

The Italian Academy for  
Advanced Studies in America  
at Columbia University

Annual Report 2005–2006

NEW YORK 2006



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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 Italian Academy's work 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 any field 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 U.S. Thanks to its

prestige and its location in New York, the Academy 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 2005–2006



# Board of Guarantors

## 2005–2006



APPOINTED BY  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

**Barbara Aronstein Black**

*George Welwood Murray Professor of Law,  
Columbia University*

**Daniele Bodini**

*Chairman, American Continental Properties,  
New York*

**Jonathan Cole**

*John Mitchell Mason Professor of the  
University and Provost and Dean of the  
Faculties Emeritus, Columbia University*

**Zvi Galil**

*Dean of the School of Engineering; Schapiro  
Professor, School of Engineering; Julian  
Clarence Levi Professor, Computer Science,  
Columbia University*

**Jeffrey T. Schnapp**

*Professor of French and Italian; Director,  
Stanford Humanities Lab, Stanford University*

**Fritz Stern**

*University Professor, Columbia University*

APPOINTED BY THE MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY

**Claudio Angelini**

*Director, Italian Cultural Institute, New York*

**Livio Caputo**

*Presidente della Commissione Stranieri ed  
Immigrazione Comune di Milano*

**Roberto de Mattei**

*Vice Presidente del Consiglio Nazionale delle  
Ricerche*

**Stefano Parisi**

*Amministratore Delegato, Fastweb S.p.A.*

**Giovanni A. Puglisi**

*Segretario Generale, Commissione Nazionale  
Italiana UNESCO*

**Salvatore Rebecchini**

*Presidente, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti S.p.A.*

CHAIR

**Alan Brinkley**

*Provost, Columbia University*



# Senior Fellows

2005–2006

## Qais al-Awqati

*Robert F. Loeb Professor of Medicine and Professor of Physiology and Cellular Biophysics at Columbia University*

## Bruno dalla Piccola

*Ordinario di Genetica presso l'Università "La Sapienza" di Roma e Direttore Scientifico dell'Istituto C.S.S. Mendel di Roma*

## Victoria de Grazia

*Professor of History at Columbia University*

## Giorgio Einaudi

*Addetto Scientifico presso l'Ambasciata Italiana a Washington*

## Anthony Grafton

*Dodge Professor of History at Princeton University*

## Denis Hollier

*Professor of French at New York University*

## Eric Kandel

*Nobel Laureate and University Professor, Columbia University*

## Carlo Ossola

*Ordinario di Letteratura Italiana all'Università di Torino, Accademico dei Lincei e Membro del Collège de France*

## Francesco Pellizzi

*Editor of Res and Research Associate in Middle American Ethnology at Peabody Museum at Harvard University*

## Angelo Maria Petroni

*Ordinario di Sociologia all'Università di Bologna e Direttore della Scuola Superiore della Pubblica Amministrazione*

## Paolo Simoncelli

*Ordinario di Storia Moderna all'Università "La Sapienza" di Roma*

## Rodolfo Zich

*già Rettore del Politecnico di Torino ed attuale Presidente dell'Istituto Superiore "Mario Boella"*

# Staff



## FALL 2005

David Freedberg, *Director*  
Elisabetta Assi, *Assistant Director*  
Olivia D'Aponte, *Assistant Director*  
Robert Brooks, *Business Manager*  
Will Buford, *Events Coordinator*  
Allison Jeffrey, *Administrative  
Coordinator*  
Jenny McPhee, *Film Series Curator*  
Anna Maria Poma-Swank, *Librarian*  
Rick Whitaker, *Theater Manager*

## SPRING 2006

Achille C. Varzi, *Acting Director*  
(David Freedberg on sabbatical leave)  
Abigail Asher, *Acting Assistant Director*  
Irina Oryshkevich, *Acting Assistant  
Director*  
Robert Brooks, *Business Manager*  
Will Buford, *Events Coordinator*  
Allison Jeffrey, *Administrative  
Coordinator*  
Jenny McPhee, *Film Series Curator*  
Anna Maria Poma-Swank, *Librarian*  
Rick Whitaker, *Theater & Music Director*

## WORK STUDY STAFF 2005-6

Christine Ashley Berthoumeiux  
Joseanibal Colon-Ramos  
Camilla Fonseca  
Anna Hunt  
Sandra Paine  
Justin Reardon  
Emily Reeves  
Jeff Ryan  
Matthew Sohm  
Brian Manning-Spindt  
Amy Tang

## PART-TIME STAFF

Ezio Blasetti

# Director's Report



EVERY YEAR the Fellowship Program at the Academy grows stronger. When I restructured the Fellowship Program in the course of 2001-2002, it did not seem possible to imagine that applications would increase by a rate of almost 100% per year, nor that they would come from so wide a variety of disciplines. While there can be no question that the overall quality of each year's group of Fellows has improved along with the growth in the applications pool, it is not always possible to predict the collegiality of the group. But this year has been remarkable for the exceptional civility, erudition, and spirit of collaboration of the group as a whole. For all of us at the Academy – and I think for Columbia in general – the Fellows of 2005-2006 will remain a model of collegiality and scholarly cooperation. They have shown a notable spirit of devotion not just to the Academy, but also to Columbia and to the great traditions of Italian and American scholarship.

While it seems unlikely that our appli-

cant pool will continue to grow at the extraordinary rate of the last few years, it is clear – both from the demand for Fellowships and from our national and international reputation – that the Academy has already achieved a reputation that ranks it with the most distinguished institutes of advanced studies in America and Europe. We should therefore prepare ourselves to deal with the continuing demand for places. In order to do this we will need to expand our growing staff, provide more funds for additional Fellowships, and consider restructuring some of our internal spaces to provide additional offices for Fellows. Without support for any of these, we will not be able to expand as much as our current potential indicates.

In his report on his Acting Directorship of the Academy during my absence on Sabbatical Leave during the spring term, Professor Achille Varzi described the Fellowship Program in the following way: “More than ever before, our Fellowship Program has flourished, making the Academy a recognized unique center for

interdisciplinary collaboration between scholars from Italy and elsewhere.”

The success of our Program is not only testified by the wonderful spirit of collegiality and scholarly cooperation that has driven the activities of our research Fellows during both semesters. It is certainly worth recording that the number of applications that we have received for next year has increased tremendously, nearing a total of 200. This makes our Program one of the most sought-after post-doctoral research opportunities in the world, reflecting the growing esteem in which the Academy is held among scholars in Italy and elsewhere. Of course, this also means that the selection process has become a truly challenging task, as many applications are of excellent quality. In this regard, our distinguished referees on the selection committee have been of invaluable assistance and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of them. The Fellows selected for 2006-2007 (eleven in the fall and ten in the spring) form a stellar group, with projects ranging from literature, history, and the history of art to philosophy, political theory, physics, and the neurosciences. We can only regret that our budget and facilities do not allow us to offer more.

As in the past, the Fellowship Program was greatly assisted by the support of other institutions at Columbia. Professor Zvi Galil, Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and devoted Guar-

antor of the Academy, secured the co-sponsorship of one Fellow in the field of Computer Science, while Professor Eric Kandel, Director of the Center for Neurobiology and Behavior, co-sponsored a Fellow in the field of Neuroscience. In addition, this year we had our first Alexander Bodini Fellow for studies in areas related to adolescent mental illness. I am delighted to say that all these tangible expressions of esteem for our Program will continue also next year. In addition, next year we will benefit from a co-sponsorship through Professor Ottavio Arancio’s laboratory at Columbia University Medical School. We are, of course, very thankful for this support: not only because it enables us to fund all the Fellowships we have space for, but also because it provides some of our Fellows with the opportunity to pursue their research projects in close contact with the extraordinary resources that Columbia has to offer. Our hope for the future is to be able to promote this kind of arrangement with other departments as well, both in the sciences and in the humanities.

This year we had eleven Fellows in the fall term, and eleven in the spring, as well as the two winners of the Premio New York in the fall, and two in the spring. This is the maximum number of Fellows feasible in terms of current financial and space resources. Indeed, it should be noted here that current levels of funding are sustained by the fact that three of the Fel-

lowships were partly funded by relevant departments at Columbia. Of course the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to make a substantial contribution to the New York Prize Fellowships, but we are exploring the possibility of finding more private sponsors for Fellowships (along the lines of the already existing Alexander Bodini Fellowship).

One of the most distinctive aspects of intellectual life at the Italian Academy is that it is truly interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinarity is much spoken about in university circles these days, but in practice the borders between disciplines seem to remain well-guarded. At the Academy the situation, for the moment at least, remains refreshingly different. It is open, critical, engaged, and frank. Our Fellows come from a large variety of areas in the humanities, sciences and social sciences, and I continue to be amazed at the fertility of cross-disciplinary discussion both at our weekly Fellows' Lunches, and in conversations in and out of our offices at the Academy. In fact, an increasing number of our Fellows give lectures and participate in seminars throughout the New York metropolitan area, thus contributing not only to scholarship in their fields, but also to the regard in which the Academy is held.

As always we enjoyed a full program of events this year. On September 28 Ambassador Richard Gardner presented his remarkable book, *Mission Italy*, an account of his years as Ambassador to

Italy in the *anni di piombo*, in years crucial for relations between the US and Italy as the Cold War ended. We were fortunate to have Professors Alexander Stille and Henry Graff as interlocutors, who were able to bring the significance of Ambassador Gardner's role in Italy during these years to the fore. On October 8, the President of the Italian Senate, Marcello Pera, delivered an address on the new university reforms in Italy at a Gala Dinner at the Academy.

As is well-known, Mozart's great librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte, was Professor of Italian at Columbia between 1825 and 1838. His library formed the basis of Columbia's not insubstantial holdings of Italian history and literature. Two thousand five – the year before the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations for Mozart – was the bicentennial of Da Ponte's arrival in this country, and we were fortunate to be able to mark this event with a program largely organized by the Da Ponte Institut in Vienna under the dynamic leadership of Professor Herbert Lachmayer. On October 10, in the presence of the Austrian Consul General, Dr Brigitte Blaha, and the Director of the Austrian Cultural Forum, Graf Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, as well as Gary A. Henningsen, Master of the Grand Lodge of New York, Professor Lachmayer and his colleagues, Reinhard Eisendle and Werner Hanak, presented their remarkable "exhibition in a box," an exceptional package of illustrations and text, contain-

ing essays on Da Ponte and his significance (including one by myself on Da Ponte as cultural pioneer in New York). This was followed by a marvelous concert performed by the Trio Marc Chagall, who came over from Vienna specially for the occasion (sponsored by the Von Karajan Centrum in Vienna). On the following day, we held a small symposium on Da Ponte, again organized by Professor Lachmayer and his colleagues, Gernot Gruber, Otto Biba, Richard Heinrich and Rainer Münz introduced by the great *diva* Regina Resnik, who spoke movingly not only about Mozart's operas, but also about her work in Vittorio Veneto, where Da Ponte was born.

The success of the events around Da Ponte in October augur well for future projects in collaboration with the Da Ponte Institut. At the moment I am working together with Professor Lachmayer to examine the possibilities for future research projects. These will highlight the role of Italy in the European Enlightenment and its American ramifications. They will exemplify the critical role of the Academy in reaffirming and emphasizing the cultural and historical relations between the United States and Europe.

At the suggestion of our Guarantor Prof. De Mattei, Prof. General Carlo Jean, Professor of Strategic Studies at Luiss Guido Carli in Rome, and Representative of OSCE at the Dayton Peace Accords, came to the Academy on December 8 to conduct

a seminar on The New Geopolitics of the Balkans. We were fortunate enough to have some of New York's most distinguished Balkanists as Professor Jean's respondents, including Professor Susan Woodward, and Columbia's own Professor Mark Mazower and Professor Robert Jervis. I am especially grateful to Gordon Bardos for having moderated the discussion and for having ensured a smooth collaboration between the Academy and the Harriman Institute in sponsoring this important event on a topic that has been too neglected in the United States in recent years.

Our film series, under the able curatorship of Jenny McPhee, continued to play a considerable role in the cultural life of New York – and of Morningside Heights in particular – with a series dedicated to “Fascism on Film.” As has now become customary at our film series, each film was introduced by a distinguished authority on the subject.

Rick Whitaker, our dedicated theater manager, played an ever-larger role in the ideation and organization of our cultural activities. In the Fall, the concert series was appropriately devoted to the theme of Lorenzo Da Ponte. It was entitled “Lorenzo Da Ponte: A Bridge from Italy to New York,” and consisted of three exceptional vocal recitals, all dedicated to Da Ponte, his circumstances, and his musical afterlife.

Mr. Whitaker also initiated a series of free public lectures by Columbia Professors held at the Academy. The series was simply

entitled “Italy at Columbia,” and was intended to highlight aspects of Columbia’s contribution to the study of Italian culture over and above the offerings of our already distinguished Italian Department. All the lectures were enthusiastically received—not surprisingly, given that the speakers in the fall term were James Beck on Masaccio and the Pictorial Revolution, Richard Howard on Pirandello, and James Shapiro on Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*. In this way we brought students at Columbia together with members of the interested public at the agreeable site of the Italian Academy. No one present could have doubted the continuing centrality of Italian culture to Columbia’s concerns.

