to the early modern period in general. My sense thus far, basing myself on the rather polemical recent work of Laurence Venuti in *The Scandals of Translation* (1998) and especially *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1995), is that the emphasis has been since the early modern period on the commensurability of cultures, on pre-

cisely the sort of triumphalism that Humanism, in my view, would have embodied. A somewhat different picture, one with more attention to strategies and anxieties other than the illusion of transparency and fluency studied by Venuti, emerges in both the discussion of gnosis in George Steiner's classic *After Babel* (1975), and that of the dictatorial "spirit" of the original text in Douglas Robinson's *Who Translates? Translator subjectivities beyond reason* (2001), and I think these works, and the primary texts to which they lead, will help me establish a more authentic relationship of Humanism to *nomina barbara*. (I was interested to find in this connection that in *Who Translates?* Robinson posits the myth of the magnet in Plato's *Ion*, where the rhapsode's unschooled and mystical interpretation of Homer is a link in some sort of communication of sympathy whose attractive force reaches from the poet all the way down to the spectator, as "an early theory of translation.")

My last chapter will examine an exceptional variant on the magneto-alphabetic dial, one in which linguistic translation and the translation of a word to a signal were supposedly combined, such that foreigners possessing no common language might converse with each other. What little that is known thus far about the scheme—certainly wholly impractical in the seventeenth century—appears in the correspondence of Marin Mersenne, and as far as I know was ridiculed by most observers, at least one of whom argued

that if it permitted a European to converse with someone in China or Japan, why not the moon as well? Given the extensive correspondence networks of Mersenne and his addressees, and the fact that stillborn inventions generally do not receive much scholarly attention, but persist nonetheless in these texts, I believe it likely that I will find more references to this particular device. What interests me is above all the implicit sense that there existed some third linguistic region—something neither French nor Chinese, for example—and that it served as a matrix to both these languages and all others, that it resided somehow in the entire globe, and was articulated by the lodestone. This impression of a global subscript to all human communication, for those who believed in it, was quite clearly utopian, and is also distinct from other conventional *linguae francae*, those of mathematics and music; the cultural specificity of the latter, and the varying

influences of language upon it, in fact, is an issue with many of those who spoke out against the magnetic translating machine. It is not clear to me, at this very early stage in my study of the device, that this last chapter will differ fundamentally in its conclusions about the possibilities and limits of early modern communication than those raised by the *nomina barbara* in the first.

I would like to emphasize in conclusion how much I have enjoyed this past year at the Academy, and what a wonderful opportunity it is for scholars to work there. I particularly like the fact that we do not necessarily share the same intellectual agendas or backgrounds; for me, the chance to learn both about the particulars and the approaches of disciplines adjacent to or even rather remote from mine was a great privilege, and in this era of narrow specialization, a rare one. I am very grateful for all that the Fellows and the Academy gave me this year.

## MARINA WARNER

I have been researching the paradoxical salience of supernatural fantasy and speculation in post-Enlightenment culture, and the book I've now almost finished is called *Figuring the Soul*. It explores different approaches and techniques of representation that have been used with popular and widespread appeal in order to communicate the elusive, imponderable and metamorphic concept of individual uniqueness – in common speech, someone's spirit, his or her soul.

I arrived at the Italian Academy in September 2003 with the book in a state of rubble, accumulated over nearly a decade, and I spent the semester identifying pieces and concentrating on placing them in a design that would give them coherence and impact. The material had been organized into various talks and seminars, articles and essays, and it needed a period of intense, uninterrupted concentration to take it apart and reassemble it as a whole with an elegant line of argument. My time in New York was invaluable: in the studiolo at the Casa Italiana, I was able to think quietly day after day without other duties (and not *too* many distractions, though New York outside the window did beckon me out now and then). My work did not

therefore consist principally of original research, but of revising, condensing, adding nuance and cogency (at least so I hope). I was able to take a long view of the theme and the manner of its unfolding, and by the end of my stay, I was revising the last section. I could not be more grateful for the chance to work in this way, and the Fellowship far exceeded my expectations, in the generosity of the hospitality and the stimulus of the company, the atmosphere in the Academy itself, on the campus of Columbia, and in the heart of academic activity much farther afield.

