Italy under the Southern Cross

An Australasian Celebration of Dino De Poli and the Cassamarca Foundation

Edited by David Moss and Gino Moliterno

AUSTRALASIAN CENTRE FOR ITALIAN STUDIES

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In honour of Dr Dino De Poli
on his visit to Perth, August 2009

Descendit Polius per caelum australe coruscans
Et stellae stupefacta novae agmina Cangaruarum
Pieridum Hesperiae numeris saltant celebrantque
Cacatuae pendentes ramo altoque cachinnant.
Artibus en gaudebit utrisque polis novus orbis.

Discende De Poli, lampeggiante tra cieli australi
Mandrie di canguri meravigliati dalla nuova stella
Insieme saltellando alle Muse occidentali rendono grazie
Ed negli alberi alti i cockatoo ridacchiano
Cosi il nuovo mondo gioisce nelle arti di entrambi i poli.

Down, through southern skies aflash, De Poli flies.
A new star! marvel the mobs of kangaroos,
Leaping in time to greet Ausonia's Muses.
From branches high above cackle the cockatoos.
New World, rejoice! Now Arts from both the poles arise!

Latin lines: *Yasmin Haskell*
(Translated *Gino Moliterno and David Moss*)

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Foreword

Professor Alan Robson
Vice-Chancellor, The University of Western Australia

The opportunity to introduce this collection of writings in honour of Dr Dino De Poli, the late Emeritus Professor Bill Kent and the Cassamarca Foundation is one I embrace with pride and affection.

As Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia I am very proud of the fact that our University was chosen in 2001 as the base for the Foundation's Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS), Cassamarca's main instrument in Australia.

I am also proud that the study of Italian language, society and culture is flourishing in our own University and many other Australasian tertiary institutions. This was not always the case. Indeed, two decades ago, Italian studies were in serious danger of extinction. A visit to Australia in March 1998 by the Foundation's President, Dr De Poli, led to the reversal of this trend with the establishment of the Australia Project Committee, of which our University, along with others, was a member. The Foundation now funds 13 posts in Italian and Latin studies around Australia, and through ACIS it supports annual scholarships for Australasian students' research projects in Italy.

It is with great affection that I acknowledge Dr De Poli, philanthropist, lawyer, bank president and politician, whose mission is to revive and integrate Italian studies in universities throughout the world. Dr De Poli's willingness to accept an invitation to our University by a young UWA researcher, Dr Loretta Baldassar, when she actively sought out philanthropic support for Italian studies research and teaching in Australia, speaks volumes about him. His capacity for friendship and his passion for the promotion of cross-cultural awareness meant that Professor Baldassar's invitation was not only taken up but resulted in the establishment of ACIS.

This book is also a tribute to Professor Kent who, a month before his untimely death on 30 August 2010, was appointed Emeritus Professor of Monash University to mark his retirement after a career spanning four decades. His distinguished career included appointments as Visiting Scholar and Visiting Professor at Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Centre for Italian Renaissance Studies in Florence. Articles by both Professor

Kent and his wife, colleague and collaborator Dr Carolyn James feature in this publication, which also serves as a recognition of the Foundation.

Along with promoting Italian culture, the Cassamarca Foundation operates in a number of fields including scientific research, the preservation of the environment, health, education, the arts, and emigration and immigration. With the aim of raising the profile of humanist Latin in Australia, the Foundation created a Chair in Latin Humanism at The University of Western Australia. The position, with its emphasis on the role of Latin humanism in the development of Western civilisation, truly captures Dr De Poli's vision.

Our region, and particularly our nation, has benefitted enormously – and been shaped by – the many hundreds of thousands of Italian people who made Australia their home, particularly from the late 19th to the late 20th century.

We celebrate their courage in exchanging their green, white and red tricolour flag for Australia's stars of the Southern Cross and rejoice in the richness of culture and language they brought with them. We congratulate Dr De Poli, the Cassamarca Foundation and the contributors to this book for helping to ensure that this richness continues to bear fruit.

PREFACE

Our aim in this book is to weave a kind of cento out of contributions by the members of the three 'generations' of Italianists associated with the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS) and the Cassamarca Foundation in order to celebrate the support of the Foundation, and in particular its President, Dino De Poli, for Italian Studies in Australia. We also wish to honour the memory of one of the founding members of ACIS, Bill Kent, who provided inspiration and help for the study of Italy, particular Renaissance Italy, over many years. His influence, direct and indirect, can be felt in many of the essays and reflections which follow.

We have divided the book into four parts, preceded by short introductions which together reconstruct the establishment of the connection between the Cassamarca Foundation and Australia, the history of ACIS, the Cassamarca Lectureships and the ACIS-Cassamarca Scholarships. In Part 1 we provide a summary of the work of the Cassamarca Foundation and its *Progetto Australia,* set in the wider context of the Foundation's *Progetto Umanesimo Latino.* Appropriately the story is told by the three protagonists in the creation and maintenance of the Treviso-Perth connection – Antonella Stelitano, Loretta Baldassar and Peter Leunig. In Part 2 we reprint, in revised or updated form in most cases, essays which cover the key interests of the Cassamarca Foundation in developing the study of Italian culture and language in Australia. Some of the contributors in this section (Ros Pesman, Desmond O'Connor, Gino Moliterno and David Moss) have been associated with ACIS from its earliest days. Others (Nina Rubino, Claire Kennedy and Gabriella Brussino) have organised conferences and workshops on behalf of ACIS, with special attention to innovations in language teaching. We have also included in this part hitherto unpublished essays by four people also associated with ACIS and the Cassamarca Foundation in various ways: Bill Kent, Carolyn James, Yasmin Haskell and Tony Pagliaro. Part 3 is a many-coloured mosaic of personal reflections on the interaction of Italian and Australian themes in their professional and private lives, mostly by the people who have held Cassamarca lectureships but including other Italianists who have served on the ACIS Management Committee. Part 4 consists of contributions by the newest generation of Italianists, the winners of the ACIS-Cassamarca scholarships for research in Italy. Dino De Poli has long paid particular

attention to the cultural formation of younger generations, both the academic development of young scholars and the preservation of ties with the Veneto among the families of emigrants through the work of the *Unione dei Triveneti nel Mondo.* In this section the winners of the Australasian scholarships describe their research projects and indicate the directions which their lives have subsequently taken, inside or outside the academy.

In putting the book together we have incurred many debts. Professor Alan Robson, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Australia, has not only been kind enough to write the Foreword but has also provided a substantial contribution towards the costs of publication. The Office of Development at the University of Western Australia supplied the information necessary to get the project under way, thus increasing the long-term debt that ACIS has to the members of that Office – specifically Peter Leunig, Deirdre de Souza and Melissa Hasluck, along with Olivia Mair and Bianca Galipo – for the support, advice and guidance which they have provided with unfailing attention, speed and tact. Other people also played vital parts. Nerida Newbigin, Matthew Absalom, Claire Kennedy, Sara Visocnik-Murray, Peter Howard, Bruno Mascitelli and Melissa Hasluck helped us to trace some contributors whom even the potent combination of the ACIS archives and Google's search engine had failed to locate. At short notice Francesca Laura translated the Introduction into Italian for us with skill and precision. To Bruno Buttini, *miglior fabbro,* go our gratitude and admiration for his imagination and skill in helping us to produce this book. And, last but hardly least, we are very grateful indeed to all the contributors who responded with enthusiasm to the project, managed to find time among all their other commitments to write their pieces, and met their deadlines with exceptional punctuality. We very much hope that reading their many-hued contributions will provoke as much interest and enjoyment as the editors have derived from bringing them together and the contributors themselves have evidently had in their great variety of engagements with Italy and Italians.