On March 24, a remarkable and pathfinding event took place at the Academy. But first some background. Ever since I became Director of the Academy in July 2000, I have made a major commitment to establishing a program that would bring artists and scholars in the humanities together with neuroscientists. It seemed to me then, as it does now, that the neurosciences was not simply one of the strongest fields in the sciences and one which offered many possibilities for collaboration with people working in the humanities, but also an area in which Italy was particularly strong. As a token of this commitment we set up a modest project on Art and Neuroscience, which has quietly gained recognition over the years, both at Columbia and internation-

ally. With the help of some of Columbia’s most distinguished neuroscientists we have been able to bring exceptional young Italian neuroscientists to the Academy. As I have commented in the past and noted in my initial remarks here, the spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration and collegiality at the Academy is truly exceptional. It offers great hope for the prospects of building strong bridges across the disciplines – an ambition often aimed for, but rarely achieved. I had long wished to bring together the world’s most famous cognitive scientists interested in both science and art with a group of noted scholars and artists; so when two of Columbia’s Nobel Laureates, Eric Kandel and Richard Axel, approached me last summer to organize such a forum under the sponsorship of the Blouin Foundation, I was happy to agree. We are grateful to Louise MacBain and all members of the Foundation’s staff for having helped make the Academy’s conference on March 24 on *Art and the New Biology of Mind* such a huge success. Our theater was packed with a riveted audience the whole day long – no mean achievement for a dense conference containing many speakers. A very distinguished international group included Antonio Damasio, V.S. Ramachandran, Raymond Dolan, Semir Zeki, Joseph LeDoux and Vittorio Gallese from Parma, one of the discoverers of mirror neurons (certainly one of the most important discoveries in the field of the

neurosciences in the last two decades). The atmosphere was intense and exciting. Everyone present was aware of the pioneering nature of the event and the many exciting prospects it opened up.

In the spring term I took a portion of a long-overdue academic leave, and handed over the reins to my colleague at Columbia, Professor Achille Varzi. I am very grateful to Prof. Varzi for taking on the challenging task of Acting Director (an especially challenging role when it is only for a short time), and for so ably directing the program which had, of course, largely been devised previously.

In addition to his remarks on the Fellowship Program cited at the beginning of this report, Professor Varzi also reported on the events of the spring term and on other aspects of his directorship as follows:

*Our acclaimed Film Series, under the curatorship of Jenny McPhee, confirmed its success in the spring term with six screenings featuring the work of the poetic master of Italian cinema, Michelangelo Antonioni. As in the past, some of New York's most distinguished academics and cultural observers introduced each film and led a discussion afterwards—a formula that our audience appears to appreciate greatly. During the spring we also held our by-now traditional concert series. Under the inventive curatorship of our Theater Manager, Rick Whitaker, the series was entitled “Three Italian Men: Solo Performers at the Italian Academy” and once again included a performance by master pianist Emanuele Arciuli – now becoming a more-than-welcome fixture at the Academy.*

*The new series of public lectures called “Italy at Columbia” began with David Rosand speaking on “Giorgione, Titian, and crisis in Venice” and continued with Victoria de Grazia on “How the West was won for Mass Consumption: the Italian campaign, 1953–1973.*

*As always, our program of events also included a number of workshops and conferences organized in cooperation with other institutes and centers at Columbia and elsewhere. In addition to the symposium on Art and the New Biology of Mind, about which Professor Freedberg comments above, we also held a two-day conference on Social Justice in Transatlantic Perspective, an event organized with the support of the History Department, the Office of the Provost, the Herbert H. Lehman Center for American History at Columbia University, and the Interuniversity Center for European-American History and Politics in Turin. The keynote address was by Columbia University Professor and Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz, and was followed by intense discussions on the subject by a distinguished group of Italian and American scholars. This conference was followed in April by a workshop titled “Social Economics: Market Behavior in a Social Context,” organized in collaboration with two of our former Fellows: Giovanna Devetag, now an Associate Professor of Business Economics and Management at the University of Perugia, and Daniela Del Boca, Professor of Economics at the University of Turin. Needless to say, this sort of collaboration bears witness to the lasting intellectual and scientific exchanges that we aim to promote through our Fellowship Program at the Academy; so we were especially delighted by the success of this event.*

*As always, we had an active program of art exhibitions. Francesco Simeti's beautiful and*

*evocative pastoral installation piece in the Salone, "Woodsy/woodzee," engaged the attention of all our visitors, while Premio New York prizewinner Ivana Spinelli concluded her semester at the Academy with her provocative series of paintings and drawings that form part of her ongoing "Global Sisters" project. Our other Premio New York winner, Sissi Olivieri, drew New York's attention with her performance piece, "Suspended," as well as with her major woven pieces and her drawings. Both young artists contributed fully to the Fellows seminars, and kept us all up-to-date with interesting aspects of the current New York art scene. In the Spring semester we continued with a show by photographer Iannis Delatolas and painter David Ryan, followed by a photography and video exhibition by Silvio Wolf curated by Laura Barreca and Olivia D'Aponte and organized in collaboration with the Robert Mann Gallery of New York. The year concluded as always with the Premio New York art show, featuring the works of performance artist Marcella Vanzo and a film by Antonio Rovaldi.*

*Amongst the many institutions and individuals who have given us special support this year, I would like to thank Antonio Bandini, Consul General in New York, and Claudio Angelini, Director of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura in New York. Together with their respective staffs, they have provided invaluable help in so many of our activities, furthering the spirit of collaboration between Columbia University and the Republic of Italy.*

The Academy continues to offer space to three important Columbia institutions dedicated to Italian and to Mediterranean culture more generally. The Center for the Ancient Mediterranean, directed by Pro-

fessor William Harris, has a full program of its own, and contributes substantially to the vitality of intellectual life at the Academy. Under the direction of Prof. Paolo Valesio, head of the Department of Italian, *Italian Poetry Review* is headquartered at the Academy, thus consolidating our links with contemporary Italian literary culture in a number of significant ways. The University Seminar on Modern Italian History also holds its meetings in the Academy. Fellows of the Academy both participate in this important University Seminar (composed of senior scholars from throughout the New York metropolitan area) and present papers at it.

This year saw the creation of an important new organization, the Italian Academy Alumni Fellows Association (IAAFA). It will clearly play an ever larger role in the growing network of support which the Academy enjoys around the world, as well as reinforcing the links between Alumni and the Academy. We also hope that it will serve to maintain the bonds between Fellows once they leave us for their continuing professional lives. We are all very grateful to Annalisa Coliva (Fellow, 2004) for having set up the Association on a firm institutional and legal basis, for having acted as midwife at its birth, and for having taken on the complex task of being its first chair.

It is a pleasure to underline Professor Varzi's words about the support we continue to enjoy from Consul General Anto-

nio Bandini, who since his arrival in New York in 2003 has become one of the Academy's best friends. The same must also be recorded for Dott. Claudio Angelini, director of the Italian Cultural Institute, with whom we enjoy not only cordial relations, but also mutually supportive ones. Several of our events – notably the exhibitions of the winners of the Premio New York – could not take place without the support of the Italian Cultural Institute. We look forward to continuing and enhancing our cultural collaborations with it.

This has been an exceptionally hectic year from the point of view of staffing and staffing changes. In December Olivia D'Aponte left her position as Assistant Director in Charge of Events, to travel the world. She served the Academy devotedly for three years, and was instrumental in bringing it to its present level of excellence. Just before I left for my sabbatical in January, Elisabetta Assi, Assistant Director in charge of Fellows and Diplomatic Affairs, was lured away from us by a New York law firm which made her an offer which we could not possibly match. The fact that Dott.ssa Assi (herself a qualified member of the New York Bar) was so much in demand did not surprise me, as no one could have performed her onerous tasks at the Academy with the same intelligence and energy.

Both these departures, occurring as they did just as I was beginning my leave, made the transition between

Directors that much more difficult. Professor Varzi was aided in his outstanding interim directorship by two temporary appointments, that of Dr. Irina Oryshkevich to the role of Acting Assistant Director in charge of Fellows, and Ms. Abigail Asher, who was an inventive and resourceful Acting Assistant Director for Events. Their skills, good counsel, and common sense were exemplary from beginning to end.

Above all I want to thank the core members of our staff who ensured that the Academy continued to operate without a hitch over this temporary transitional period. Indeed, it was genuinely transitional, since in 2005-2006 we moved, I think, from being a relatively significant player on the academic and cultural field, to a truly significant one, of which we hope both Columbia and Italy can be proud. Allison Jeffrey, our longest-standing member of staff, carried the brunt of the responsibilities this year. Rick Whitaker devoted long hours not only to his role as Theater and Music Director, but to many other aspects of the Academy's life. Jenny McPhee, advisor in so many areas, continued as curator of our critical Film Series. Robbie Brooks ran the business side of the Academy and Will Buford ensured that all of our events went smoothly. Their presence has been invaluable; we could not have done without them – or without their remarkable friendliness and reliability.

As Director of the Academy I feel proud to be associated with a staff of such excellence. The spirit of collegiality that has come to exist amongst our Fellows is at least in part due to the example set by all those I have named above. As I write, we prepare to welcome two new staff members, Ellen Baird, who will take over as Administrative Coordinator (to replace Allison Jeffrey, promoted in March to the position of Assistant Director in Charge of Events), and Dott.ssa Barbara Faedda, anthropologist, who comes to us from Rome, and will replace Elisabetta Assi as Assistant Director in Charge of Fellows and of Diplomatic Affairs. They will have shining examples to follow, but I am sure they will live up to our expectations. I wish them well at the Academy, and hope that our commitment to the furtherance

of Italian culture, science and learning in the United States will enhance their lives as much as it has ours.

Needless to say, I remain grateful to our devoted Board of Guarantors for all their support over the past year, as well as to Provost Alan Brinkley and President Bollinger. Both are frequent visitors to events at the Academy, and retain an active interest in very many of our events. The Academy would not be the same without their encouragement and participation. I am thus able to conclude this report in a spirit of optimism about the road ahead. All that is necessary to make it smoother is an expansion of our endowment, a project to which we hope to devote increasing energy in the course of the coming years.

DAVID FREEDBERG



# Fellows' Reports



## PAMELA BALLINGER

During the semester I spent at the Italian Academy, I carried out research and writing on a book project that examines the experience of Italian nationals returning to the Italian peninsula as refugees after World War II from a variety of possessions lost with the defeat of fascism. These lost territories include Istria and Zara, the Dodecanese Islands, Albania, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia, and Libya. In my research, I compare the status and rights of “national refugees” in Italy to those of non-Italian displaced persons (DPs) and explore the different regimes of refugee relief administered by the Italian state, international agencies (Allied Military Government, United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, International Refugee Organization, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and voluntary agencies. Analyzing the two categories of refugees together sheds light on the redefinition (legal and social) of Italian citizenship and national identity in the decade following World War II, as well as Italian attitudes to immigrants or “aliens” in the early post-war period.

Before coming to the Academy, I had already conducted extensive archival

research at the archives of the Ministero degli Affari Esteri in Rome, the Archivio Centrale dello Stato, the National Archives in Paris (which contain the documentation of the International Refugee Organization or IRO), and the U.S. National Archives. My time in New York permitted me to finish up with the International Refugee Organization materials (during a spring break trip) and consult the relevant material of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNNRA) on deposit at the United Nations Documentation Center. Both the UNNRA and IRO documents contain considerable material on “Italian” national refugees, particularly in the form of debates over whether individuals classified as such were eligible for international aid or proved the sole responsibility of the Italian state. Positions shifted over time, with some of the Italian refugees receiving international relief after initially being denied. In turn, the clear-cut division of Italian and foreign refugee camps did not prove so distinct in practice. In the city of Trieste, for example, “Italians” from Istria sometimes lived alongside other refugees who had fled from Eastern bloc countries.

I also took advantage of the variety of

materials related to UNNRA contained in Columbia University's Oral History Section, Butler Library, and the Lehman Suite Collection. Herbert Lehman served as the Director of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations and, in 1943, became the first Deputy Director of that organization's successor, UNNRA. The rich collection of Lehman's papers at Columbia include a section of interesting correspondence and materials related to UNNRA in its early phases, such as Lehman's diary of a trip to Italy, Greece, and Yugoslavia. The Lehman Collection also houses the papers of Hugh R. Jackson, deputy-director of UNNRA (1942-45), and Robert G.A. Jackson, Senior Deputy Director-General of UNNRA (1945-47).

In addition to carrying out supplementary archival research for my project, I also wrote an article entitled "Borders of the Nation, Borders of Citizenship: Italian Repatriation and the Redefinition of National Identity after World War II," that offers an overview of my book project topic. I presented a working draft of this article in the Italian Academy Fellows' seminar. Benefiting from the useful comments of the seminar participants, I finalized the manuscript and then submitted it for consideration to a journal. I presented a shorter version of the paper to the Council of European Studies conference held in Chicago in March. I also wrote an article-length paper on the Ital-

ian minority in Slovenia and Croatia (a community "left behind" by the territorial revisions to Italy after World War II) for a conference in April on "Ethnic Mobilization" sponsored by the University of Leuven, Belgium. In addition, I finalized for publication an article (distinct from my larger book project) on representations of culture in maritime museums in and around the Gulf of Trieste.

As an anthropologist working on a historical subject, I benefited not only from the wide interdisciplinary scholarly range of the Academy Fellows' interests but also from the opportunity to meet and discuss my work with a variety of scholars in diverse fields. I participated in the Modern Italian Studies seminar held at the Academy once a month, which brings together scholars of contemporary Italy from around the New York City area. I also took part in a reading group made up mostly of anthropologists at Columbia's Harriman Institute. These experiences provided opportunities to think about and discuss different aspects of my research.