After the Introduction, the book opens with "Waxworks: Living Likenesses"; this medium offered, since the late 18th century when it first became an entertainment, the highly particular physical portrayal of a person, seen externally and as objectively as forensic methods can create a real semblance. Yet waxworks strike us as uncanny, even ghostly; they look so animate, yet remain inert. This approach to grasping the essence of a person did not satisfy the need; the Romantics and after them, the Surrealists, explored soul, or individual consciousness, along very different lines, taking subjectivity as the key. So in the next chapter, "Fata Morgana: Visions of

the Invisible”, I revolve the angle of view, and take us into the eyes of the thinking subject who sees castles in the air, signs in stones, and faces in clouds, who is able to discover meaning and order in phenomena according to personal fantasy. The beholder in this way signs what he or she perceives, and so brings subjectivity into play as the chief mark of self. By the early twentieth century, the Rorschach test had adopted this function of visual intelligence into clinical psychology, in order to read character.

These highly contrasting approaches to the problem of figuring the soul of someone, the first by depicting the outer person, the second by diagnosis of inward cognition, lead on to an account of “the mind’s eye”, or “eye of the imagination” in relation to photography and portrait photographs; I gave part of this chapter (“The Mind’s Eye: Imagination’s Mirror”) at one of the Wednesday seminars, when we discussed with some warmth the paradoxical closeness of early camerawork to projective imagination. In order to give the Fellows a larger sense of what I am trying to say, I brought in arguments from later in the book, about the relations between soul and technology. For example, in Chapter 5, “Shadow-Catching”, I discuss the idea that the camera steals the soul, while Chapter 6, “Dream Figures”, argues that the medium was used as an extension of fantasy, not only as an instrument of record. Julia Margaret Cameron wanted to capture the soul of her sitters, but she

also made poetic tableaux of scenes she imagined, often inspired by literature or religion, not lived or experienced circumstance. The fear of the camera’s powers strikes me as not entirely unfounded, for many reasons arising from the eerie temporal space occupied by the photograph, and tied to the ever-growing and highly ambiguous role of celebrity in contemporary culture. The idea is routinely attributed to Others and described as a product of superstition and the savage mind, but I argue that when we in the West set the belief at a distance, we are attempting to undo our own anxiety. In the early history of photography, the camera and the projector created pictures of things that the human eye could not see, such as ghosts and fairies. They became prostheses for the inner eye of the imagination, as demonstrated by the tableaux of angels and cherubim, poetic figments and fancies, in the work of the Victorians.

My colleagues made very helpful comments, and the response was lively, as this theme touches on the overall topic of Memory, Culture and the Neurosciences. Also, I was fortunate that Michael Taussig, the professor of Anthropology, attended, and added keen insights from his wide-ranging research into dreams, visions, and other states of heightened consciousness; he also alerted me to pay attention to local history of the state of New York during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when messianic utopians, visionaries and spir-

itualists teemed in the state’s “Burned Over Ground”. He brought with him Stefan Andriopoulos from the German department of Columbia, who is also working on the relations between psychology, culture, and the emerging mass communications media of modernity, with an inspired article on the psychic associations of television in its early years. His research into German fears about the camera’s powers of soul-stealing also offered me fascinating points of comparison. These kinds of contacts and exchanges were truly valuable, and the ambience of the Academy makes them possible.

I was very apprehensive about giving a lecture in the Academy, which I did towards the end of the semester. As Chapter 4 from my book (“‘My Airy Spirit’: Breath, Vapour, Liquor, Cloud”) was proving the hardest section of all to organise and prune, I knew that working towards a public account of my thoughts would force me to clarify them. My chief interest lies with the metaphors used to convey “soul”, in the “logic of the imaginary” (a phrase of Roger Caillois), which connects airiness in manifold forms to the “ethereal body”. I am not attempting definitions of such intractable terms as “soul”, “spirit”, “essence”, but arguing that the material imagery at their foundation, as in the word “spirit”, has shaped and moved aspects of modern experience. The affinities between baroque visions of other worlds, for example, and Victorian attempts to experience spirit states con-

tinue to unfurl nebulous and evanescent figures of speech.

The book ends with chapters on psychic photography and the quest for ectoplasm in scientific circles up to the twenties of the last century. The Society for Psychical Research, founded in the 1880s by luminaries of Cambridge University, sedulously investigated spirits and the paranormal, often using the latest technologies. The most influential discoveries and inventions of a uniquely productive era in the physical sciences were intertwined with the quest to understand what the spirit might be. Another form of light? Radiant matter? A fourth state of matter? In a period when the electromagnetic field was being analysed, and new gases were detected in the apparently empty air, many theories of the life force, the vital spark, and the animating principle were proposed. One of the most curious offshoots was the phenomenon of ectoplasm, imponderable stuff from the other side which mediums produced during séances, from the 1870s for around fifty years. These sessions were handled according to the highest scientific principles then in use, and produced some astonishing photographs - before embarrassment and failure put a stop to that particular wrong turning in twentieth-century scientific inquiry.