Acknowledgements

The following chapters in Parts 1 and 2 originally appeared elsewhere, in three cases (chs 1, 11 and 12) in earlier versions. We hereby acknowledge the publishers' copyright and are grateful for permission to reprint them in modified or unmodified form:

Chapter 1: Loretta Baldassar, 'The future of Italian Studies in Australia: The Cassamarca challenge', *Convivio,* 1999, vol.5, no.1, April, pp. 34-39.

Chapter 2: Script of talk broadcast by the ABC in 'Lingua Franca,' 20 October 2007.

Chapter 6: This unpublished essay will appear in F.W. Kent, *Princely Citizen: Lorenzo de' Medici and Renaissance Florence,* Brepols, 2011.

Chapter 7: Gino Moliterno, 'Dante Down Under: Francis MacNamara's *A Convict's Tour to Hell,' Convivio,* (1996), vol.2, no. 1, pp. 49-58.

Chapter 8: Roslyn Pesman Cooper, 'Sir Samuel Griffith, Dante and the Italian Presence in Nineteenth-Century Australian Literary Culture,' *Australian Literary Studies,* 1989, 14, 1989, pp.199-215.

Chapter 10: Desmond O'Connor, 'Il peso della lontananza nell'opera di Enoe Di Stefano", in *Identità e diversità nella lingua e nella letteratura italiana,* Atti del XVIII Congresso dell'Associazione Internazionale per gli Studi di Lingua e Letteratura Italiana, Volume terzo, Firenze, Franco Cesati Editore, 2007, pp. 475-488.

Chapter 11: David Moss, 'Anomalies in the Academy: The Vicissitudes of Italian Studies in Australia,' *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education,* 2004, vol.3, no.2, pp. 125-146.

Chapter 12: Antonia Rubino, 'Italian in Australia: Past and New Trends', C. Kennedy (ed) *Proceedings of the* Innovations in Italian Teaching *Workshop,* 2002, Griffith University, pp.1-15 (http://www.griffith.edu.au/centre/italian/content_proceedings.html).

The contribution by Kirsten Pilz (pp.235-7) is an edited extract from her article, 'An Italian literary perspective on ecology: Italo Calvino', which appeared in *Mots Pluriels,* 1999, no.11. The full version, published by the University of Western Australia, is available online at:
<http://motspluriels.arts.uwa.edu.au/MP1199kp.html>.

The epigraphs which appear on the title pages for each section are taken from Dino De Poli, *Percorsi spirituali e politici. Scritti scelti 1946-2008* (Treviso, Silvano Piazza, 2008), pp. 610, 615, 609 and 655.

Kevin Bayley has very generously given us permission to reproduce on the back cover the photograph by Jo-Anne Duggan, *Impossible Gaze #5,* from the exhibition of the same name first held at the UTS Gallery, University of Technology, Sydney, in 2002. Further details of the photograph and of Jo-Anne's work and publications can be found at: <http://www.jo-anne-duggan.com>. The photograph is accompanied by an extract from Bill Kent's introduction to her *Invisible Presences,* Brisbane, Arts Queensland, 2006. We are also indebted to Kevin for his permission to reproduce the photograph of Jo-Anne herself which accompanies Catherine Dewhirst's tribute to her life and work below (p.204).

We are grateful to Monash University (Institute for Public History) and Griffith University for permission to reproduce the photos of Emma Nicholls and Adriana Diaz respectively.

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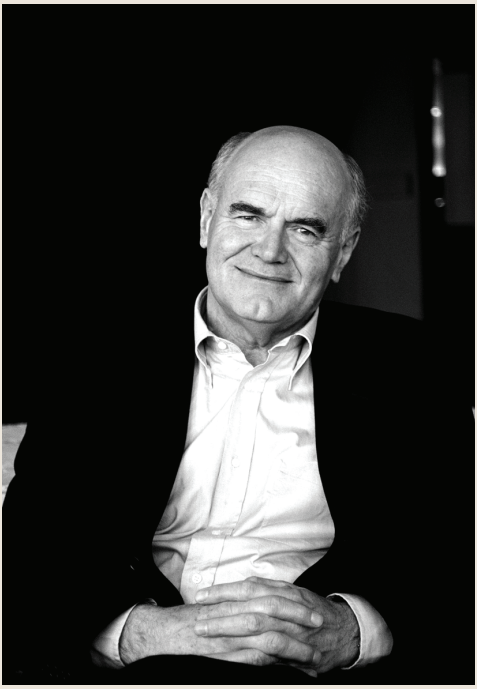
Dino De Poli



Bill Kent

Introduction

David Moss and Gino Moliterno

A celebratory record

With this volume we mark the tenth anniversary of the first Cassamarca Lectureship appointments which were made possible by the extraordinary generosity of the Cassamarca Foundation and its President, Dino De Poli. Thanks to Dino De Poli's own enthusiasm and unfailing support for the Australia Project, Italian Studies in Australasia was helped first to survive in a very cold climate for language programmes and then to consolidate its strengths and to offer new opportunities to young scholars. The Foundation's initiative has been a vital element not only in sustaining the field in practical ways but also in renewing its sense of purpose as an important component of any humanist education. As the inaugural and current Chairs of the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS), we have therefore sought to gather together in a single volume contributions from everyone directly associated with the Foundation's work in Australasia over the past ten years. The different ways in which its exceptional support has had its effects and the appreciation which its beneficiaries have felt are illustrated throughout this volume.

As we began to think seriously about this book, one of the Australian protagonists of Italian Studies on whose intelligence and experience we intended to draw, Professor Bill Kent of Monash University, was diagnosed with an eventually fatal illness which he bore with extraordinary courage and fortitude. Bill was a very enthusiastic and active supporter of ACIS from the beginning, just as he took a leading role in a great number of Italy-related initiatives, intellectual and practical. His impact is recorded in several of the contributions to this book by people who were lucky enough to have been his students or to have received good advice or practical help at important moments. We therefore felt that this celebration of Italian-Australian relations should also be dedicated to Bill's memory and the contribution he made to them throughout his life.