The semester spent at the Academy and in New York has helped me to reconceptualize further my book project. Initially, I began my project with a sharp focus on the Italian populations of the Istrian peninsula, which was transferred from Italian to Yugoslav control by a series of agreements between 1947 and 1954. During my archival research, I expanded the project by inserting the sto-

ry of Istria's Italians (the vast majority of whom had emigrated from Istria by 1955) into a larger picture of population movements to Italy after World War II and the sorting out of refugees into the categories of "national refugees" and non-national DPs. As the result of my fellowship at the Academy, I am also thinking about the specific Italian case in the larger picture of reconstruction in Europe after World War II. During my semester in New York, I attended a number of talks given by historians who are focusing new

attention on the experience of reconstruction after the war. In working at the U.N. archives, I also became aware of the intense and renewed scholarly interest in UNNRA and, in particular, the assistance it offered to displaced persons. I am now orienting my work to speak to these wider debates. I hope that my research will attract not only the interest of scholars of Italy but of Europe and refugees more generally. I am grateful to the Italian Academy for the time and space in which to develop and refine my project.

## FRANCESCO BORGHESI

During my year as a Fellow at the Italian Academy, I have focused mainly on two research projects. The first of these has been the centre of my studies over the last five years. It is the critical edition of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's letters. In the past years it has addressed the diffusion of manuscripts and printed editions of Giovanni Pico's letters. A collection of his letters, put together and edited by his nephew Giovan Francesco Pico della Mirandola shortly after his uncle's death, was first published along with the rest of Pico's work in Bologna in 1496 by Benedetto Faelli. It was then reprinted ten times, almost unchanged, by different printers during the fifteenth century. Because Giovan Francesco allegedly wished to furnish an orthodox image of his uncle's beliefs, some epistles remained excluded from this collection, which is therefore partial and unreliable. This research involved locating all the manuscript material. I discovered that most of it was to be found in Europe, mainly in Italy, but also in libraries in France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Russia and the Vatican. In order to provide a reliable critical edition of these letters it is necessary not only to locate, but also to collect, describe, and collate both manuscripts of

the letters and the printed editions (which contain 47 letters by Pico, 14 addressed to him). At the Italian Academy I have found the perfect environment for the last phase of the editing procedure: collating the manuscripts and the printed editions in order to establish the correct text of the letters. I had the chance to show the progress made regarding this project while at the Academy at the conference of the American Association for Italian Studies held in Genoa in late May 2006.

I have also had the opportunity to continue my work on a long-term research project addressing the origins and diffusion of Pico's thought, in particular the much debated question of *concordia*, the tendency to view the teachings of major ancient and medieval thinkers as fundamentally in harmony. This concordism has a rich and important history during the Middle Ages, and its influence may be found in vernacular texts such as the *Tesoretto*. As Brunetto Latini writes: "Each one by its nature / is a different factor, / and is sometimes separate; / but I make them equal; / all of their discord / returns to such concord / that I through them control / the world and sustain it, / except for the will / of the Divinity." This idea is echoed in both literary texts and in the visual arts. It is treated not

only in Dante's *Commedia*, but also in the *Convivio* and *De monarchia*, which was later translated into Italian by Marsilio Ficino. The relationship of Dante and the *Roman de la Rose* by means of the *Tesoretto* was seen by Gianfranco Contini, and Francesco Mazzoni noted that the *Tesoretto*, written within an important literary continuum of philosophical poetry, exemplifies a continuation into the thirteenth-century Italian vernacular of the twelfth-century Latin Neoplatonist culture of the school of Chartres. In the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena, on the North wall of the Sala dei Nove, Justice is depicted 'distributing' and 'commuting' rewards and punishment so as to hand the cords which Concord braids together to the first in a procession of twenty-four men. The philosophical and political relevance of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Buon governo* frescoes and its concordistic theme have been discussed by scholars such as Nicolai Rubinstein, Quentin Skinner, Randolph Starn and, more recently, Maria Monica Donato.

The persistence of concordistic ideals can be verified also throughout the Renaissance, and its relevance needs to be studied in texts such as the *Orlando Furioso*. Ariosto's '*aspro concerto, orribile armonia*,' describing the battle of Paris, has been discussed as symptomatic by scholars from Benedetto Croce to Robert M. Durling and Albert R. Ascoli, though each arrives at a very different interpretation. My aim would be to fashion a history of con-

cordism during the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern period from Giovanni Pico's point of view. For Pico, a true *concordia philosophica* is possible in which most philosophical and theological disagreements can be shown to be merely verbal or else reconciled by placing the discordant positions in the proper perspective.

I believe this research may be relevant in shedding light on the historical antecedents of long-debated contemporary ethical, political and religious issues, such as human rights and religious pluralism. Paraphrasing the philosopher Alasdair McIntyre, affirming the variety and heterogeneity of moral beliefs, practices and concepts, we are committing ourselves to evaluations of different particular beliefs, practices and concepts. It seems that the nature of moral judgement in distinctively modern societies is such that it is no longer possible to appeal to moral criteria without having a reliable knowledge of its history. I presented some preliminary results of my studies on concordia during my time at the Italian Academy at the Renaissance Society of America conference held in late March in San Francisco.

As my main research project, so far, entails the edition of a humanist text, I have a strong interest in textual criticism and history of scholarship, philology and material culture. In the past few years, I have also acquired an interest in the so-called "digital philology" and discovered the potential of electronic resources,

thanks to two on-line projects supported by the Department of Italian Studies at Brown University, the “Pico Project” and the “Conclusiones Nongentae Project.” They are both born out of a collaboration between Brown University and the University of Bologna, Italy, and I am currently the editorial manager of the former and one of the three editors of the latter.

A group of collaborators has designed a web site to be used as a resource for a collaborative annotated edition and commentary of Pico’s *Conclusiones Nongentae*, <http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/pico/index.php>. This project was conceived within the framework of the Virtual Humanities Lab, whose scope is to provide a platform for a number of shared research activities, ranging from scholarly editions and publications to advanced online workshops and seminars. The *Conclusiones* project is the ideal continuation (albeit different in format and scope) of the annotated version of Pico’s *Oratio de hominis dignitate* (the “Pico Project”), available at [http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian\\_Studies/pico/](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/pico/). This annotated digital edition will soon be printed, as it will be published by University of Toronto Press in the ‘Lorenzo Da Ponte Italian Library.’ Currently, the *Conclusiones* web site provides access to the transcription of the original edition of Pico’s text. The core of the project is an annotating system allowing participating scholars to share their annotations to Pico’s

text within a password-protected environment. I presented a paper at the international conference on “Digital philology” in January 2006 in Hamburg, where I was invited by the Institut für Griechische und Lateinische Philologie of the University of Hamburg.

Furthermore, thanks to the generosity of the Italian Academy and its Director, Professor David Freedberg, I have been so fortunate to be able to organize a seminar on digital philology, which was held in early May 2006.

Last but not least, I cannot avoid mentioning the fact that I had the opportunity to discuss with a group of very challenging researchers a side-project on methodological issues related to the status of proof in historical research. I feel very much indebted to the Fellows and the Director of the Italian Academy – to be precise the Directors, as Professor Achille Varzi has been the Acting Director during the spring semester – not only for the discussion we had on this occasion – that, by the way, helped me a great deal in transforming an idea into an article which has been recently published – but also for the help and expertise dispensed with generosity throughout the academic year. A final thanks goes to the members of the staff of the Academy. Each one of them has gone out of her or his way to make my stay at the Academy and in New York City incredibly pleasant. Their effort has been quite successful and deeply appreciated.

## BENEDETTA CESTELLI GUIDI

During the spring semester I spent at the Italian Academy I was able to continue in the best possible place my ongoing cross-cultural research on the approaches to the art object both from anthropology and art history perspectives. My interest focuses on the decades between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century which saw the institutionalization of the disciplines within the University and the Museum when each field interested in art – archaeology, ethnography and art history – shaped its own discourses and eventually erected its own disciplinary boundaries.

During these months I have focused on Franz Boas' art criticism of native art. In my paper on "Franz Boas' Grammar of Native Art," I endeavored to assess Boas' aesthetic education in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Germany in order to see to what extent his background allowed for his aesthetic appreciation of non-mimetic, non-Western art which he collected during his first fieldtrip in the US in the 1880s and with which he then worked while curator of the ethnographical collections of the American Museum of Natural History, New York (1896-1905). After a lifelong interest in cultural productions, his late approach to

native art, as it is put forward in his *Primitive Art* (1927), is striking insofar as it bears few similarities with the anthropological approach to art production which was then focused on a contextual and symbolic understanding of the object and not on its formal qualities. On the contrary, in talking about compositional devices followed by the artist and placing the creative urge at the centre of his/her artistic drive, Boas paves the way for the enhancement of aesthetic value of native art and, to a certain extent, to art criticism tout court. His intuitions about the differences in style due to gender and about the dynamicity of art practices widened his fellow anthropologists' interest in art and resulted in new studies oriented toward the disclosure of the artist's psychology such as Ruth Bunzel's *The Pueblo Potter* and a stylistic approach to native art collections such as Gladys Amanda Reichard on *Melanesian Design*. Boas' insistence on the dynamics of cultural traits together with his firm refusal of looking for ur-forms allowed him to show a formal pattern which he identified as the art style of the Northwestern tribes. Within a given area, a geographic area which shared cultural traits, Boas underlined differences in

forms and meaning, breaking down the evolutionist assumption of a uni-linear evolution of art, either from abstract pattern or realistic rendering.

Given his originality in approaching native art I then traced Boas' debts to European art historians and aesthetics from late romanticism – Goethe, Herder – to his contemporaries, and focused on the Viennese art historian and museum curator Alois Riegl. I was able to point out the similarities of approach to art in the two German-speaking scholars in a later stage of the research which I presented in a lecture titled “Franz Boas' Grammar of Native Art: An art historical perspective” organized by Northwestern University in April, 2006.

Lately my work has shifted toward the reception of Boas' art criticism within the artists' and scholars' community in New York City. Although it appears that *Primitive Art* was not much used by either anthropologists or art historians at the time it was printed, I have tracked down a route through which the book seems to have been influential in the decades after it was published. Art historians on the other side of the Atlantic seem not to have acknowledged Boas' originality and groundbreaking assumptions but it was in the United States that his discourse on the formal qualities of native art found its audience, both within the art market, the artists' community and the scholars'. From the late '30s onward New York saw

a number of venues for native art which reflect the shift of native art works from the ethnographic display to the art display that eventually brought forward Greenberg's work on *Primitivism and Modern Painting* (1938). On the other hand American artists seem to have read and to be aware of Boas' work on native art and it is compelling to see how the drive towards a pure expressive sign or color of the early work of the Abstract Expressionists draws upon Northwestern native arts which were presented by Boas both in his book and in his display of the Northwest coast tribes in the AMNH.

Boas' fellow art historians working at Columbia and in other US universities seem to have been interested in his approach to native art which helped reshape the perception of what should be considered as art. Since Vasari, some art styles have been dismissed on the ground of not being art but only attempts to be so; Meyer Shapiro's and Henry Focillon's studies on Roman and Gothic art and architecture are part of these reevaluations of non-mimetic art which Boas pushed forward in *Primitive Art*.

While I was Fellow at the Academy I presented a paper at a conference on “Aby Warburg e l'Italia. La ricezione tra fine Ottocento e Novecento,” co-organized by the University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’ and the University of Siena and sponsored by the Centro Warburg Italia (Siena). My interest lay in how Aby Warburg and Vit-

torio Macchioro, an Italian archaeologist and religion scholar, approached religious iconography and rituals in antiquity and the Renaissance and whether it reflected their concern with political religion ( I here borrow a term that has often recurred at the Italian Academy seminars thanks to the work of Simon Levis Sullam and Piergiorgio Odifreddi) in late '20s and '30s Europe. Warburg and Macchioro shared interest in the mythical figure of Orpheus and in the visual representations, such as Macchioro's study of the fresco of the 'Casa dei Misteri' at Pompei, have been the starting point of a comparison in methods and aims which I then followed up well into the '40s. In 1946 the Warburg Institute issued a number of its *Jour-*

*nal* by Italian scholars, among whom was the leading historian of religion of the time, Raffaele Pettazzoni. A comparison of Pettazzoni's essay on the iconography of the three-headed God and of Rudolph Wittkower's study on the iconography of the eagle and the serpent showed a reception of iconology within Italian history of religion.

It is time to start gathering my collection of JSTOR articles from my studiolo's floor and I haven't even mentioned the most important thing, i.e., the feeling I have had of belonging to a much bigger project which came forward in the daily contact and exchange with my fellow scholars, with the staff and the visitors of the Italian Academy.

## ANTONIO FELICIELLO

The main aim of my research project is to understand the molecular mechanism by which hormones and neurotransmitters elicit major biological functions, including hormone secretion from endocrine glands, ion channels activity, development of certain types of human cancers. During my stay at Columbia University, as a Fellow of the Italian Academy, I have been focusing on elucidating the molecular framework by which a signal generated at cell membrane propagates throughout the cell, thereby eliciting major biological effects. The final goal of my research project is to improve our understanding of cell behavior and develop novel tools that selectively inhibit hormone-dependent growth, differentiation and survival of cancer cells.

In all countries, cancer is a major health problem and represents the second most prevalent cause of death. The morbidity and prevalence of cancer has wide impact in terms of general health and welfare. Therefore, a means of inhibiting carcinogenesis onset and/or progression is a subject of great interest to scientists and physicians world wide. Early cancer detection, targeted therapy, and finally, increased patient survival depend upon an expansion of our understanding of the molecular mechanism underlying cellular growth and

tumor formation. There is considerable experimental evidence that implicates elevated activity of the epidermal growth factor (EGF) in various human cancers, including breast cancer, glioblastoma and skin melanoma. Therefore, inhibition of EGF signaling represents the main focus of modern therapies and several molecules that selectively interfere with this pathway are already being tested in controlled clinical trials.