To conclude, I discuss the new dimensions of imaginative experience opened by digital and virtual reality imaging, and the ways that present-day experience has become etherealised, producing a

familiar, if disorientating, common state of disembodiment, ubiquity, and suspension of time. The metaphors that govern thought about spirits – airiness, lightness, insubstantiality, malleability – have found a new habitation and a name in mass media technology, which can beam a perfect semblance of a person who never existed at all across time and space into the quasi-eternal zone of the virtual. I was able to develop some of these ideas for a talk at the Dia Foundation in connection with an installation by the artist Pierre Huyghe, who explores the immateriality of figments conjured by film and digital media, as evoked by the title of one of his works, “No Ghost Just a Shell”.

During my stay at Columbia, the Bowdoin College Museum in Maine held an exhibition “Disembodied Spirit”, which Alison Ferris selected, juxtaposing contemporary artists who explore ideas of haunting with earlier images of spirit encounters. I was invited to give a lecture at the opening and saw some remarkable examples of spirit images, many of them American, and unknown to me beforehand. I also visited Northwestern University, to take part in a symposium in the Program in the Study of the Imagination, at which I heard many far-ranging papers. I visited the Clark Institution, where by coincidence the Museum was displaying a small show on the very topic of the Burned Over Ground.

Professor Freedberg inspired us all at the weekly seminars and on other occa-

sions with his challenging questions, his huge range of interests, and his high expectations. The campus was most fertile and stimulating territory, and the Academy’s activities enriched it: the conference on Macchiavelli, with a splendid panel with Quentin Skinner and David Freedberg, was a highlight. Both the Premio New York artists showed us their work in different ways and these encounters were fascinating, thought-provoking, and hugely enjoyable. (I was able to include both the art of Alessandra Tesi and of Sarah Ciracì in the talk I gave at the Dia Foundation.) The staff were so thoughtful and kind to us, no detail too trifling for them to help with, and all the major arrangements made most providently.

The Italian Academy offered an unrivaled base, excellent fellowship in more ways than one, superb opening hours, perfect quiet, and a wholly wonderful opportunity to deepen my inquiry into strange, modern attempts to apply technological media to understanding and representing continuing mysteries of our human condition.



MARINA WARNER

## Description of Programs

# Fellowship Program

**I**N 2003–2004, the Fellowship Program at the Italian Academy continued to focus on issues relating to cultural identity, cultural transmission, and cultural memory. It has a twofold aim: to foster the conservation of the many aspects of culture that are increasingly being lost, and to forge genuinely new links between the arts, the sciences and the social sciences.

Applications were therefore invited for Fellowships in all areas relating to the study of cultural identity, cultural transmission, and cultural memory, particularly – but not exclusively – with regard to

Italy. Theoretical, monographic, and positivist approaches were equally welcomed. Applications dealing with the scientific, sociological and technological aspects of culture and memory were encouraged. Fourteen Fellowships were awarded in 2003–2004, with two reserved for the Academy's ongoing Art and Neurosciences Project.

Preference was given to candidates who planned to work with scholars in relevant areas at Columbia, but other candidates were also considered. In all instances, Fellows were encouraged to work with departments and faculty members at Columbia.

# Premio New York / New York Prize

In April 2002, the Premio New York/New York Prize was established on the basis of an agreement signed by the Italian Academy and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Prize is awarded by the Italian Academy and the Directorate General for Cultural Advancement and Cooperation of the Foreign Ministry.

A jury of distinguished experts in the field of contemporary art choose between two and four of the most promising young Italian artists to spend a year or a semester at Columbia. Each artist is given an office at the Academy and a studio at the

Columbia School of the Arts, and is offered the possibility of having an exhibition of his/her work at the end of their period in New York. The aim of this distinguished prize is to offer the most promising young Italian artists the opportunity to develop their work under outstanding artists and in the context of the stimulating contemporary art environment of New York City. It is also to encourage the exchange of ideas between Italian and contemporary Italian and New York artists.