Although the conventions governing introductions to celebratory volumes are fairly relaxed, it may still seem strained to try for some kind of illuminating comparison between our two dedicatees. Born half a generation apart on opposite sides of the world, one establishing himself in a tranquil semi-rural setting with an impoverished agricultural hinterland, the other growing up in a tumultuous industrial suburb rapidly filling up with European immigrants from just such hinterlands; the older moving confidently across several different professions, the younger devoting himself to an academic career; one presented by journalists first as a promising *giovane leone,* then as a political *cavallo di razza,* then as a farsighted *Doge* by the bank of the Sile river which winds around Treviso; the other characterised by colleagues as a *maestro di bottega,* a phrase originally applied to the man who fascinated Bill and is the subject of his essay here, Lorenzo il Magnifico – all this might appear to make for a very odd pairing. Certainly they combine the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* in quite different ways. Dino De Poli has devoted himself primarily to action, in many different walks of life but – as Antonella Stelitano shows in describing the worldwide scale of the Cassamarca Foundation's activities – he has also made very substantial efforts to ensure a rewarding *vita contemplativa* for others. Bill Kent was dedicated to teaching and scholarship, but he was ready to devote time and resources to the *vita activa* when he thought it necessary for the causes he believed in. Beyond those differences what they certainly shared was the determination to deepen the reciprocal understanding between Italy and Australia. And, as we explored the details of their different careers, we were able to pick out at least two further features they have in common: an attachment to place, and an insistence on the continuing value of humanism.

The attachment to place

Dino De Poli was born in Treviso, the oldest of four siblings, in Via Collalto in the working-class neighbourhood of San Nicolò on 24 August 1929. The life of his family was difficult. His father had refused to enrol in the Fascist Party and was therefore more unemployed than employed; his mother often had to pawn the few family possessions of any value to put food on the table. Success at school earned him entry to the University of Ferrara where he graduated in 1955 with a thesis on the theory and practice of Marxism in jurisprudence and a sub-thesis on footballers' contracts. His passion for football might have led him to build his early experiences coaching junior teams into his preferred career as a coach, favouring the *catenaccio* in the Helenio Herrera mould. But the choice was for law. He joined the legal firm of the local Christian Democrat parliamentarian, Ruggero Lombardi, in Vicolo Rialto before establishing a

firm of his own where he continues in active practice today. As a young lawyer and Christian Democrat MP, his name came to national attention when he accompanied a vital witness of the planning of the Piazza Fontana bombing in 1969 to give his testimony to one of the first investigating magistrates; he took the courageous step of declaring publicly that the responsibilities for the bombing lay with rightwing extremists based in Treviso itself – a view then by no means widely accepted by his party leadership or the public. He left national politics after a single term and a narrow defeat in 1972, perhaps disappointed by the aggressive rise of his party's centre-right faction in the Veneto, the *dorotei,* led by Toni Bisaglia whose success he had reluctantly to acknowledge: 'A nù le pene e a *lù el capon*.' In the tradition of appointment of ex-parliamentarians to public bodies, he took up the presidency of the *Ente Nazionale per la Cellulosa e la Carta* until 1982 when he returned to Treviso to resume his legal career. His additional experience in company boardrooms and in economic planning stood him in good stead when he was appointed President of the ailing Cassamarca SpA in 1987, a position he resigned in favour of the Presidency of the Cassamarca Foundation in 2000, the post he will hold until at least 2012. He still lives not far from his first neighbourhood with his wife, Renza, herself from a Treviso family, whom he married in 1960; they have a daughter, Nicoletta, and a son, Mauro, who practise law in their father's firm.

Treviso has remained at the heart of his private and professional lives. *'Ecco perché non posso dimenticare Treviso; perché ha saputo innestarmi in una scala di valori spirituali …. Il torrente della vita scorre sì al mare ma lo fa soltanto perché alle spalle lo nutre una sorgente …. Quella sorgente per me ha nome Treviso.'* Those words were written in 1953; they are echoed half-a-century later in reply to a question about his relations with his birthplace: *'È un rapporto d'amore. L'amore ti porta ad assumerti responsabilità e a pensare al futuro …. Io mi do da fare per la mia città.'* Treviso has indeed been a direct beneficiary of those activities. As President of the Cassamarca Foundation, he has undertaken a series of initiatives to renew the city landscape – heavily bombed by the Allies on 7 April 1944 with great destruction and loss of life, from which he and his family were only saved by his father's accurate intuition that taking refuge in one of the town's bomb shelters would be more dangerous than staying at home – by restoring in whole or part some of the most significant historical buildings. Retrieving the past and making it serve contemporary purposes has been the hallmark of these initiatives, both in bricks and mortar and in minds. Thus he has brought imagination and resources to the support of Treviso's scientific and cultural life. Thanks to the Foundation, the town once more has a university, some seven hundred years since its short-

lived predecessor was closed down in the early 14th century. The buildings restored by the Foundation now house courses in law, foreign trade, statistics and informatics for business management as well as research in biotechnology, nanotechnology and agriculture. The humanities have not been neglected: the Foundation sponsors regular academic conferences and art exhibitions and established a *Premio Europeo della Poesia* in 2004. Nor has its conception of culture been a narrow or élitist one. In 1959, the young De Poli, then the Chair of the Education Committee of the town council, launched a *Festival della cucina trevigiana,* at the time a novel way to celebrate a largely ignored expression of knowledge and skill. *"Si mette in moto, con il piacere, l'economia e, si spera, più cultura e civiltà",* he suggested, drawing the connections between individual satisfaction, economic development and social values which would mark many of his later initiatives. And if the *sopa coada,* one of the glories of Treviso's cuisine – the town with perhaps the best home-cooking in Italy according to Marcella Hazan – has not yet achieved wider recognition, it is not for lack of his own enthusiastic promotion. Significantly, the first volume to appear in the *Lorenzo Da Ponte Italian Library* recently sponsored by the Cassamarca Foundation under the imprint of the University of Toronto Press – a series consisting of translations into English of one hundred Italian texts to form an innovative canon of very diverse works united by their influence on English-language culture – was Pellegrino Artusi's *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiare bene.*

The world into which Bill Kent was born in 1942 could hardly have been more different to Treviso - the working-class industrial suburb in Melbourne's inner-west, Footscray. While Treviso's countryside was rapidly losing people to other parts of Italy, Europe and the world in the 1950s, Footscray was drawing in many Italians and Greeks from just such rural backgrounds; by 1970 they amounted to one-third of the local population. Bill's interest in Italy was surely stimulated in the unusually multicultural world which surrounded him during his childhood and adolescence. Although he retained his attachment to Footscray, not least by loyal support for its rarely successful AFL team (whose change of name to Western Bulldogs in 1996 he deplored), he spent much of his adult life on the other side of Melbourne. He joined Monash University in 1965 after graduating in history from the University of Melbourne and was part of the early group of staff which established the new university's reputation. Marked by his ascent to larger offices and higher floors in the Menzies Building (the Ming Wing), his career prospered, taking him to the award of a personal Chair in 1989 and the title of Emeritus Professor in 2010. Renaissance Florence and modern Melbourne were the two poles of his professional life. But the great success of his last decade was undoubtedly

the establishment of the Monash Centre in Prato and its development as a centre not only for teaching but also for international scholarship in form of the Prato Consortium for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, with the participation of universities from the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. Bill himself recounted the saga of the Centre's establishment; but it was undoubtedly through his own determination, diplomatic skills and refusal to be discouraged by the preceding twenty years of frustration in trying to gain an Australian foothold in Italy that the Centre became a reality.