Epidermal Growth Factor Receptors (EGFRs) belongs to the family of the tyrosine kinase membrane receptors (RTKs) that play a crucial role in different aspects of cell physiology. Altered expression and activity of these families of membrane receptors have been largely recognized as a leading cause of several human diseases. The binding of epidermal growth factor (EGF) to its cognate tyrosine kinase receptors at cell membrane induces the formation of macromolecular complexes composed by a variety of adapters and signaling molecules. The formation of such complexes under plasma membrane is a critical step for the sequential activation of downstream effectors. The EGF signaling pathway might be regulated at each point of such enzymatic cascade. One important mechanism is evoked by protein tyrosine

phosphatases (PTPs). PTPs represent an expanding family of signaling enzymes that catalyze de-phosphorylation of tyrosine residues on specific substrates, including receptors and adapter molecules. PTPs act not only as negative regulators of tyrosine kinase signaling, but positively participate at each molecular event of the signal transduction pathway. Thus, the dynamic interplay between kinases and phosphatases regulates the rate and magnitude of the signaling pathways activated on the cell membrane by a given growth factor.

We have isolated a protein, tyrosine phosphatase (PTPD1), that interacts with the NH<sub>2</sub> terminus of AKAP121, a scaffold protein that assembles and regulates distinct signaling enzymes on the mitochondria. PTPD1 is a widely expressed cytosolic non-receptor tyrosine phosphatase that interacts with—and is phosphorylated by—src tyrosine kinase. Our work indicates that PTPD1 is fundamental for the growth factor-dependent proliferation of most mammalian cells and recent evidence in the laboratory demonstrates that this gene is essential for cell respiration and energy production. We found that the levels of PTPD1 protein are markedly increased in human bladder cancers. PTPD1 expression linearly increases with the grading and invasiveness potential of these tumors, suggesting an important role of this phosphatase in the mechanism of tumorigenesis.

As Research Scholar at the Italian Academy and Fellow at the Institute of Cancer

Research, Columbia University, I wished to test if PTPD1 is involved in the mechanism of cancer progression. The 3LL Lewis lung carcinoma is a highly invasive cell line derived from C57Bl/6 mice that had been used widely to monitor cancer growth and metastases *in vivo*. 3LL cells express high levels of endogenous PTPD1 and when injected in mice tail veins they will allow the formation of lung and liver metastases. By using genetic tools, the activity of PTPD1 in 3LL cells was selectively silenced. Cells bearing inactive PTPD1 were isolated and subsequently injected into the tail veins of C57Bl/6 mice. Three weeks later, the mice were sacrificed and their lungs removed for analysis. Mice injected with cells carrying inactive PTPD1 showed significant decrease of lung weights, compared to controls. Inspection of the lung surfaces revealed that inactivation of PTPD1 significantly reduced the number of metastatic lesions. Histological analysis of the lungs confirmed that mice injected with cells containing inactive PTPD1 carried fewer and smaller metastatic tumors.

These findings indicate that PTPD1 is an important regulator of EGF signaling *in vivo*, which is essential for growth and survival of a large fraction of cancer cells. Since its levels were significantly elevated in human bladder cancers, PTPD1 may serve as a biomarker for tumor invasiveness and as a potential target for anti-metastatic therapy.

## NICOLA GARDINI

In the fall 2005 I worked as a Fellow at the Italian Academy on a book about literary lacunae. When I arrived at the Academy in early September, my project was still at a very early stage. I had in my mind just a few leading notions (a definition of lacuna, some sources, the reasons why this project dawned on me), tons of notes, and lots of questions. I believe that a number of these questions were answered by the end of my stay, making my research a very happy occasion. So I left the Academy with a gratifying sense of accomplishment. To be sure, my book was far from finished, but some important chapters of it had been written and I could certainly envision the whole of it. Regretfully, I could not spend the spring semester at the Academy. If I had been able to, my book would have been completed by the end of April (which, much to my sorrow, could not happen in Italy, where university and family life dragged me back to diverging obligations).

I will always think of my time at the Academy as one of the most fruitful and intellectually challenging ones of my entire academic life. Leaving my office, in which reading and writing proved so extraordinarily rewarding, was close to

traumatic. It was like leaving for the military service – a forced departure and a violent rupture in the continuum of research.

The environment at the Academy couldn't have been more inspiring and amiable. Not only was I stimulated by Professor Freedberg's and other Fellows' opinions (I found the scientists' takes on my subject particularly beneficial), but I used Columbia University as a vantage point. I got in touch with colleagues from other departments (not just literary ones) and discussed with them a number of issues. One of them, Professor Rita Charon, turned out to be a very special encounter. Professor Charon, a medical doctor and Ph. D. in English literature, teaches Narrative Medicine at Columbia University. Her work in the field of bioethics is held in international repute. I interviewed her for a magazine online I edit for the Dipartimento di Italianistica at the University of Padua ([www.ilcalzerottomarrone.it](http://www.ilcalzerottomarrone.it)) and discussed with her another project of mine: an essay on the notion of illness, which I had partially written before starting at the Academy and has just been published by Bollati Boringhieri (appended to my translation of Virginia Woolf's 1930 essay *On*

*Being Ill*). I also attended one of Prof. Charon's writing seminars at the School of Social Work. It was an illuminating experience, which showed me all the more cogently the importance and the difficulties of writing one's lived experience. While at the Academy, I also found interesting material on illness I intend to include in the fall 2006 issue of the above-mentioned magazine (this issue will be totally devoted to the relation between literature and medicine).

Before I conclude this report, I must mention at least some other individuals whose opinions helped my research on lacuna find its way. Professor Michael Rogan, a neuroscientist at Columbia University and a great reader of literature (Dickens is one of his favorites), taught me the notion of "foveation" and, in the course of our discussions, made me realize how hard it is to translate literary categories into supposedly corresponding sci-

entific notions. A tremendous gulf separates the language of science and that of the humanities, or I should say the language of scientists and that of literati. It is high time that the two, science and literature, retrieved faith in reciprocal communication and addressed *together* the most fundamental issues of human life. Scientists like Michael Rogan should serve as paragons.

Professor Teodolinda Barolini (Department of Italian, Columbia University) gave me precious advice on the structure of my book. She can read and word people's intentions with astonishing lucidity. Our lunches at "Le Monde," on Broadway, make an important chapter in the story of my fellowship at the Academy. So will my encounters at Butler Library with my old friend Professor Daniel Javitch (NYU). He too helped me to outline the structure of my book and recommended some important readings.

## LUDOVICO GEYMONAT

During my year as a Fellow at the Italian Academy, I focused my research on the transmission of images, specifically of iconography, in medieval art. Current digital technology allows images to be moved and copied at high speed and high fidelity. This was not the case in the past, and yet technologies of reproduction have always been central to the transmission and diffusion of images. Images on unmovable mediums – wall-paintings, for example – needed to be copied onto a mobile support in order to travel. Intermediary supports, that is model-drawings and the artists' visual memory, were essential to the outcome of the image's transmission.

Christian medieval iconography operated on the basis of the shared meaning of a number of signs and images. Referring at first to the founding texts of the Old and New Testament, a rich language of images developed in the public space of churches and shrines. By representing holy figures and scenes, images made the sacred immediately present on-site. Cults of saints and their relics enhanced this phenomenon by creating a reciprocal connection between the authority and effectiveness of images and their location:

places were made holy by the presence of relics and images, and images gained authority by their location at specific sites and shrines.

Drawings and circumstantial evidence offer indications concerning the medieval practice of reproducing images in order to transmit them. This is a crucial point which touches upon a number of issues in the study of medieval art, from the development of specific iconographies to the spreading and assimilation of style, from the understanding of which features were considered essential in an image to that of the technical execution of works of art. Along with a couple of Byzantine cases, about a dozen sets of model-drawings from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been preserved. This is a formative period in both the development of artistic traditions and the creation of cultural identity in many Italian cities. The visual evidence suggests that it was through the use of model-drawings that painters and patrons active in Italy at the time appropriated images from distant places, especially from the Holy Land.

In the course of my doctoral research, I investigated the vast painted cycle from the thirteenth century in the Baptistery at

Parma. I used the results of my analysis as the starting point for my research at the Italian Academy. My inquiry on the cycle in Parma showed that certain scenes preserve rare iconography copied from monumental paintings in the Holy Land. The use of model-drawings seems responsible for the transfer of this specific iconography and the appropriation of Byzantine images. This technique explains, in fact, a number of idiosyncratic features in the wall paintings in Parma. The cycle in the Baptistery offers a revealing case study. The results prompted a series of questions which go beyond this particular example, involving the wider issue of how cultural transmission occurs at all.

At the Academy, I explored the topic of *maniera greca*, that is of paintings from Western Europe that show a degree of assimilation of Byzantine art. I examined the topic through both a close reading of visual evidence from the thirteenth century and a historiographic study of the use of the expression *maniera greca*. The term is first found in the fourteenth century, but its meaning and interpretation are sanctioned in the Introduction to and the first few *Lives of the Artists* by Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574). The negative connotation of the expression as used by Vasari – meaning a rough and stiff style imported from abroad to be quickly abandoned by native artists from Tuscany – has long endured, reaching well into the twentieth century.

However, nowadays the appropriation of Byzantine elements looks interesting to our eyes, and the assessment of *maniera greca* is often a positive one.

An analysis of the visual evidence suggests that, by means of drawings from Byzantine works, something originating in Byzantine art could well reach the repertory of thirteenth century artists. The question remains, however: is *maniera greca* a matter of Byzantine sources or instead of the technical device of linear drawings able to capture in dark contours the shape and essential features of a figure's position, drapery and iconography, whether Byzantine or not? The definition *maniera greca* arrived only once a new *maniera* – that of Giotto – had prevailed. Comparing images and their iconography with direct observation of three-dimensional reality – and not only with visual memory and linear drawings – made the difference. It also made the earlier practice look antiquated and foreign in comparison to the new one: the *maniera moderna* prevailed over the old style, now seen as Greek and termed *maniera greca*. But a close reading of the visual evidence indicates that *maniera greca* was not all that Byzantine.

From Vasari's time up to the latest digital technology, the ease with which we compare different images has been essential to the practice of art history. This brings with it, however, the risk of seeing what was never there. In the thirteenth

century, did artists and patrons have a range of stylistic and iconographic possibilities to choose from, and did they consistently pick what looked most Byzantine in cultural emulation of the ancient Greek-speaking Empire? Or was the repertory simply a product of the training of the artists' minds and hands with, at most, a few sketchy drawings? During my stay at the Academy, I tried to offer answers to this kind of question. One thing seems certain: imagination and visual memory have the power to transform, assimilate and internalize the most diverse images and iconography, whatever their origin.

During my second semester at the Academy, I also looked into the evidence from another interesting example of *maniera greca*, the vast painted cycle formerly in the chapterhouse at Sigena, in Spain, dating from the first half of the thirteenth century. In my study of the cycle at Sigena, I also explored issues

related to the weight of visual evidence as opposed to documentary evidence and the role of connoisseurship in the study of medieval painting.

The facilities offered by Avery Library and by the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University, as well as the intellectual community of the Italian Academy, provided the ideal circumstances in which to undertake this project. The weekly meetings with the other Fellows have been both challenging and enjoyable. This pleasant atmosphere provided a rare and profitable context in which I was able to form an impression of how research is conducted in other fields. This induced me to rethink my own work's goals and methodologies. Fresh from the specialized research that I had to do for my dissertation, I found it extraordinary to have the opportunity to present my work and research to an audience that was at the same time highly accomplished and of wide-ranging interests.

## SERGIUS KODERA

During my stay at the Italian Academy, I worked on a book project on Giambattista della Porta (1535-1615). A fascinating personality, and renowned polymath in his lifetime, this Neapolitan nobleman published numerous scholarly works, most of them connected to natural magic, optics, physiognomy, ciphers, the art of memory: all topics that are characteristic for the sciences of the Italian Renaissance.

I became interested in della Porta particularly because of his emphasis on non-metaphysical, natural explanations of events that many contemporary scholars and theologians would have perceived as being caused by supernatural or as demonic agents; and his fascination with seemingly extraordinary and hence inexplicable events.

Less than the metaphysical aspects of natural magic, della Porta therefore rather emphasizes practical instructions, recipes, remedies, devices of various kinds, some of which seem (evidently) more or less obscure to the modern reader. Accordingly, della Porta claimed that his magic was founded on the natural properties of physical substances or bodies.

For instance, he was notorious for being a specialist at creating such *meraviglia* as women willing to strip in male company in

the light of a magical lamp that (as he explains) exhaled special drugs. Yet della Porta had always been anxious to uphold his social distinction from the crowd of common tricksters who were normally producing such dubious spectacles. Rather, della Porta's tactics consisted in a policy of expropriation of these and similar ticks from the lower classes.

His artful production of miraculous events focuses on the physicality of the body and its portentous properties; in such ways, della Porta's approach is markedly different from his Renaissance Neoplatonic predecessors as well as from the use of experiments in later scientific approaches; his *scienza* also seems to be equally removed from the speculative Aristotelian science taught at the Italian universities. Indeed, della Porta's insistence on the categorically sensual and somatic foundation of experience seems to me a cohesive line along which his work can be understood.