## Activities of the Academy

# The Italian Academy

## Film Series

**E**xploring Stereotypes: *Italians in America on Film* will be the Italian Academy's sixth series in our ongoing and very successful Film Series. Our elegant and spacious Teatro is packed for each film with a devoted audience made up of not only the Columbia University community, but of the New York community at large. Before each film we serve an aperitivo to set the tone of the evening; we engage a speaker to present the film in order to enhance our audience's viewing; and then afterwards we host a question and answer session for those who seek a deeper understanding of the film, its context, and its wider cultural significance. It is our aim to choose films that go far

beyond the usual made-for-export fare that portrays the clichéd, good-natured, pasta-loving, Latin lover or seductress. Our films are selected with the desire to allow our audience to experience Italy in as many of its manifestations and incarnations as possible. The incredible success of the Film Series so far has been both surprising and exciting for us. The interest in Italian film in New York City, whether it be for a renowned classic such as *La dolce vita* or for a lesser known classic such as *I tre fratelli*, has been far beyond our expectations, revealing New Yorkers' desire for a fuller understanding of Italian culture that it is our pleasure and purpose to fulfill.

JENNY MCPHEE, *curator*

### FALL 2003

#### *Visions of the South: Geography as Character in Italian Cinema*

*La Terra Trema* by Luchino Visconti  
Speaker: Richard Peña

*Viaggio in Italia* by Roberto Rossellini  
Speaker: Ingrid Rossellini

*Divorzio all'Italiana* by Pietro Germi  
Speaker: Antonio Monda

*Salvatore Giuliano* by Francesco Rosi  
Speaker: Gaetanna Marrone-Puglia

*L'Avventura* by Michelangelo Antonioni  
Speaker: Nelson Moe

*Pasqualino Settebellezze* by Lina Wertmüller  
Speaker: Ruth Ben-Ghiat

### SPRING 2004

#### *Visions of the North: Geography as Character in Italian Cinema*

*Il Posto* by Emmanno Olmi  
Speaker: Antonio Monda

*Prima della Rivoluzione* by Bernardo Bertolucci  
Speaker: Leonard Quart

*Senso* by Luchino Visconti  
Speaker: Phillip Lopate

*Rocco e i Suoi Fratelli* by Luchino Visconti  
Speaker: Nelson Moe

*La Notte* by Michelangelo Antonioni  
Speaker: Alexander Stille

*Miracolo a Milano* by Vittorio De Sica  
Speaker: James McCourt

# The Italian Academy Concert Series

The Italian Academy's first season of concerts featuring contemporary music was a series of three concerts in the Fall 2003, *Contemporary Classic Italian: Music of the Last Fifty Years*. The aim of these concerts is to present the public with first-rate performances of music composed in recent years by Italians along with music by other composers influential to and influenced by the Italians. In October, the Italian pianist Emanuele Arciuli played a program in the Teatro that was praised by a critic in the *New York Times* as "an excellent recital" with music by Giacinto Scelsi, Morton Feldman, John Cage, Ivan Fedele, Claudio Rastelli, and Frederic Rzewski. The November concert was with Antares, a young chamber music group that performed music by Gyorgy Ligeti, Luigi Nono, Scelsi, Elliott Carter, Nicola Sani, and Luciano Berio. In December, a concert focused on Berio's solo *Sequenzas*, with performances of those challenging pieces by soprano Joan La Barbara, violinist Vesselin Gellev, and accordionist William Schimmel, among others. All of

these first three concerts were lauded in the *New York Times*.

The Spring 2004 series, *Solo at the Italian Academy*, showcased three virtuosic musicians all of whom happened to be women. Pianist Marilyn Nonken played a spiky, ultra-modern program in March consisting of music by Arnold Schoenberg, Luigi Dallapiccola, Salvatore Martirano, and Charles Ives. In April, soprano Lucy Shelton offered an excellent program mixing old and new music, with a definite focus on Italy: an Italian cantata by Handel, Berio's *Sequenza III for female voice*, and songs by Dallapiccola, Scelsi, Rossini, Donizetti, and Berio. The May recital was by world-renowned cellist Frances-Marie Uitti, who performed an entire program of music written specifically for her by Salvatore Sciarrino, Jonathan Harvey, Gyorgy Kurtag, Iannis Xenakis, Sylvano Bussotti, Scelsi, and Berio, along with an improvisation by Uitti herself in collaboration with author Diane Williams, who appeared as a special guest reading from her own work.

In presenting these concerts to the

public and the Columbia community, the Italian Academy provides an increasingly uncommon service. The admission fees for these concerts are kept low to ensure that anyone with a sincere interest in attending can afford to do so. And the artistic quality and academic interest in the concerts redound to the prestige and importance of the Academy. The audience

for such music is inevitably smaller than for films or popular or even more familiar classical music, but the number of tickets sold has grown with each successive performance, and soon enough the Teatro will be full of intelligent, committed people eager to hear a live performance of music written in our own time.