Attachment to their home towns was no bar to recognition far afield. Bill Kent was awarded his PhD, supervised by Nicolai Rubinstein whom he succeeded in 2002 as General Editor of Lorenzo de' Medici's letters, at the University of London in 1971 and was appointed Visiting Scholar and Professor at Harvard's Villa I Tatti in Florence on several occasions, Christensen Visiting Fellow at St Catherine's College, Oxford, in 1990 and the Schouler Lecturer in History at the Johns Hopkins University in 1999. Those awards show how widely his work in the cultural and social history of late medieval and Renaissance Italy was esteemed in a research community hardly short of stellar names. Dino De Poli's sponsorship of intellectual life has earned him similarly wide-ranging recognition. He has received honorary degrees at universities in Australia, Brazil and Romania – all countries in which the Cassamarca Foundation has sponsored academic positions and conferences - and has been awarded the title of Honorary Professor at Bishkek University in Krygyzstan. But – we hope this will not be taken as an irreverent note – not all the honours he has received are academic. In 2002 he was granted the *l'Onorificenza Pontificia di Commendatore dell'Ordine di San Gregorio Magno,* an order whose recent members have included the former manager of Manchester United FC Sir Matt Busby, the disc-jockey Jimmy Savile, and the media tycoon Rupert Murdoch. Were the Order's members ever to gather at the same time in the same place, Dino De Poli's appreciation of hard creative work in any field of human endeavour would certainly enable him to feel entirely at ease in their company.

The value of humanism

It is easy to imagine, without pressing the comparison too far, that Bill would have recognised in Dino De Poli some of the qualities of humanist, patron of scholarship and the arts, and skillful politician that the person he studied most closely, Lorenzo de' Medici, displayed. (A key difference would hardly have escaped him: while Lorenzo's attempt to run a bank was a disastrous failure, Dino De Poli has weathered all the financial storms of the past two decades on behalf of the bank and Foundation of the Cas-

samarca). Humanism was not an anti-Christian movement so much as a retrieval of educational lessons from the classics of Roman and Greek literature that could serve the Christian world of the Renaissance. Similarly, the search for the points of usable contact between different value systems rather than the monotonous reiteration of their undoubted differences is, it seems to us, what characterises the work of the Cassamarca Foundation and its attachment to the term 'Latin Humanism'.

Dino De Poli began his public life in the world of organised Catholicism, a natural starting point in the Veneto for young men and women committed to national renewal after the collapse of Fascism. After taking on leadership roles in parish and diocese, he was promoted to a national position in the youth section of *Azione Cattolica* (GIAC) in Rome in 1952, his value spelled out in the reference from his sponsor in Treviso: *'un ottimo ragazzo, molto intelligente, umile anche se forse può non apparire tale a prima vista e soprattutto di una infinita generosità … si è fatto da sé, attraverso conquiste personali, conquiste combattute e sofferte'.* During that year in Rome he worked alongside a young Umberto Eco who many years later would write to him that '*[d]i tutta quella banda di quei tempi sei quello di cui ho il ricordo più caro e più intimo'.* The success of his work in Catholic associations led naturally towards a significant role, first as a city councillor in Treviso (1956-65) and then as a leading member of the talented group of figures (notably Carlo Bernini and Marino Corder) on the left wing of the Christian Democrat party in the Veneto. Catholicism of course remains his fundamental source of inspiration. His recuperation of Latin Humanism as a tradition also able to furnish valuable intellectual and ethical resources really begins in the 1990s at the time of the renewed march towards closer European integration in the form of the single market and the creation of the euro. In this context, the evocation of Latin Humanism serves three purposes. First, it is a reminder of the complex underlying unity of the cultures touched by Latin, including the Northern European countries where the Romans had a significant influence. It provides values to underpin the European project, including the work of reconciliation required by the wars and political divisions of the recent past. The commitment has been made manifest even in small ways: in 2008, for example, the Cassamarca Foundation funded the restoration of the virtually abandoned Austro-Hungarian cemetery of Follina (between Treviso and Belluno), permitting the proper reburial of some eighty soldiers who had died along the Piave in 1917-1918 with a simple memorial surrounded by the flags of their twelve nations, now at peace. Second, it serves as a label for the values of solidarity and community in which the emigrants and their descendants in the national and international diaspora from the Veneto can recognise themselves – values closely related

to the Christian idea of the person. Third, it serves as a counterpoise to the over-emphasis on the strictly economic dimensions of European integration which, accompanied by the growing web of global economic and financial ties, often seems to be the dominant, even exclusive, form in which Europeans are invited to recognise what they share. Against this economistic, reductionist, framework for bringing people together, Latin Humanism provides resources to meet some of the social, cultural and political problems that the mere establishment of economic ties between hitherto separate groups of people creates but cannot itself solve.

Bill Kent came to humanism as a topic of study, not a resource for action. But, from the comments of his students and colleagues at his memorial service, it is easy to appreciate how far what we might call a kind of 'everyday humanism' guided his professional life. He was devoted to teaching, displaying the interest in younger generations that Dino De Poli has shown in his efforts to ensure that the children and grandchildren of emigrants from the Veneto do not lose touch with their original homeland. Bill was keen to make sure he grasped the multiple aspects of his students' lives, how they incorporated their university work into their many other interests, how they could be coaxed into doing better by being helped to gain a better perspective on what they were doing out at Clayton in the context of all the other demands on their time. The predilection for understanding people 'in the round' is also foremost in his academic work. Perhaps his best-known book, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence* (2004) – hailed by a doyen of Florentine studies, Richard Goldthwaite, as one of the most important books on the Italian Renaissance in the past fifty years – deals with a limited, often downplayed, aspect of Lorenzo's multifarious life: his interest in the visual arts and his patronage of artists. But it offers a prism for understanding the man as a whole, a means of understanding the integration of political, social and aesthetic interests in his character and their embodiment in the projects he supported.

The motto chosen for the Bill Kent Foundation is a phrase by Giovanni Rucellai, a member of one of the powerful lineages that Bill studied in his first book on Florence: *'Non è l'uomo nato per vivere dormendo ma per vivere facendo'.* It is a conviction conveyed in English with lyrical force by A.E.Housman half a millennium later:

> 'Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
> Breath's a ware that will not keep.
> Up, lad: when the journey's over
> There'll be time enough to sleep.'

Giovanni Rucellai included the phrase, originally from Leon Battista

Alberti's *Trattato del Governo della Famiglia,* in his *Zibaldone,* composed of fragments from earlier authors which he thought contained good advice for his heirs and later generations. Alberti goes on, underlining the need to make full use of all our talents: *'L'ingegno, il giudicio, la memoria, la ragione, il consiglio, e le altre potenze in noi non ci sono date per non le adoperare'.* The lives and works of Dino De Poli and Bill Kent illustrate the value of that exhortation and the enduring importance of a generous humanism.