Strikingly for the modern reader, della Porta was often looking for his *meraviglia* in the demimonde of prostitutes, panderers, criminals and necromancers. Far from being the romantic caprice of a Neapolitan nobleman, I think that for della Porta (as well as for some of his read-

ers) the dubious sources of these *segreti* enhanced belief in their effectiveness. After all, these methods had been tried by *meretici, ruffiani, furfanti e nigromanti*, and such people were frequently and spectacularly punished for their crimes; obviously they were crafty practitioners in their *mestiere*. Their inborn astuteness – a true *ingenium* – was so thoroughly imprinted and represented in these individuals that their bodies and their belongings may become powerful *materia magica*; for instance the brains of executed criminals was an ingredient for various magical concoctions. Again, as in his magic, della Porta's physiognomy has a distinctly naturalistic twist.

Apart from his scholarly books on natural philosophy, della Porta was also a prolific writer for the stage. The *Edizione Nazionale* of his works reproduces fourteen comedies and three tragedies; it seems that the author started to write for the stage while in his twenties. Della Porta did not think of his plays as something important or worthy to be remembered: or at least that was what he said in public.

Yet these plays provide a kaleidoscopic and highly contrived view of the social and political realities of sixteenth-century Naples: after all, if the characters in these plays had been utterly foreign to a dreary reality of everyday Naples, who could have laughed at them, who would have been a possible audience? I perceive della Porta's comedies as anamorphic representations

of a complex agenda centering on the person of the natural magus and his power to describe and interfere in the social and political sphere. Apart from clear structural references and affinities to classical and contemporary literary traditions (which della Porta claims to have surpassed anyway) these plays betray constant and (sometimes highly ironic) references to the most important agenda of della Porta's *scienza*.

In fact, on stage della Porta often mocks the secret recipes and sciences he discusses in his more serious scholarly books. Viewed from this perspective, these comedies are important sources for understanding fundamental concepts of della Porta's general perspectives on his natural philosophy, negotiations between a purportedly unserious genre and *scienza*, between texts written "in the heat of the summer," as a pastime and the dreaded reality of the censors.

His function as a mastermind, both in the laboratory and in the theatre, is read by me as a remarkable aspect of an otherwise repressive situation: in religious as well as in political terms. For, from 1573 on, della Porta remained in lifelong trouble with the Inquisition. Opting out of metaphysical debates allowed the Neapolitans to reconstitute a sphere of intellectual discourse that was independent not only of politics and theology, but also of traditional Renaissance Aristotelian and Platonic perspectives, which were still dangerously close to religious affairs. Hence the bid to

stay away from metaphysical speculation and to emphasize the undeniable evidence of the senses and the marvellous, that was to leave a silenced and stunned crowd of spectators, was generated by a complex field of tension (and negotiation) between church authorities and natural philosopher, each eager to get out of the other's way and to leave their respective territories untouched.

Far from being an eccentric perspective on natural phenomena, della Porta designed his *scienza* as a means to regain an authority for his kind. Under Spanish domination, political power had become permanently out of reach for the Neapolitan landed gentry.

By the mid sixteenth century, della Porta and his kind had lost virtually all political power to the Spanish. The Italian landed gentry lacked legitimacy in exerting its often brutal rule. One might say that the function of the Neapolitan Noblemen was more 'auratic' than founded on real political power that had carefully and slowly ousted them from power by the foreign rulers. The performance of *meraviglia* was probably the only means to re-establish a new and symbolic form of authority for della Porta and his kind. For them, appearances had become more deceiving than ever, it was necessary to take recourse to judge from the physical evidence of the body, the only safeguard for truth in a colonial place where dissimulation had become vital. I think the fact that della

Porta's works became the rage all over Europe confirms that he, as a colonized subject, anticipated the pressure of absolutist power in his colonial situation earlier.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that my working conditions at Columbia University differed vastly and in every respect from the social and political realities of my protagonist; the Italian Academy offered me a prodigious infrastructure, such as a lavish office and access to the myriad books in the Libraries of Ivy League Universities. Also, and most importantly, the Director, staff and Fellows made up a most stimulating and highly supportive social environment for my research. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them. I love to remember their gentle presence, as well as their patience and interest to discuss lofty topics (for instance the question if della Porta would understand the expression *succo di cervello* in literal or metaphorical ways) and their willingness to help me with vital issues of daily life in the US (such as the acquisition of a social security number). For the Fellows, our regular Wednesday meetings became an eagerly awaited and distinguished forum to discuss and develop ongoing research. For the fall term 2005 I was presented with an environment that allowed me to carry out my research and to develop my ideas in unprecedented ways; the result is a draft book manuscript which I hope to finish in the course of the coming year.

While monetary policy benefits from a large space in the existing (consolidated version of the) Treaty Establishing the European Communities (TEC) and in the future, still potential, Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe (CON), it is hard to find even the location of fiscal policy both in the current and in the possibly future primary norms of the European Union.

This does not mean that budgetary policies are literally ignored by the European Union norms for two reasons. First, because the most important component of the European fiscal policy is discussed both in TEC (Article 104) and, almost identically, in CON (Article III-184) and in their annexed Protocol on «excessive deficit procedure», but it is hidden in the Treaties under the too general label of «economic policy;» second, because there exist secondary norms beyond primary ones in the Union and they contain a very significant part of the European fiscal policy, i.e. the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), formally born in 1997 through a European Council Resolution (in Amsterdam) and two Council's Regulations (1466/97, 1467/97).

The strictness of the 1997 SGP's rules, later reinforced in 2003, has provoked an

increasing number of criticisms in the two following years. Three of them were particularly strong.

(A) It was thought to be too stability-oriented and too little growth-oriented, as if there existed a clear trade-off between the two targets, a trade-off precisely denied by the approach underpinning the Treaty (Protocol included) and the Pact. Many majority parties with different political inspirations (from Social-democrats to Conservatives) joined that view, particularly in large European countries experiencing a scarce growth, probably because they wished to please their electorates through deficit spending, while opposition parties, as usual, were much more rigorous for similar and opposite reasons of political economy. This composite group asked «to lisbonize» the Pact. Admittedly, the 1997/2003 Pact is the expression of a supply-side approach, where the structural rigidities of the system, the insufficient accumulation, the excessive presence of the State on the market cause at the same time inadequate growth and some propensity for inflation, so that fighting in favour of a higher nominal stability would also lead to boost growth. The Lisbon Agenda, on the contrary, stems from a compromise between a

supply- and a demand-management approach.

(B) Other forms of criticism focussed on the differences between the Treaty (Protocol included) and the 1997 Pact. They pointed out that Article 104, unlike the Council's Regulations of 1997, illustrates the awareness of the important qualitative distinction between public expenditure in current and in capital account along the lines of the golden rule. Moreover, some experts and policy-makers rightly recalled that the TEC and its Protocol (but not the SGP) create a consistent link between the deficit/GDP and the debt/GDP ratios, which was missing in the 1997 SGP: as it is well known, in the steady state, if no variation occurs in the financial assets and liabilities (which play a role in the debt and not in the deficit creation), the debt/GDP ratio equals the deficit/GDP ratio divided by the nominal GDP growth rate. Thus, a numerical coherence between the two public finance parameters (3% and 60%) existed in the Maastricht Treaty, because in 1992 the nominal GDP growth rate of the Union (EU 12 at that time, as Austria, Finland and Sweden joined in 1995 and the latest accession of 10 new countries happened in 2004) was about 5%. Moreover, the golden rule was numerically satisfied at the time, as the average European public investment to GDP ratio was in the beginning of the 90's approximately equal to 3%. That close numerical

connection had gone lost in the following decade, owing to the slowdown of the European economies combined with an inflation decrease and to a reduction in public capital accumulation. Furthermore, the economic logic was completely missing in the 1997 SGP (and in its 2003 reinterpretation), because – given the steady state solution of the differential equation mentioned above – it is simply impossible to obtain a balanced budget in the medium run together with a constant debt/GDP ratio equalling 60%, unless the unlikely and unfavourable hypothesis of a zero growth rate is assumed. Therefore, growing countries with debt/GDP ratio below 60% should register a deficit in order to obtain that medium run target, while countries above 60% with the same objective should develop and maintain a budget close to balance or in surplus. In any case, the sacredness of a medium-term balanced budget had to be questioned, as it is incomprehensible.

(C) Another type of critical comment of the European fiscal policy concerned the effective enforceability of the European fiscal policy: there exists an intrinsic mechanism in the Treaty and in the 1997/2003 SGP governance making unlikely the adoption of the excessive deficit procedures for two kinds of complementary reasons; moreover, a third element tends to soften the effectiveness of those procedures, even if they were firmly adopted. This is firstly because it is the

Council who decides whether to assess that an excessive deficit exists and proposes to reduce countries' deficit eventually sanctioning cicada-States on the basis of a recommendation by the Commission, the «recommendation» being in the European jargon, unlike the «decision,» not more than a non-binding opinion; the Council itself consists of national politicians and is not a technical body free from the «tyranny of the democracy,» as the Commission is at present. Secondly, as a matter of fact, the majority of euro countries is more and more often in one of the three following situations: either the country has already overcome some parameters of the Pact (such as Ireland or Portugal, who received an early warning in 2001 and 2002 respectively); or the country is presently exceeding the deficit/GDP ceiling (among others, in 2004-2005 France, Germany and Italy); or the country is about to exceed that ceiling (such as the United Kingdom). And if this is the situation, the SGP governance is highly imperfect, because, as Juvenalis used to say, «quis custodiet ipsos custodes» (who watches the watchmen)? Obviously, policy coordination – traditionally encouraged and considered a plus in the European Treaties – becomes on the contrary, in this context, an instrument for weakening the enforcement of policy procedures concerning the European fiscal policy. Thirdly, even if the Council were willing to adopt those proce-

dures, deciding that an excessive deficit exists and needs to be corrected and eventually sanctioned, the Council, according to Art. 104, could only «make recommendations to the Member States concerned»: the latter are not a strong instrument for the SPG's effectiveness, as they essentially consist in a form of moral suasion, obtaining the desired results only to the extent that the preaching institution has a charisma.

In evaluating whether the SGP reform introduced last year by the Brussels European Council on March 22-23, and made operational by the new Council's Regulations 1055/2005 and 1056/2005, satisfies those three-fold criticisms (A,B,C), it appears that the amendments introduced in 2005 are not only consistent with the Treaty, but are somehow closer to its spirit than the 1997 Pact itself, as they reach a good compromise between two of the three requests for revision (A and B but not C), emerged in the previous two years. On short-term objectives, the new SGP has introduced a more dynamic approach, on the basis of a cyclically adjusted budget, net of one-offs and other temporary measures. On the medium- and long-term objectives (MTOs), due account is taken of the connection between public deficit and debt and of the growing economic and fiscal heterogeneity within the EU 25. Thus, MTOs should be differentiated and may diverge from positions of close to balance or in surplus for individual Member States

on the basis of their current debt ratio and potential growth, while preserving sufficient margin below the reference value of 3% of GDP. The novelties introduced in the area of derogations to the excessive deficit procedure are equally important, as the new definition of a “severe economic downturn” considers as exceptional simply a negative growth rate. With reference to the mitigating factors which the Commission should consider in evaluating budgetary positions, special attention should be paid to structural reforms with long run implications different from short run, in particular to pension reforms introducing a multi-pillar system: Member States implementing such reforms should be allowed to deviate from the adjustment path towards the MTO, or from the MTO itself. Finally, dealing with the timing and modalities of sanctions, the reformed Pact postpones deadlines and softens sanctions.

What stated so far clearly shows how the 2005 reform of the SGP has met some of the needs expressed both by the demand- and by the supply-side advocates, but it also indicates both the strength and the weakness of the new SGP: when the Pact becomes a more «intelligent» and balanced mix between rules and discretion and, ultimately, more discretionary and soft than in its original 1997 formulation (and in its 2003 reinterpretation), so as to take into account the different Member States’ situations, cyclical conditions, growth potentials and

public finance disequilibria, that is also the moment where the policy design concerning the governance of the Pact should improve and become good enough to address the new major problems; however, this is not the case, as the decision-making mechanisms of the European fiscal policy have not been modified by the 2005 reform along the lines indicated by the third (C) set of criticisms. Unfortunately the internal conflict of interests, stemming from the overlapping between controllers and controlled within the governance body responsible for the budgetary surveillance, has not been solved either through a transfer of powers from the Council to the Commission or to any other possible future independent Authority, nor through a better balance of powers between the different European institutions involved in the European fiscal policy implementation.

In this situation, one would be tempted to propose to further complete the 2005 revision of the SGP, following the critical comments described in (C). However, that would turn out to be not only politically unfeasible, given that the Pact can be changed exclusively through the unanimous consensus precisely of the national Governments that do not want to give up to their power; it would also prove to be probably useless. The modification of the governance of the Pact, even if it were possible, is a necessary not a sufficient condition to restore the effectiveness of

European policy rules constraining the Member States' fiscal policy. The enforcement and the effectiveness of the kinds of procedure indicated in the new SGP require not only new forms of decision-making concerning the Pact; more generally they also require the restoration of the credibility of all the European institutions involved in the excessive deficit

elimination, as their charisma to make moral suasion on Member States effective is necessary but partly lost.

The question then arises: do we still have an effective European fiscal policy? Will we have a different one in the near future may be through a further reform of the Stability and Growth Pact? My likely answers tend to be both negative.