RICK WHITAKER, *curator*

## FALL 2003

### *Contemporary Classic Italian: Music of the Last Fifty Years*

OCTOBER 8, 2003

Pianist Emanuele Arciuli

NOVEMBER 5, 2003

Antares (Vesselin Gellev, violin; Rebecca Patterson, cello; Garrick Zoeter, clarinet; Eric Huebner, piano)

DECEMBER 3, 2003

Luciano Berio *Sequenzas* with Joan La Barbara, soprano, William Schimmel, accordion, Vesselin Gellev, violin, Michael Beit-Halachmi, clarinet, Miriam Kapner, oboe

## SPRING 2004

### *Solo at the Italian Academy*

MARCH 10, 2004

Pianist Marilyn Nonken

APRIL 7, 2004

Soprano Lucy Shelton, accompanied by pianist Karl Paulnack

MAY 5, 2004

Cellist Frances-Marie Uitti

# Exhibitions

## 2003 Winners of the Premio New York:

Sarah Ciraci  
*Dimensional Jump*  
APRIL 12, 2004

Alessandra Tesi  
*Glass Movie/Film di Vetro*  
APRIL 27, 2004

## Guest Artists:

Iannis Delatolas  
*Photographs*  
OCTOBER 15, 2003

Allison Jeffrey  
*Fountain Paintings*  
NOVEMBER 15, 2003

Marina Berio  
*Untold Stories*  
MARCH 10, 2004

Fausto Fornasari, The King Studio, Italy  
*Splendors of the Renaissance: Princely Attire in Italy*  
JUNE 2, 2004

# Fellows' Seminars

## FALL 2003

"Touching Art: Intimacy, Embodiment, and the Somatosensory System"  
*Ellen Esrock* SEPTEMBER 17

"Randomness"  
*Fabrizio Luccio* OCTOBER 1

"Memory and Image"  
*Andrea Pinotti* OCTOBER 8

"In the Mind's Eye: Thought-Pictures and Ethereal Presences"  
*Marina Warner* OCTOBER 15

"Of Language and the Lodestone"  
*Eileen Reeves* OCTOBER 22

"Why are Fertility and Participation Rates So Low in Italy (and Southern Europe)?"  
*Daniela Del Boca* OCTOBER 29

"Is Italy an 'Atlantic' Country?"  
*Marco Mariano* NOVEMBER 5

"A Story in Color, at Notre Dame in Paris . . ."  
*Alessandra Tesi, Premio New York Artist*  
NOVEMBER 12

"Style, Difference and Uniqueness"  
*Carla Benedetti* NOVEMBER 19

"Public History and the Production of the 'Culture of Shiraz'"  
*Setrag Manoukian* DECEMBER 3

"Civic Pedagogies, Cultural Identity and the Issue of Liberal Education in Italy"  
*Giovanni Giorgini* DECEMBER 10



FABRIZIO LUCCIO

SPRING 2004

“Image and Narration (from Wickhoff to the Fantastic Four)”

*Andrea Pinotti*      JANUARY 28

“‘Now That’s Italian!’: Representations of Italian Food in American Popular Magazines, 1950-2000”

*Simone Cinotto*      FEBRUARY 11

“The Place of the Tyrant in Machiavelli’s Political Thought and the Literary Genre of the *Prince*”

*Giovanni Giorgini*      FEBRUARY 18

“Roman Archaeological Heritage and Cultural Identity in Republican Italy”

*Gabriele Cifani*      MARCH 10

“Enumerative Geometry”

*Enrico Arbarello*      MARCH 24

“Embodying Literature”

*Ellen Esrock*      MARCH 31

“Self-knowledge (But not: ‘Know Thyself’)”

*Annalisa Coliva*      APRIL 7

“Something from Nothing: Making Sense of Early Modern Nonsense”

*Eileen Reeves*      APRIL 14

Video and Film Work

*Sarah Cirací*      APRIL 21

“Italy in the Atlantic World: The View from *OGGI*, 1950-1955”

*Marco Mariano*      APRIL 28

ILLUSTRATIONS:

*cover and page 4:* Sarah Cirací

*page 6:* Splendors of the Renaissance: Princely Attire in Italy

*page 20:* Alessandra Tesi

SET IN THE TYPES OF GIAMBATTISTA BODONI.

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