Note: For details of Dino De Poli's life we have drawn on his writings, speeches and interviews collected by Ivano Sartor in *Dino De Poli. Percorsi spirituali e politici. Scritti scelti 1946-2008* (Treviso, Silvano Piazza, 2008) with a valuable introduction by the editor. The quotations are also taken from that source. Bill Kent told some of the story behind the establishment of Monash Prato in 'Gaining a foothold: Australian cultural institutions in Italy' in Bill Kent, Ros Pesman and Tributes to him, delivered at a memorial service held at Monash on 7 September 2010, can be heard at: http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/about/bill-kent-memorial.php. We are very grateful to Antonella Stelitano and Carolyn James for help and encouragement in writing this introduction.

Introduzione

David Moss and Gino Moliterno

Una testimonianza celebrativa

Con questo libro vogliamo celebrare il decimo anniversario delle prime cattedre istituite da Cassamarca e la straordinaria generosità della Fondazione e del suo Presidente, Dino De Poli, che quelle cattedre ha reso possibili. Grazie al personale entusiasmo di De Poli e al suo inesauribile sostegno al Progetto Australia, gli studi di Italianistica in Australasia hanno ricevuto dapprima l'aiuto necessario a sopravvivere in un clima molto poco propizio ai corsi di lingue e poi ad acquistare vigore e offrire nuove opportunità a giovani studiosi. Le iniziative della Fondazione sono state vitali non solo nel sostenere l'area in termini pratici, ma anche nel rinnovarne le finalità come componente importante di ogni formazione umanistica. Abbiamo quindi voluto riunire i contributi di tutti coloro che hanno avuto relazioni con la Fondazione Cassamarca in Australia, sia come docenti e vincitori di borsa di studio che come membri del comitato *Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS),* inizialmente presieduto da David Moss e attualmente da Gino Moliterno. Le modalità con cui questo eccezionale supporto si è manifestato e la gratitudine di tutti coloro che ne hanno beneficiato trovano espressione in ogni parte di questo volume.

Quando abbiamo cominciato a pensare seriamente a questo libro, uno dei protagonisti dell' Italianistica in Australia, alla cui intelligenza ed esperienza contavamo di fare appello, il Professor Bill Kent della Monash University, veniva colpito da un male rivelatosi poi incurabile che affrontò con straordinario coraggio e forza di spirito fino alla morte. Dall'inizio Bill era stato un sostenitore attivo ed entusiasta dell'ACIS, nella stessa misura in cui si era fatto promotore di molte iniziative, intellettuali e pratiche, legate alla causa dell'italiano. La sua influenza è dimostrata nei diversi contributi a questo libro da parte di coloro che hanno avuto la fortuna di essere suoi studenti o hanno da lui ricevuto validi consigli o aiuti pratici in momenti importanti. Pensiamo perciò che questa celebrazione delle relazioni Italia-

Australia debba essere dedicata anche alla memoria di Bill ed al contributo da lui dato a quelle relazioni durante tutta la vita.

Per quanto le convenzioni che regolano i volumi celebrativi siano piuttosto flessibili, può sembrare un po' forzato cercare un paragone illuminante tra le due figure a cui il libro è dedicato. Nati a circa quindici anni di distanza ai lati opposti del mondo, l'uno si faceva strada in un tranquillo ambiente semirurale circondato da aree agricole impoverite, l'altro cresceva in un tumultuoso sobborgo industriale che si stava rapidamente popolando di immigrati europei provenienti proprio da aree simili; il più anziano si destreggiava con sicurezza tra diverse professioni, il più giovane si dedicava ad una carriera accademica; l'uno veniva presentato dai giornalisti prima come promettente *giovane leone,* poi come cavallo di razza politico e infine come lungimirante *Doge* sulle sponde del fiume Sile che si snoda attraverso Treviso, l'altro fu descritto dai suoi colleghi come *maestro di bottega,* una frase da lui stesso originariamente impiegata per definire l'uomo che l'affascinò e che è l'oggetto del suo saggio in questo volume, Lorenzo il Magnifico. A prima vista sembrano due personaggi molto difficili da accostare che combinano la *vita activa* e la *vita contemplativa* in modi alquanto diversi. Dino De Poli si è impegnato soprattutto nell'azione in molti settori della vita, ma ha anche – come spiega Antonella Stelitano descrivendo l'estensione globale delle attività di Cassamarca – contribuito in modo significativo ad assicurare ad altri una produttiva e gratificante *vita contemplativa.* Bill Kent si era votato allo studio e all'insegnamento, ma era pronto a dedicare tempo e risorse alla *vita activa* quando lo riteneva necessario per le cause in cui credeva. Al di là di queste differenze, quello che certamente condividevano era la determinazione ad approfondire la reciproca comprensione tra l'Italia e l'Australia. Nell'esplorare i particolari delle loro diverse carriere, abbiamo trovato almeno altre due caratteristiche che li accomunano: l'attaccamento ai luoghi e l'insistenza sul valore duraturo dell'umanesimo.

L'attaccamento ai luoghi

Dino De Poli è nato a Treviso, il maggiore di quattro figli, in via Collalto nel quartiere popolare di San Nicolò, il 24 agosto 1929. Le condizioni familiari erano difficili. Il padre aveva rifiutato l'iscrizione al Partito Fascista e di conseguenza si trovava frequentemente disoccupato; la madre spesso doveva impegnare i pochi oggetti di famiglia di un qualche valore per mettere cibo sulla tavola. I successi scolastici gli guadagnarono l'ammissione all'Università di Ferrara dove si laureò nel 1955 con una tesi sulla teoria e pratica del marxismo in giurisprudenza ed una tesina sui contratti dei calciatori. La passione per il calcio avrebbe potuto indurlo a trasformare le sue prime esperienze tra squadre giovanili in una carriera vera e propria

da allenatore, con una predilezione per il *catenaccio* al modo di Helenio Herrera. Ma la scelta fu per giurisprudenza. Entrò nello studio legale del parlamentare democristiano Ruggero Lombardi in Vicolo Rialto, prima di aprire il proprio studio dove continua ad esercitare tuttora. Era ancora un giovane avvocato e deputato per la Democrazia Cristiana, quando il suo nome venne alla ribalta nazionale per aver accompagnato un testimone cruciale negli eventi che portarono alla strage di Piazza Fontana nel 1969 a testimoniare davanti ad uno dei primi magistrati a condurre le indagini. Prese la coraggiosa iniziativa di dichiarare pubblicamente che le responsabilità della strage ricadevano sugli estremisti di destra di base proprio a Treviso, una posizione allora certo non ampiamente condivisa né dal direttivo del partito né dal pubblico. Lasciò la politica dopo un solo mandato e una sconfitta per pochi voti nel 1972, forse anche deluso dall'aggressiva ascesa della fazione di centro-destra del partito nel Veneto, i *dorotei,* guidati da Toni Bisaglia il cui successo aveva dovuto a malincuore riconoscere: *"A nù le pene e a lù el capon".* Nella tradizione che vedeva ex-parlamentari nominati a capo di enti pubblici, assunse la presidenza dell'*Ente Nazionale per la Cellulosa e la Carta* e la mantenne fino al 1982 quando ritornò a Treviso per riprendere la carriera legale. L'ulteriore esperienza guadagnata in consigli di amministrazione e in materia di pianificazione economica gli tornò molto utile quando assunse la presidenza della malridotta Cassamarca SpA nel 1987, una carica dalla quale si dimise a favore della presidenza della Fondazione Cassamarca nel 2000, carica che manterrà almeno fino al 2012. Attualmente abita appena fuori mura, non lontano dal suo quartiere di origine, con la moglie Renza, lei pure trevigiana, sposata nel 1960. Hanno una figlia, Nicoletta, ed un figlio, Mauro, che esercitano entrambi nello studio legale del padre.