## SIMON LEVIS SULLAM

My research at the Italian Academy has explored the mobilization of religious categories within political thought in Italy and Germany, in the 1920s and 1930s, at the time of the rise of Fascism and Nazism. It has considered in particular the recovery of counterrevolutionary, prophetic, nationalist and romantic tendencies, which aimed at the imagination and construction of liberal, socialist and conservative political projects. I thus intend, through time, to consider in this perspective on the one hand the development of fascist totalitarian ideologies, on the other antifascist reactions, liberal and marxist.

In the 1920s and 1930s political thinkers, philosophers and intellectuals in Italy and Germany resorted to Romanticism, the Counterrevolution, Catholic reaction and Catholic liberalism, but also Jewish mysticism, in the development of political theologies which gave space to the irrational, the mystical, to a monistic and holistic dimension, to authoritarianism and, in the end, to totalitarianism. On the other side of the political arena these tendencies produced political ideals and projects which aimed at popular sovereignty, the rights of free nations, and the rights of the people. Different interpretations of the religious experience, and par-

ticularly of the connection between and intertwining of religion and politics, gave rise to diverse and often opposed political theologies, which envisioned the establishment of new regimes or new social and even new anthropological conditions, all with some degree of utopistic expectation.

The religious dimension and categories evoked were rooted in the Christian and often the Catholic tradition, but also in a broader humanitarian religion, or even in the Jewish tradition. They usually envisioned a secularized and politicized civil religion, which would transform society and the world at its foundations. These tendencies and efforts were in large part the development of a general crisis of the European society after the First World War, the massification of life and death as a consequence of the conflict, the rise of irrationalistic tendencies which characterized Western culture since the end of the nineteenth century. They also represented attempts to face and control phenomena of cultural despair, social instability and anxiety, political radicalization and violence, through a collective but culturally and politically prepared escape from freedom.

During my stay at the Italian Academy I have focused in particular on the rise of two different political theologies: that of

Giovanni Gentile in Italy and that of Carl Schmitt in Germany. In the 1920s these two influential political thinkers, which in different ways would rise to prominence in the Fascist and Nazi regimes, reflected on the relationship of religious and political experiences, its relevance for the politics of their times, and the possibility of mobilizing political-religious categories and concepts in the new political order of post-war Europe. Both looked back to the first decades of the nineteenth century, to thinkers reacting to the French Revolution, to the thought of the Restoration, and to the recovery of, and reactions to, religious experience in the early phase of secularization. Gentile and Schmitt thought that in that post-revolutionary period major shifts had taken place in the philosophical and political arena, which had shaped elements of modern political experience, and that there lay thoughts and expressions which could be a source of inspiration for current politics.

Giovanni Gentile rediscovered the thought and personality of Giuseppe Mazzini, one of Italy's founding fathers (as well as that of the catholic liberal Vincenzo Gioberti), and seeing him as a religious thinker and a patriot, placed him at the center of his own adhesion to and interpretation of Italian Fascism. Carl Schmitt reflected on the thinkers of the Counter-revolution, such as Edmund Burke, De Bonald and De Maistre, and discovered the figure of Donoso Cortes, a Spanish

diplomat, Catholic and ultra-conservative, seeing him as one of the inspiring forces of his own theoretical proposal of a dictatorship in the "state of exception" of the crisis of the Weimar Republic.

In my research I have looked more in particular at the attitudes of Gentile and Schmitt toward one of the major nineteenth-century European experiences in the mobilization of political religious categories and ideals: that of Giuseppe Mazzini. Mazzini came to represent one of the premises of the political religion of Fascism in Italy, particularly, as I mentioned, through the interpretation of Gentile. A further major strain within Italy's political religion was represented by the persisting role of Catholicism and the Church during Facism. However, I have also analyzed Mazzini's political religion in the light of Schmitt's interpretation of what he called "Political Romanticism" and of his theory of "Political Theology," although Schmitt did not work at length on Mazzini. And I also kept in mind that Schmitt as well looked at the role of the Church and certainly at the Catholic roots and streams of modern politics. I finally tried to compare the different outcomes of Gentile's and Schmitt's interpretations and reflections in the context of Italian fascism and of the rise of Nazism, to shed light on the similarities and differences of the two totalitarian political religions.

In Giovanni Gentile's conception of secularization a higher Spirit survived.

His Hegelian approach denied a true theological transcendence, but considered reality and history as the product of “thought as a pure act,” and saw the State as the highest ethical expression of the Spirit. The Risorgimento patriot Giuseppe Mazzini, through his slogan “thought and action” and his religious theory of the “duties of man,” became the hero of Gentile’s philosophical and political vision. He was the precursor and inspirer of Gentile’s totalitarian doctrine of Fascism, incarnated in the “ethical State,” to which the religious devotion of a new political religion was attributed. At the same time, the Christian and Catholic faith remained at the basis of Gentile’s theory of education: together with the new political religion of the ethical state, a historical religion, founded in the tradition and in national history, coexisted as a means of inspiration and orientation for the individual and the collectivity.

In the political religion of Nazism we possibly find the development of what Schmitt intuited as a more radical secularization. We can perhaps refer to one of the first theorists of political religions in the Twentieth century, Eric Voegelin, and consider Nazism an “inner-worldly religion.” It was opposed to the “trans-worldly religions” of Judaism and Christianity and was founded on “innerworldly” symbols and myths turned into what the Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg called “organic truth”: the *Volk*, the race, the racial ene-

my. According to the Israeli historian Uriel Tal the structure of the political religion of Nazism consisted of two basic forms: the secularization and politicization of the theological roots on the one hand, and the sacralization of politics on the other. Certainly, in his theory of the “political theology” Schmitt thought that: “All the most significant concepts of the modern doctrine of the State are secularized theological concepts. . . . They have moved to the doctrine of the State from theology.” Among these was dictatorship, which Schmitt considered as developing from a secularized infallible decision coming from above, and thus as modeled on the Christian conception of the infallibility of the religious order.

The intellectual paths of Giovanni Gentile and Carl Schmitt thus show how a recovery, in the first decades of the Twentieth century, of counterrevolutionary, romantic and nationalist thought, together with a new consideration of the Catholic tradition and of the role of the Church, gave rise and shaped the totalitarian political religions of Fascism and Nazism. A careful historical exploration of the transformation of religious thought in the age of secularization, and of what has been called the “transfer of the sacred” from traditional faith to secular civic religions, may therefore shed light on profound and dark aspects and changes in modern ideologies and in mass politics in the Twentieth century.

In this year spent as a Fellow at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia I worked on writing a book on the mathematical aspects of computer networks and, in particular, the Internet. I enjoyed two very favorable situations: the proximity of the computer science department of Columbia, where seminars on the theoretical aspects of the more advanced topics in computer science are regularly held, and the constantly stimulating intellectual exchange with the group of Fellows at the Academy in everyday life and during the seminars guided by the two directors. Writing a book aimed at non-specialists, it was extremely important for me to discuss how the mathematical aspects of the book can be explained and to find relationships, comparisons and applications between the network and the other disciplines represented at the Academy such as, for instance, history, literature, anthropology and art history. Suggestions and observations from the seminars have been included in the book, which I hope will be for this reason more complete and interesting.

During my time at the Academy I wrote several chapters of the book on the following topics: (1) *Search Engines*: Complex systems of hardware and software compo-

nents able to return, after the specification of one or more *keywords*, the Web pages containing those keywords. The most famous is Google after which Internet searches became more effective. (2) *The Dissemination of Information*: If the Internet allows immediate communications and dissemination of information, what happened before? How was information circulated in ancient times and what kind of interconnection networks were formed by humans? (3) *The Internet and the World Wide Web*: History and fundamental protocols for the functioning of a computer network. Basic characteristics of the Internet. The World Wide Web as a hypertext of Web pages forming another network of links interlaced to the Internet. (4) *Cryptography*: A secret manner of writing used since antiquity mainly for military and recreational purposes. Cryptographic techniques have become more and more sophisticated after the development of the Internet and the need to exchange secret or private information. (5) *The Distributed Computation*: A set of computing entities, communicating by means of messages, achieve a common goal, e.g. to perform a given task, to compute the solution of a problem, to satisfy a request either from the user or from other entities.

The chapters on search engines and on cryptography were the subjects of my two seminars. While at Italian Academy I had the time to continue my research on fault tolerant networks and to begin a

research collaboration with Sean Cleary of the Mathematics Department of CUNY on some theoretical properties of tree structures.

I am studying the functional characterization of TRIP8b, a new protein that regulates the activity of ion channels. Nerve cells, or neurons, are able to communicate with each other in an extremely rapid fashion, by using miniature electrical signals (currents). The flow of these electrical currents is controlled by a class of specialized proteins, which are called “ion channels.” Quite literally, ion channels form channels (or tunnels) that run through the outer membrane of the cell, and allow for ions (e.g. sodium, potassium or calcium ions) to enter or exit the cell. Since ions are charged particles, their movement creates an electrical current. What is critical, in the context of neuronal function, is that each channel opens (and closes) only in response to specific physiological stimuli. Thus, the movement of ions –i.e. the production of electrical currents across the cell membrane– is very tightly regulated, and highly “significant” in terms of the cells’ language.

There are hundreds of different types of ion channels, which can be distinguished by the type of stimulus that they respond to, by the ions that they conduct, and by the nature of the current that they produce (e.g. positive or negative, fast or slow, and

so on). The art of measuring the minuscule currents that are produced by a neuron’s ion channels is called electrophysiology, and it equates to listening to very animated conversations among a large group of individuals all speaking at the same time – in a complex foreign language of which we understand only the basics.

Despite the fact that an individual class of ion channels might represent only a word (in the form of the unique current that it expresses) within an otherwise vast and articulate vocabulary, it can have a very profound impact on the overall workings of the brain. As a neuroscience laboratory, interested primarily in the cellular mechanisms that underlie learning and memory, a few years ago we set out to explore this notion by creating a genetically modified mouse in which one class of ion channels (called HCN1) is entirely prevented from functioning. This is technically achievable, since ion channels are proteins, and proteins are encoded by genes, which can be readily manipulated through the use of genetic engineering methods. Thus, we were able to target the HCN1 gene and essentially delete it from the mouse genome (this is called a “knock-out”). Our founder animal and its

offspring consequently are not able to produce any HCN1 channels within their brains, and are not able to express the type of electrical signals that HCN1 normally generates.

A number of considerations allowed us to predict that this channel would have a significant impact on the mice's ability to perform specific learning and memory behavioral tasks. Nonetheless, the fundamental result of our analysis was a bit of a surprise: HCN1 knock-out mice are actually "smarter." They learn and remember better than their wild-type counterparts, demonstrating that an individual class of ion channels can affect specific brain functions (while sparing others) and establishing a negative correlation between HCN1 activity and spatial learning (or memory formation).

Since obtaining this result, we have been very interested in the questions of why would we have a gene that makes us more "stupid" (humans have HCN1 channels too . . .); of whether the brain can up- and down-regulate the activity of such a gene depending on the circumstances (in other words, are there "intelligent" or "memory-competent" states, and "non-intelligent" or "forgetful" states); and what would be the mechanisms underlying such up- and down-regulation (i.e. how do we switch from one state to the other).

Embedded in these very questions are a significant number of assumptions, all of which could be the subject of discus-

sion and experimental investigation. Yet, in a rather reductionist reading of the problem, I decided to skip all higher order issues of behavioral or cognitive/functional nature and simply focus on the molecular side of the question: how is HCN1 channel activity up- and down-regulated in neurons, and what are the biochemical pathways involved in this regulation?

Since ion channels perform their role by sitting in the outer membrane of the cell, and controlling the flux of ions in and out of the membrane, a very fundamental way of reducing the activity of a particular class of channels is to remove them from the outer membrane and relocate them to the interior of the cell. The moving of proteins from one location to another, within a cell, is generally referred to as "intracellular trafficking." Thus, very frequently channel activity is regulated by their interaction with the cell's trafficking machinery: this is also the case for HCN1 channels, which have been shown to move very rapidly in and out of the membrane in response to specific electrophysiological stimuli. The present challenge is to reconstruct the individual steps of the biochemical pathway that leads from stimulus (incoming electrical current) to response (removal, or insertion, of HCN1 channels into the membrane), and to identify the specific cellular proteins that are involved.

In an initial phase of the study, I had been able to demonstrate that a key com-

ponent in the regulation of HCN1 channel trafficking is a protein called TRIP8b, which is found in close association with HCN1 channels in the brain. During my 2005-2006 residence at the Italian Academy in New York, I carried out the mutagenesis and functional analysis work that now provides the proof that TRIP8b indeed acts as a bridge, by binding on one end to HCN1 channels and on the other end to one of the factors in the cellular trafficking machinery. This factor, called AP-2, is known to promote the removal of proteins from the outer membrane, and their accumulation in intracellular organelles called endosomes. From endosomes, proteins can be either reinserted onto the outer membrane or targeted for destruction, providing a very dynamic mechanism for the ongoing regulation of HCN1 channel activity.

In the course of this analysis, I have also been able to demonstrate that some naturally occurring isoforms of TRIP8b lack the sequences required for the interaction with AP-2, pointing to the existence of additional roles for TRIP8b (what would be the use of such alternative isoforms, if they are incapable of promoting channel internalization?). Further, this finding suggests that changing the relative abundance of one TRIP8b isoform vs the other within the brain could be a way of altering the mode of expression and regulation of HCN1 channels. This is an important observation,

since we know that the modulation of HCN1 channel expression in response to electrical activity is not always necessarily “healthy.” Thus, while down-regulation of HCN1 might very well make mice smarter, there is also increasing evidence that HCN1 activity is down-regulated in various animal models of epilepsy, suggesting that there are fine differences in the mode of HCN1 regulation that can precipitate a physiological response (e.g., local and transient suppression of HCN1 activity during learning) into a pathological response (e.g. widespread and persistent suppression of HCN1 activity during epileptogenesis).