Treviso è rimasta al centro della sua vita privata e professionale. *"Ecco perché non posso dimenticare Treviso; perché ha saputo innestarmi in una scala di valori spirituali …. Il torrente della vita scorre sì al mare ma lo fa soltanto perché alle spalle lo nutre una sorgente … quella sorgente per me ha nome Treviso".* Queste parole, scritte nel 1953, trovano eco mezzo secolo più tardi nella risposta ad un quesito sul suo rapporto con la sua città natale: *"È un rapporto d'amore. L'amore ti porta ad assumerti responsabilità e a pensare al futuro … io mi do da fare per la mia città".* Treviso ha sicuramente beneficiato delle sue attività. Come presidente della Fondazione Cassamarca ha intrapreso una serie di iniziative per rinnovare il paesaggio urbano restaurandone, interamente o in parte, alcuni degli edifici storici più significativi. La città fu pesantemente bombardata il 7 aprile 1944 dagli Alleati che seminarono morte e distruzione dalle quali la famiglia De Poli si salvò soltanto grazie all'intuito del padre che cercare riparo in uno dei rifugi antiaerei sarebbe stato più pericoloso che rimanere a

casa. Recuperare il passato e utilizzarlo per raggiungere obiettivi contemporanei è stato il marchio caratteristico di quelle iniziative, sia nelle opere di ristrutturazione urbanistica che nel campo culturale. Dino De Poli ha saputo immettere immaginazione e risorse nella vita scientifica e culturale di Treviso. Grazie alla Fondazione, la città ha di nuovo un'università, circa 700 anni dopo la chiusura del piccolo ateneo che l'aveva preceduta agli inizi del XIV secolo. Gli edifici restaurati dalla Fondazione adesso ospitano corsi di laurea in giurisprudenza, commercio estero, statistica e informatica per la gestione delle imprese, come pure sezioni di ricerca in biotecnologie, nanotecnologie e agricoltura. L'area umanistica non è stata certo trascurata: la Fondazione con regolarità sponsorizza conferenze di ateneo, mostre d'arte, e un *Premio Europeo della Poesia* istituito nel 2004. La sua concezione della cultura non è stata mai né ristretta né elitaria. Nel 1959 il giovane De Poli, allora Assessore alla Pubblica Istruzione del Comune, lanciò un *Festival della cucina trevigiana,* a quel tempo un modo originale di celebrare un'espressione di sapere e abilità allora ancora in gran parte ignorata. *"Si mette in moto, con il piacere, l'economia e, si spera, più cultura e civiltà",* disse, sottolineando il legame tra soddisfazione individuale, sviluppo economico e valori sociali che caratterizzerà molte delle sue iniziative successive. E se la sopa coada, una delle glorie gastronomiche di Treviso – la città con forse la migliore tradizione di cucina casalinga d'Italia secondo Marcella Hazan – non ha ancora ottenuto un riconoscimento più vasto, non è certo per mancanza dell'entusiasmo promozionale di Dino De Poli. E' sicuramente significativo che *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiare bene* di Pellegrino Artusi sia stato il primo volume ad apparire nella *Lorenzo Da Ponte Italian Library,* collana pubblicata dalla University of Toronto Press con la sponsorizzazione della Fondazione Cassamarca che raccoglie le traduzioni in inglese di cento testi italiani per costituire un canone innovativo di opere molto diverse tra loro, unite dalla comune influenza sulla cultura di lingua inglese.

Il mondo in cui nacque Bill Kent nel 1942 non poteva essere più diverso da quello di Treviso: il quartiere industrial-popolare di Footscray, nella zona centro-occidentale di Melbourne. Mentre la campagna attorno a Treviso negli anni '50 si andava rapidamente spopolando per via di movimenti migratori verso altre parti d'Italia, d'Europa e del mondo, Footscray cominciava a ricevere molti italiani e greci provenienti proprio da quelle zone rurali (nel 1970 essi costituivano un terzo della popolazione locale). Senza dubbio l'interesse di Bill per l'Italia ebbe origine nel mondo a quei tempi insolitamente multiculturale che lo circondò durante l'infanzia e l'adolescenza. Per quanto rimanesse affettivamente legato a Footscray, se non altro con il fedele supporto alla sua squadra AFL raramente vittoriosa, il cui cambio di nome in *Western Bulldogs* nel 1996 egli vivamente disap-

provò, Bill trascorse la maggior parte della sua vita adulta dall'altra parte di Melbourne. Entrò alla Monash University nel 1965 con una laurea in storia della University of Melbourne e fece parte del gruppo di docenti che contribuirono fin dall'inizio alla reputazione della nuova università. Segnata dall'ascesa ai piani più alti e agli uffici più grandi del Menzies Building (Ming Wing), la sua carriera proseguì di successo in successo portandolo all'assegnazione di una Cattedra personale nel 1989 e al titolo di Professore Emerito nel 2010. La Firenze del Rinascimento e la Melbourne moderna furono i due poli della sua vita professionale. Ma l'apice dei suoi ultimi dieci anni di carriera fu senza dubbio la fondazione del Centro Monash a Prato e il suo sviluppo come centro non solo d'insegnamento ma anche di collaborazioni internazionali di ricerca nella forma del Consorzio di Prato per gli Studi Medievali e Rinascimentali di cui fanno parte università del Regno Unito, gli Stati Uniti e il Canada. Bill stesso ha raccontato l'interminabile saga della fondazione del Centro, ma è stato sicuramente grazie alla sua determinazione, abilità diplomatica e rifiuto a farsi scoraggiare dai precedenti vent'anni di frustrazioni nel cercare di stabilire un fulcro australiano in Italia, che il Centro è diventato una realtà.

L'attaccamento di Bill Kent e di Dino De Poli alle rispettive città natali non ne ha affatto impedito il loro riconoscimento altrove. Bill conseguì il dottorato, sotto la supervisione di Nicolai Rubinstein, al quale successe nel 2002 come curatore principale delle lettere di Lorenzo il Magnifico, alla University of London nel 1971; varie volte ebbe l'incarico di Visiting Scholar e Professor a Villa I Tatti (Harvard University) a Firenze; nel 1990 fu nominato Christensen Visiting Fellow al St Catherine's College, Oxford, e nel 1999 Schouler Lecturer in History alla Johns Hopkins University. Queste onorificenze dimostrano quanto il suo lavoro nella storia culturale e sociale del tardo Medio Evo fosse stimato in una comunità di ricerca alla quale non mancavano nomi di grande rilievo. Il supporto di Dino de Poli alla vita intellettuale gli ha guadagnato altrettanto ampi riconoscimenti: lauree onorarie da università in Australia, Brasile e Romania – tutti paesi in cui la Fondazione Cassamarca ha sponsorizzato cattedre e convegni – e il titolo di Honorary Professor dalla Bishkek University in Krygyzstan. Ma, senza voler essere impertinenti, non tutte le onorificenze ricevute sono accademiche. Nel 2002 gli è stata conferita l'*Onorificenza Pontificia di Commendatore dell'Ordine di San Gregorio Magno,* un ordine che vede tra i membri più recenti Sir Matt Busby, ex-dirigente del Manchester United FC, il disc-jockey Jimmy Savile e il magnate dei media Rupert Murdoch. Se mai questi insigni notabili si potessero ritrovare insieme, Dino De Poli si sentirebbe sicuramente a proprio agio in loro compagnia grazie alla sua capacità di riconoscere il valore dell'impegno e della creatività in qualsiasi campo espressivo si manifesti.

Il valore dell'umanesimo

È facile immaginare, senza forzare troppo il paragone, che Bill avrebbe riconosciuto in Dino De Poli alcune qualità dell'umanista, patrono delle arti e delle lettere, ed abile politico, Lorenzo il Magnifico, la figura da lui più attentamente studiata. (Certamente però non gli sarebbe sfuggita una differenza essenziale: mentre i tentativi di Lorenzo il Magnifico di gestire una banca finirono in un clamoroso fallimento, De Poli ha saputo superare tutte le crisi finanziarie degli ultimi vent'anni per conto della banca e della Fondazione Cassamarca.) L'Umanesimo non era un movimento anti-cristiano quanto piuttosto un recupero dell'insegnamento dei classici della letteratura greca e romana a vantaggio del mondo cristiano del Rinascimento. Ugualmente la ricerca di punti di contatto tra sistemi di valore diversi piuttosto che la monotona insistenza sulle loro innegabili differenze, è, secondo noi, l'elemento fondamentale che caratterizza l'opera perseguita dalla Fondazione e il suo attaccamento al termine 'Umanesimo Latino'.

Dino De Poli ha iniziato la vita pubblica nel mondo dell' associazionismo cattolico, una matrice comune a molti giovani veneti impegnati nella rinascita nazionale che fece seguito al crollo del Fascismo. Dopo aver dato prova di sé a livello parrocchiale e diocesano, nel 1952 si trasferì a Roma con un incarico di rilievo nazionale nella sezione giovanile dell'Azione Cattolica (GIAC). Le sue qualità sono evidenziate dalle parole di chi lo sponsorizzava da Treviso: *"un ottimo ragazzo, molto intelligente, umile anche se forse può non apparire tale a prima vista e soprattutto di una infinita generosità … si è fatto da sé, attraverso conquiste personali, conquiste combattute e sofferte".* Durante quell'anno a Roma lavorò anche a fianco di un giovane Umberto Eco che molti anni più tardi gli scrisse: *"[d]i tutta quella banda di quei tempi sei quello di cui ho il ricordo più caro e più intimo".* Il successo del suo impegno nelle associazioni cattoliche lo condusse ad assumere un ruolo significativo, prima come consigliere comunale di Treviso (1956-65) e poi come uno dei leader del gruppo di sinistra della Democrazia Cristiana nel Veneto, di cui facevano parte figure notevoli quali Carlo Bernini e Marino Corder. Il cattolicesimo rimane sempre la sua fondamentale fonte di ispirazione; ma il recupero dell'Umanesimo Latino come altra tradizione in grado di fornire valide risorse etiche ed intellettuali inizia negli anni '90 al tempo del rinnovato movimento verso l'integrazione europea nella forma del mercato unico e dell'euro. In questo contesto, sottolineare l'attualità del messaggio dell'Umanesimo Latino svolge tre funzioni. In primo luogo, vuole ricordare la complessa unità che è alla base delle culture toccate dal latino, compresi i paesi del nord Europa dove i romani esercitarono un'importante influenza; vuole proporre i valori che sono alla base del progetto Europa, tra cui l'opera di riconciliazione resa ne-

cessaria dalle guerre e divisioni politiche del recente passato. L'impegno di Cassamarca si manifesta anche in piccoli interventi: nel 2008, per esempio, la Fondazione ha finanziato la restaurazione del cimitero austro-ungarico di Follina (tra Treviso e Belluno), di fatto abbandonato, consentendo di dare definitivo riposo alle salme di un'ottantina di soldati morti sul fronte del Piave nel 1917-1918, ora riposte in un semplice sacrario circondato dalle bandiere delle dodici nazioni di origine dei caduti. In secondo luogo, l'Umanesimo Latino si pone come un'insegna per i valori di solidarietà e comunità in cui gli emigranti della diaspora veneta si possano riconoscere, valori strettamente connessi all'idea cristiana della persona. In terzo luogo, serve a bilanciare l'enfasi eccessiva posta sulle dimensioni meramente economiche dell'integrazione europea che, unitamente ai crescenti legami finanziari e commerciali globali, sembrano dominare, spesso in modo esclusivo, la modalità in cui gli europei sono invitati a riconoscere ciò che li accomuna. Contro questa prospettiva economicistica e riduttiva, l'Umanesimo Latino offre risorse per affrontare alcuni dei problemi sociali, culturali e politici che la semplice istituzione di legami economici tra gruppi finora indipendenti crea senza essere poi in grado di risolvere.

Bill Kent abbracciò l'umanesimo come area di studio, non come strumento d'azione. Ma dai tributi di studenti e colleghi alla cerimonia in sua memoria appare chiaro che quella che potremmo chiamare una sorta di 'umanesimo quotidiano' guidò tutta la sua vita professionale. Si dedicò con passione all'insegnamento, mostrando lo stesso interesse per le giovani generazioni che Dino De Poli ha manifestato con il suo impegno a garantire che i figli degli emigranti veneti e i figli dei loro figli non perdano il contatto con la terra di origine. Bill voleva cogliere i molteplici aspetti della vita dei suoi studenti, il modo in cui lo studio universitario si combinava con i loro altri interessi; voleva incoraggiarli a ottenere migliori risultati aiutandoli a comprendere il senso della loro presenza a Clayton nel contesto dei loro altri impegni. La predilezione che Bill aveva per una comprensione delle persone nella loro interezza è anche al centro della sua attività accademica. Il suo libro forse più noto, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence* (2004) – salutato da un decano di studi fiorentini come una delle opere più importanti sul Rinascimento italiano degli ultimi cinquant'anni – tratta di un aspetto specifico e spesso trascurato della vita sfaccettata di Lorenzo il Magnifico: il suo interesse personale per le arti visive e la sua attenzione verso le opere dei loro autori. Questo aspetto diviene un prisma per la comprensione dell'uomo nel suo complesso, un mezzo per capire come gli interessi politici, sociali ed estetici si integrarono nella sua persona e trovarono espressione nei progetti che sostenne.