If we are interested in understanding, let alone intervening on, the cellular processes that underlie learning and memory formation, it is imperative that we unravel the full meaning of the molecular changes involved. With this perspective in mind, the dynamic interaction between HCN1 and TRIP8b provides a unique opportunity to explore the balance between function and dysfunction in the brain.

I am truly grateful to all my Fellow colleagues, and very especially to Prof. Freedberg and Prof. Varzi, for having instigated some of the most enriching and challenging discussions of the problems that are the focus of my work. I believe the time I spent at the Italian Academy will leave a mark in my scientific production for a long time to come.

## WILLIAM STENHOUSE

During my Fellowship at the Academy, I set out to investigate the links between two intellectual developments in Early Modern Italy. The first of these was a change in ideas about what historical scholarship involved. Theorists and practitioners in the late sixteenth century argued that historians should involve themselves with a wider range of subject matter than their predecessors, and that they should not limit themselves to political and military history. To do this, they should cease simply to mimic the great narrative historians of antiquity – Livy and the rest – and they should expand the types of sources they used, to include objects as well as texts and chronicles. The second, better-known phenomenon was the rise of the museum. Through the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth, Italian cities became studded with collections to which proud owners offered their visitors access. These museums ranged from the famous and grand, like the Capitoline or Papal collections at Rome or the Medici collections in Florence, to the small collections made by otherwise unknown erudites and eccentrics whose objects won them a small degree of fame and renown among their contemporaries across Europe. It

seemed to me that whereas scholars had shown brilliantly and effectively how collecting practices were an essential component of the rise of the seventeenth-century “new science,” no one had yet done the same for historical scholarship. Perhaps that was too obvious, or perhaps the momentous changes in scientific practice were much more interesting than changes in how people wrote about the distant past, but to me at least, and particularly in an institution so devoted to ideas of cultural memory, here was a lead worth following. I am particularly interested in the study of classical Roman antiquities, and so I focused on antiquity collections and writing about the ancient Roman world. The men involved in these undertakings are usually called antiquarians.

I have found information on how people visited museums, how they discussed objects with their colleagues, and how they wrote about their encounters with objects. Although the changes in historical practice were less revolutionary and more subtle than those in scientific research, I also think that a good case can be made for the argument that museums have a similarly transformative effect. In the course of the year I became particularly interested in the role of representa-

tion of antiquities in the understanding of the classical world, and this presents a useful example of the sort of research that I have been doing. Within the antiquarian movement from the mid-fifteenth century right through until the eighteenth century, there was a division between those scholars who demonstrated their knowledge of antiquity by relying on texts, and those who dealt primarily with buildings, objects, and images. On one side of the divide lay great philologists like Flavio Biondo or Scipione Maffei, on the other artists like Raffaello and Piranesi. The difference between the two groups was made very clear by the sixteenth-century Spanish lawyer, churchman and scholar of antiquity, Antonio Agustín. He described his contemporary Pirro Ligorio as “very well known as an antiquarian and painter, who, without knowing Latin, has written more than forty books about coins, buildings, and other things.” When his interlocutor asked how on earth Ligorio could produce his books without that knowledge, Agustín referred to others like him, including Enea Vico, and claimed: “If you read their books, you’d think they had seen and read all the Latin and Greek books written. But they have used the work of others, and while they have drawn competently with the pencil, they’ve done otherwise with the pen.” Agustín’s point was clear. Elsewhere he described Ligorio as simply an “artifice.” In Agustín’s view, knowing Latin, with the

educational and social background such competence suggested, was essential to writing about antiquity.

Agustín’s statements are relatively well known to historians of antiquarianism, but they have usually been seen as something of a dead end. The archetypal philologist pulls rank (fairly successfully, given the subsequent persistence of the division between the artist and the antiquarian) to defend his turf against poorly-trained people who presumed to bring different skills to the study of antiquity than the ones he possessed. I have been trying to qualify that position, and to show how scholars in Italy dealt with the division between philological and artistic antiquarians; figures on both sides visited collections and discussed their contents. One example is Vico, the target of Agustín’s scorn, who illustrated and discussed Roman coins. He began his career as an engraver, working for publishers of books and prints. He then decided to write about coins himself, and in 1560 he published a commentary in Latin on the coins of Julius Caesar. In this work he claimed that his artistic expertise allowed him to illustrate the coins properly, and so he then combined the role of artisan (*artifex*) with commentator (*interpres*). In a contemporary unpublished note responding to his scholarly rival, Sebastiano Erizzo, he went further, and claimed that knowledge of *disegno* was necessary for the interpretation of coins. Another

figure is Onofrio Panvinio. Panvinio, like Agustín, was an accomplished philologist and a brilliant gatherer of information from classical texts. Early in his career, he showed very little interest in visual evidence for antiquity. In the 1560s, though, he started working with the engraver Etienne Du Pérac to create elaborate, and beautiful, scenes of Roman life, including sacrifices, triumphal processions, and gladiatorial games. Panvinio designed these illustrations to accompany his essays on Roman civilization. He claimed to have drawn the evidence for his reconstructions from a range of sources: texts, certainly, but also, and vitally from my point of view, collections of statues, coins and relief sculpture. He also claimed that the illustrations were his own work; but in fact, he stole most of his information and the designs for the reconstructions themselves from Ligorio. Here, then, we see a philologist and friend of Agustín freely appropriating, and endorsing, the work of an artist. It is true that Agustín acknowledged the skill in drawing of Ligorio and others, but Panvinio seems to take acknowledgment a step further, and has seen how visual reconstruction can go hand in hand with textual description as a

way of representing antiquity. There is evidence that Vico and Panvinio were inspired by visits to particular museums, and their activities can be seen as one facet of the growing interest in objects as historical sources, and the challenges involved in interpreting them and in communicating details of them.

My work falls in the gaps between the 21st-century disciplines of history, classics and art history, and so for me the greatest benefit, and pleasure, of the Italian Academy was the presence of a genuinely interdisciplinary group of researchers. They included a classicist, an historian of science, a renaissance philologist, a historian of philosophy, an art historian, and a scholar of historiography, all of whom I could turn to when I wanted to try out an idea. Then when I presented my work to the whole group, I had to learn how to communicate to a penetrating and inquisitive group of non-specialists. This atmosphere of free intellectual enquiry and discussion is both unusual and marvelously inspiring, and I am hugely grateful to the director and staff for fostering such an environment in which I could spend such a productive year.

The project I have undertaken at the Academy is a biography of Gianfrancesco Sagredo (1571–1620). Sagredo’s name is familiar to us as one of the three protagonists of Galileo Galilei’s two controversial classics, the *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo* (1632) and the *Discorsi e dimostrazioni* (1638). Galileo used the posthumous persona of his friend to take apart the world of unexamined common-sense experience and pedantic Aristotelianism and build a new cosmos based on mathematical principles under the tutelage of another friend, Filippo Salviati (1582–1614).

While Galileo’s depiction of Sagredo is an important source for reconstructing his friend’s life, it masks as much as it reveals. The real Sagredo, as presented in his one-sided extant correspondence with Galileo and other documentation, was a complex and mutable figure. His interventions in natural philosophical matters were varied and complex: he negotiated with glass-makers to produce lenses for Galileo, he sent his own experimental results and descriptions of instrumental innovations (in magnetism and thermoscopy, especially) to his former teacher, he read Galileo’s works in manuscript and print, and often disagreed with

his former teacher and friend. But he also performed stranger roles: in the sunspot debate (1611–1613), he not only copied out and circulated Galileo’s texts while they passed through Venice on their way from Florence to Augsburg and Ingolstadt, but also made vicious, independent attacks on Galileo’s opponent “Apelles,” accusing the pseudonymous Jesuit of hypocrisy and stupidity. His zealous loyalty to Venice led him to invent his own pseudonyms in his epistolary attacks on Jesuits after their expulsion from the Veneto in 1606. His letters to Galileo display the witty and informal tone punctuated with precise acuity celebrated in the *Dialogo*. But there are many other versions of Sagredo also revealed in this correspondence: his instinctive sense of political satire, his refreshingly explicit accounts of his libidinal economy, his self-conscious experimentation in finding out his tastes and desires.

The only attempt to provide a brief biographical sketch of Sagredo was made over a century ago, by the great Galileo scholar Antonio Favaro. My own archival research undertaken in Venice, Florence and Rome has unearthed a large number of previously unknown documents which help us understand Sagredo’s interven-

tions in politics and science.

During my Fellowship at the Italian Academy, I made a further important discovery: Sagredo's letters to Galileo describe two portraits he had had done by the artist Gerolamo Bassano, brother of the more famous Leandro. One of these, executed the year before Sagredo's death, was sent to Galileo as a token of their friendship. Its existence was attested until the mid-eighteenth century, but then it disappeared. By chance, I came across a review of a catalogue of paintings in Ukraine, which included a portrait attributed to Leandro Bassano that bore an inscription on the back of Sagredo's name. I was immediately struck by the close facial and stylistic resemblance of the Ukrainian portrait with another more famous picture, the so-called "Procurator of St. Mark" in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, which had also been attributed to Leandro Bassano.

By unlocking a series of iconographic clues hidden in the painting, I was able to demonstrate that this was the long-lost portrait of Sagredo which had been given as a gift to Galileo, and had hung on his living-room wall while he wrote his deceased friend into the *Dialogo*.

There were a series of peculiar details in the painting whose decipherment gradually restored the sitter's faded identity: the robes he wore had previously been thought to be those of the Procurators of St. Mark, a senior role in the Venetian

government. But they could also be worn by ambassadors and consuls. The sitter held a book in one hand, which turned out to be a very specific kind of book, the *commissione dogale*, or beautifully illuminated manuscript book of orders given by the Doge to outgoing ambassadors, military captains and local governors. These *commissioni* were not, however, given to Procurators of St. Mark, so the sitter had to be an ambassador. In Sagredo's letters to Galileo, he describes his outfit in the painting as being the official uniform he was allowed to wear as a Venetian consul to Aleppo, Syria (1608–1611).

The sitter's other hand gestured towards a sumptuous carpet draped over a table. Upon closer inspection, this proved to be a very early example of a new kind of carpet, a silk kilim produced in Persia, of which there were only a handful of examples in Europe. Sagredo's correspondence again helped explain the clue: while on duty in Aleppo, he had exchanged letters with the great leader of the Persian Empire, Shah 'Abbas I. When Sagredo returned to Venice in 1611, he told Galileo, he had sent the Shah his entire collection of scientific instruments (including, I suspect, the newest and most exciting device to be invented, a Galileian telescope). In return, 'Abbas had sent him a carpet, probably woven in his new and fabulous capital of Esfahan.

Over the sitter's shoulder, there was a harbor scene, which included a strange

domed lighthouse. Comparisons with contemporary depictions of such buildings showed that this was meant to represent one of the lost Wonders of the World, the Pharos of Alexandria. Venetians at this time claimed that the famous and mysterious mirrors of the Pharos might have been used not only to project a beam of light to help guide incoming ships, but also as a huge telescope that would serve as a surveillance device, protecting Alexandria from enemy fleets by giving advance warning of attacks. Galileo's astronomical telescope was thus transformed into a military instrument protecting the Venetian Empire and making Venice the natural heir to Alexandrian science.

Decoding these clues involved a great

deal of detective work, and I am much indebted not only to the Fellows, Director and staff of the Italian Academy for their help and expertise, but also to other individuals and institutions in New York and elsewhere, without whose generosity these images of Sagredo would have remained obscure. An article discussing the works and reproducing them for the first time together will be published in the journal *Galileana: Journal of Galilean Studies*. This research will also be described in my forthcoming biography of Sagredo.

In addition, I am writing an article on the vicissitudes of the newly rediscovered unique copy of Thomas Salusbury's *Life of Galileo* (1664) and also producing a new translation of Galileo's *Dialogo* for Penguin Classics.

Winners of  
the Premio New York

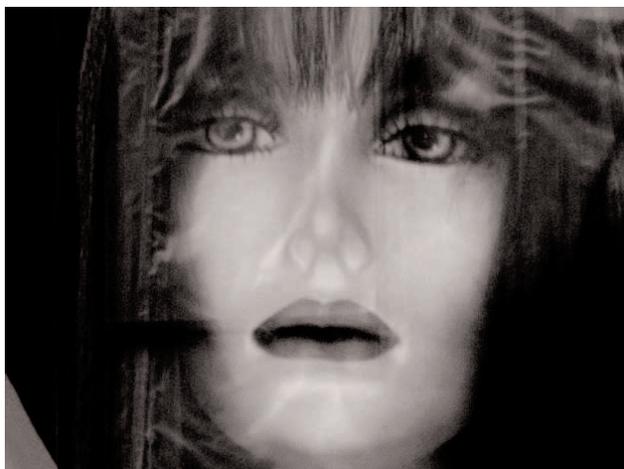
## ANTONIO ROVALDI

### *“I Was Fine Before You Came”*

Film / April 2006

ANTONIO ROVALDI (born in Parma, 1975) lives in Milan, where he graduated from the NABA Academy of Fine Arts. He has taken part in several solo and group shows in Europe (Milan, Ravenna, Rome, and Kassel), as well as in New York, Buenos Aires (Argentina), Labin (Croatia), and Bangkok (Thailand).

*I Was Fine Before You Came.* Video made in collaboration with the Italian band “Fine Before You Came.” The thirteen-minute piece has moving pictures and stills set to music, making the city of New York the protagonist of a musical score in development. This was a short film in several chapters, a non-narrative story for sound images.



SISSI

*“Suspended”*

Performance and Painting / December 2005

SISSI (born in Bologna, 1977) lives and works in Bologna. A graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts, her work has been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions in Italy (Rome and Venice) and the USA (Miami, New York, and Washington, D.C.).

*Suspended.* Performance in the theatre space and upon the neo-classical facade of the Italian Academy. Two large cocoons of plastic material knitted by Sissi hung from the outdoor flagpoles. These organic shapes grew from within the building like roots and represented a natural extension joining the artist’s body with the architecture of the building. A selection of Sissi’s watercolors was also displayed.



## IVANA SPINELLI

### *“Global Sisters”*

Drawing and Video / December 2005

IVANA SPINELLI (born in Ascoli Piceno, 1972) is an Italian artist who studied at the University of Luton (U.K.) after obtaining a degree from the Academy of Fine Art in Macerata, Italy. Her work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in London, Paris, Bologna, Rome, and elsewhere in Italy.

*Global Sisters*. A series of drawings, a video, and a small canvas depicting the *Global Sisters* symbol. This concept is the embodiment of a trademark that represents the first step toward a larger project, with the participation of additional artists, in the creation of serial objects, public interactions, and video and media performances.



## MARCELLA VANZO

### *“An Impossible Tour”*

Performance / April 2006

MARCELLA VANZO was born in Milan in 1973, where she lives and works. After a degree in anthropology, she graduated from the Accademia di Brera in Milan. Her work has been shown, among other venues, at Studio Guenzani and the Pavilion of Contemporary Art in Milan, at Galleria Continua in San Gimignano, at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin. It is part of the permanent collections of the Pavilion for Contemporary Art in Milan, of the Castello di Ama per l'arte contemporanea in Siena and the ACCIA fund in Milan.

*An Impossible Tour.* Site-specific performance, 2006. On the opening night, the Fellows and staffers at the Italian Academy conducted guests on a surreal guided tour of the Italian Academy (documented via video), using every floor of the building. The performance is an extension of the artist's investigation of the boundaries between the real and the surreal.





# Description of Programs

# Fellowship Program



**I**N 2005–2006, 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 2005–2006, 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 semes-

ter at Columbia. Each artist is given an office at the Academy and a studio at the Columbia School of the Arts, and holds an exhibition of his or 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 also encourages the exchange of ideas between contemporary Italian and American artists.



# Activities of the Academy

# Fellows' Seminars

FALL 2005

*Who Wrote the Book of Nature?  
Gianfrancesco Sagredo, masks and  
propaganda in seicento natural philosophy*  
Nick Wilding  
SEPTEMBER 22

*Problems of historical methodology in Carlo  
Ginzburg's work*  
Francesco Borghesi  
SEPTEMBER 28

*The Magus and the Strippers, or: The  
Indiscreet Art of Giambattista Della Porta*  
Sergius Kodera  
OCTOBER 5

*A Poetics of Lacuna*  
Nicola Gardini  
OCTOBER 12

*Does the European Union have a fiscal policy?*  
Fiorella Kostoris Padoa Schioppa  
OCTOBER 19

*Where did I leave my keys? (or: How we use  
mouse genetics to understand memory)*  
Bina Santoro  
NOVEMBER 2

*Search Engines: Google's revolution*  
Linda Pagli  
NOVEMBER 9

*Molecular architecture of signal  
transduction in living cells*  
Antonio Feliciello  
NOVEMBER 16

*Arnaldo Momigliano between history;  
politics and autobiography*  
Simon Levis Sullam  
NOVEMBER 30

*The Invention of "Maniera Greca"*  
Ludovico Geymonat  
DECEMBER 7

*Antiquarians, objects and historical  
scholarship*  
William Stenhouse  
DECEMBER 14



SPRING 2006

*Galileo's Idol (work in progress)*

Nick Wilding

FEBRUARY 1

*Cryptography*

Linda Pagli

FEBRUARY 8

*The Theological and the Political: Italy's  
Political Religions between Giovanni  
Gentile and Carl Schmitt*

Simon Levis Sullam

FEBRUARY 15

*Borders of the Nation, Borders of  
Citizenship: Italian Repatriation and the  
Redefinition of National Identity after  
World War II*

Pamela Ballinger

FEBRUARY 22

*Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's Idea of  
Concordia*

Francesco Borghesi

MARCH 1

*Franz Boas' grammar of native art*

Benedetta Cestelli Guidi

MARCH 8

*The functional characterization of  
TRIP8b, a new protein that regulates the  
activity of ion channels*

Bina Santoro

MARCH 22

*Why we cannot be Christian (and  
especially not Catholic)*

Piergiorgio Odifreddi

MARCH 29

*Writing Ancient History with Pictures*

William Stenhouse

APRIL 5

*Weighing the Evidence from Sigena: Otto  
Pächt, Connoisseurship and the Case for  
a Date*

Ludovico Geymonat

APRIL 12

# The Italian Academy Film Series

Our fall 2005 series entitled “Fascism on Film” was an enormous success: the Teatro was filled for each film with people of all ages and from all over the city. The series included such classics as Bernardo Bertolucci’s “Il Conformista” and Vittorio De Sica’s “Sciuscì,” as well as more modern films such as Gianni Amelio’s “Porte Aperte” and Liliana Cavani’s “Il Portiere di Notte.” Our speakers included Columbia Professor of History Victoria de Grazia, Ruth Ben-Ghiat, Chair of the Department of Italian Studies at New York University, and Paolo Valesio, who holds the Giuseppe Ungaretti Chair in Italian Literature in Columbia’s Italian Department and is editor of the journal *Italian Poetry Review*, which has its new home at The Italian Academy.

Equally successful was the spring 2006 series of films by Michelangelo Antonioni. Again, the theater was packed for all six of the films we showed by this great Italian filmmaker. We had an amazing group

of speakers, some from our regular roster and some new. Noa Steimasky, Associate Professor of Art History at Yale, introduced “La Notte”; Leonard Quart, contributing editor of *Cineaste*, presented “L’Avventura”; Ivone Margulies of Hunter College talked about “Eclisse”; Columbia Professor of Film Richard Peña presented “Il Deserto Rosso”; Kent Jones, Associate Director of Programming at the Film Society of Lincoln Center, discussed “Blow-up”; and the journalist and Columbia Professor in the Graduate School of Journalism Alexander Stille introduced the rarely seen film with Jack Nicholson, “The Passenger.” The Italian Cultural Institute together with BAM Cinémathèque continued the Antonioni retrospective in June. We continue to be very impressed by the popularity of classic Italian film in New York City and are very glad to be contributing to the continuation of its profound cultural significance.

JENNY MCPHEE, *curator*



FALL 2005

*Fascism on Film*

*Il Conformista* by Bernardo Bertolucci

SPEAKER: Leonard Quart

*Una Giornata Particolare* by Ettore Scola

SPEAKER: Victoria de Grazia

*Sciuscia* by Vittorio De Sica

SPEAKER: Ruth Ben-Ghiat

*Porte Aperte* by Gianni Amelio

Speaker: Peter Schneider

*L'Uomo della Croce* by Roberto Rossellini

SPEAKER: Paolo Valesio

*Il Portiere di Notte* by Liliana Cavani

SPEAKER: Gaetana Morrone-Puglia

SPRING 2006

*The Films of  
Michelangelo Antonioni*

*La Notte*

SPEAKER: Noa Steimatsky

*L'Avventura*

SPEAKER: Leonard Quart

*L'Eclisse*

SPEAKER: Ivone Margulies

*Il Deserto Rosso*

SPEAKER: Richard Peña

*Blow-Up*

SPEAKER: Kent Jones

*The Passenger*

SPEAKER: Alexander Stille

# The Italian Academy Concert Series

The Italian Academy's concerts have become, in just a few years, a well-known and often-praised feature of the New York music scene.

The Fall 2005 series was in homage to Lorenzo Da Ponte, the great librettist and poet who once taught Italian at Columbia. The Academy hosted a major conference on Da Ponte in October in conjunction with the Da Ponte Institut of Vienna, and our concert series was a fitting supplement to the symposium. Each of the three concerts featured a solo vocalist: mezzo Krista River, soprano Lucy Shelton (in her third appearance at the Academy), and tenor James Schaffner. The programs were inventive and original in their methods of tribute to Da Ponte, ranging from performances of his texts as set by Mozart for the three great operas to contemporary works that referred interestingly to

Da Ponte's profound influence on composers and librettists from the late eighteenth century right up to the present.

The Spring 2006 series, "Three Italian Men," featured two accomplished virtuosi from Italy, guitarist Marco Cappelli and pianist Emanuele Arciuli (also in his third appearance at the Academy), along with Italian-American baritone Thomas Meglioranza. The recitals by Cappelli and Arciuli coincided with releases of new recordings by these artists on major record labels.

Of the six recitals, those by Lucy Shelton in the Fall and Emanuele Arciuli in the Spring deserve special mention for their excellence. We have been privileged at the Academy to be present for such outstanding and distinguished performances.

RICK WHITAKER, *curator*



FALL 2005

*Lorenzo Da Ponte: A bridge  
from Italy to New York –  
three vocal recitals*

Krista River, *mezzo-soprano*  
with pianist Alison D'Amato

OCTOBER 5

Lucy Shelton, *soprano*  
with pianist Pedja Musijevic

NOVEMBER 2

James Schaffner, *tenor*  
with pianist Lydia Brown

DECEMBER 7

SPRING 2006

*Three Italian Men*

Marco Cappelli, *guitar*

MARCH 8

Thomas Meglioranza, *baritone*  
with pianist Reiko Uchida

APRIL 5

Emanuele Arciuli, *pianist*

MAY 3

# The “Italy at Columbia” Lecture Series

For the ongoing “Italy at Columbia” lecture series, the Italian Academy asks prominent Columbia professors who are teaching lecture courses in a given semester to present one of their lectures, on a topic relevant to the Acade-

my’s mission, in our Teatro for both the professor’s students and a public audience. Admission for the lectures is free, and they have found a large, enthusiastic following.

RICK WHITAKER

## FALL 2005

James Beck on Masaccio and the Pictorial Revolution

OCTOBER 12

Richard Howard on Luigi Pirandello

NOVEMBER 1

James Shapiro on Shakespeare’s  
*Julius Caesar*

NOVEMBER 23

## SPRING 2006

David Rosand, “Giorgione, Titian, and Crisis in Venice”

JANUARY 31

Victoria de Grazia, “How the West was won for Mass Consumption: the Italian campaign, 1953-1973”

FEBRUARY 27

Gayatri Spivak, “Dante’s *De vulgari eloquentia* as a world text”

APRIL 3 (canceled due to illness)

# The First Columbia Forum on Art and the New Biology of Mind

On March 24, 2006 the Italian Academy presented the first-ever Columbia Forum on Art and the New Biology of Mind. The Academy's Teatro was packed with an enthusiastic crowd eager to learn about the most recent advances in the neurosciences from the best-known scientists in the world, including Antonio Damasio, V.S. Ramachandran, Raymond Dolan, Vittorio Gallese, Joseph LeDoux, Semir Zeki, and Margaret Livingstone, along with responses and reflections from world-famous artists including Marina Abramovic, Robert Irwin, Richard Meier, Lynn Davis, Laurie Anderson, Terry Winters, Joan Snyder, Philip Taaffe, George Condo, and David Salle. The conference was led by the Academy's Director, art historian David Freedberg, along with Arthur C. Danto and Nobel Laureate Eric R. Kandel. The Forum was sponsored in part by the Louise T. Blouin Foundation.

On June 13, a smaller meeting was held to follow up on some of the ideas raised in March. This gathering, in the

Academy's Library, featured rigorous discussion among all the participants. In addition to some of the aforementioned, the group included Peter Schjeldahl, Art Spiegelman, Françoise Mouly, Siri Hustvedt, Alan Gilchrist, Pietro Perona, and Fortunato Battaglia.

The Academy's Art and Neuroscience Project is closely related to its concerns with cultural memory. It is intended to expand the historical and sociological investigation of the traces of memory into fields where the operations of memory itself can be subjected to analysis and critique. The aim is to move from traditional historical approaches to memory, such as those most famously described by Paolo Rossi and Frances Yates, to modern scientific approaches, such as those currently being studied in the neurosciences.

Each year, the Academy sponsors a Fellowship in Art and Neuroscience, and we are proud to have become well-known as the leading academic institution for the advanced study of this rich interdisciplinary field.

# Exhibitions

*2005–2006 Winners of the  
Premio New York*

*Guest artists*

ANTONIO ROVALDI

*“I Was Fine Before You Came”*

Film / April 2006

FRANCESCO SIMETI

*“Wood.sy/wóodzee”*

Installation / October 2005

SISSI

*“Suspended”*

Performance and Painting / December  
2005

SILVIO WOLF

*“Scala Zero”*

Photography and Video / March 2006

IVANA SPINELLI

*“Global Sisters”*

Drawing and Video / December 2005

MARCELLA VANZO

*“An Impossible Tour”*

Performance / April 2006



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PHOTOGRAPHY BY IANNIS DELATOLAS. SET IN THE TYPES OF GIAMBATTISTA BODONI.  
DESIGNED BY JERRY KELLY, NEW YORK.