Il motto scelto per la Bill Kent Foundation è una frase di Giovanni Rucellai, un membro di una delle potenti casate che Bill studiò nel suo

primo libro su Firenze: *"Non è l'uomo nato per vivere dormendo ma per vivere facendo".* È una convinzione espressa in inglese con forza lirica da A.E. Housman cinquecento anni più tardi:

> 'Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
> Breath's a ware that will not keep.
> Up, lad: when the journey's over
> There'll be time enough to sleep.'

Giovanni Rucellai inserì la frase, tratta originariamente dal *Trattato del Governo della Famiglia* di Leon Battista Alberti, nel suo *Zibaldone,* una collezione di frammenti di autori precedenti che, egli riteneva, contenevano buoni consigli per gli eredi e le future generazioni. Alberti continua, sottolineando la necessità di utilizzare pienamente i nostri talenti: *"L'ingegno, il giudicio, la memoria, la ragione, il consiglio, e le altre potenze in noi non ci sono date per non le adoperare".* La vita e le opere di Dino De Poli e Bill Kent dimostrano il valore di quell'esortazione e la duratura importanza di un generoso umanesimo.

Nota: Per i particolari della vita di Dino De Poli ci siamo valsi dei suoi scritti, discorsi e interviste, raccolti da Ivano Sartor in *Dino De Poli. Percorsi spirituali e politici. Scritti scelti 1946-2008* (Treviso, Silvano Piazza, 2008) con una preziosa introduzione del curatore. Le citazioni provengono dalla medesima fonte. Bill Kent ha narrato gli eventi che hanno portato all'istituzione del Centro Monash a Prato nel quarto capitolo, intitolato 'Gaining a foothold: Australian cultural institutions in Italy', del libro *Australians in Italy,* a cura di Bill Kent, Ros Pesman e Cynthia Troup (Clayton, Monash University Press, 2008/2010). I tributi resigli nel corso della cerimonia commemorativa tenutasi alla Monash University il 7 settembre 2010 possono essere ascoltati a http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/ about/bill-kent-memorial.php. Siamo molto grati ad Antonella Stelitano e Carolyn James per il loro aiuto ed incoraggiamento durante la stesura di questa Introduzione.

Part 1

'L'Umanesimo Latino non significa riscontrare un dato di appartenenza etnica, né significa riproporre itinerari storici impossibili, né stabilire rapporti politici. Significa, invece, trarre dalla rilettura di una memoria storica complessiva valori che in vario modo sono presenti nel mondo e che occorre suscitare.'

UWA-Cassamarca Administrative team
2000-2011

THE CASSAMARCA FOUNDATION AND ITS *PROGETTO AUSTRALIA*

The three contributions in Part 1 tell the story of the origins of the Cassamarca Foundation's Australia Project from three points of view. Antonella Stelitano, President De Poli's personal assistant at the Foundation and an indispensable source of advice and support at all times, indicates the range of the Foundation's activities and how its initiatives in Australia fit into that broad picture. For readers wishing to get more detailed information on its work inside and outside Italy, a good place to start is the Foundation's website (http://www.fondazionecassamarca.it/).

Loretta Baldassar, the Chair of the original Australia Project Committee, tells the story of the Cassamarca Foundation's first approach to Australasian universities, the gloomy times for Italian teaching in which it was made, and the ways in which Italianists sought to respond to the unprecedented opportunities which the Cassamarca's generosity suddenly opened up. Loretta's role has been a fundamental one. Her own family origins in North-East Italy and the interest in the area which she has maintained through longstanding anthropological research there have made her the ideal academic intermediary between the Foundation and Australia. Her present position as Director of the Monash Prato Centre, consolidating and extending Bill Kent's initiatives there, has also enabled her to push her cross-cultural expertise into new areas and academic initiatives.

Finally, Peter Leunig, the Head of the Office for Development at the University of Western Australia at the time, recalls some of the issues which arose in the wake of the Cassamarca's entirely unexpected gift. In 1999 managing funding from a private source on this scale in the Humanities raised a series of administrative, legal and procedural issues which the University had to confront for the first time. In this regard we were extremely fortunate to have been able to draw on the unflagging and creative support of Peter and his dedicated team in the Office for Development right from the start. The contributions by Antonella and Peter thus present a neat complement: the Foundation's initiative as seen from both Italian and Australian standpoints.

Fondazione Cassamarca e il Progetto Umanesimo Latino nel Mondo

Antonella Stelitano
Fondazione Cassamarca

Uno dei progetti che ha maggiormente caratterizzato la Fondazione Cassamarca nell'ambito delle Fondazioni italiane di origine bancaria è stato senza dubbio il progetto battezzato dal Presidente, on. De Poli, come "Progetto Umanesimo Latino nel Mondo". Esso si caratterizza per il forte impegno, operativo ma anche economico, rivolto alla promozione e diffusione dell'alta cultura e dei valori e principi propri dell'umanesimo latino sia in Italia sia all'estero.

Questo approccio al "fare cultura" è stato nuovo e quasi rivoluzionario per il panorama delle Fondazioni italiane di origine bancaria, abituate a lavorare in un circoscritto ambito di appartenenza territoriale. Tuttavia l'intuizione del presidente della Fondazione Cassamarca è stata subito accolta con favore anche dal legislatore italiano che, nel 1999, nell'Atto di Indirizzo in materia di adeguamento degli statuti delle Fondazioni, ha voluto espressamente indicare che, nel definire i confini dell'operatività delle Fondazioni, *"si potrebbe immaginare la possibilità di iniziative per gli italiani all'estero ovvero interventi atti a favorire la conoscenza reciproca della cultura e dell'arte".*

In questa direzione sono state davvero molte, fino ad oggi, le iniziative rivolte sia in favore degli italiani all'estero, sia per la promozione e diffusione della lingua e della cultura italiana nelle università straniere, nelle sedi di alta cultura come gli Istituti Italiani di Cultura, i Centri Studi, le organizzazioni culturali internazionali. Secondo l'intuizione del presidente De Poli, questo progetto si è fondato sulla necessità di dare, soprattutto alle nuove generazioni derivate dall'emigrazione, un quadro di valori non riferito solo al loro passato, ma un vero e proprio quadro di valori per il futuro, che trae dalla cultura umanistica latina i suoi principali punti di forza e caratterizzazione.

Per questo la Fondazione Cassamarca si è mossa dando precedenza ad iniziative in Paesi anglosassoni giacché qui la perdita della lingua latina, l'italiano nel nostro caso, trascina con sè anche la perdita di quei valori culturali che transitano attraverso la lingua stessa. Molto si è fatto perciò

dando precedenza a Canada, Australia, Gran Bretagna, Stati Uniti per poi aggiungere, via via, interventi e momenti di approfondimento anche in molti altri Paesi. Nel corso di questi anni, infatti, la Fondazione Cassamarca ha organizzato più di 50 convegni, con la pubblicazione dei relativi atti, nei cinque continenti, coinvolgendo Paesi come: Romania, Germania Svizzera, Ucraina, Spagna, Portogallo, Francia, Belgio, Gran Bretagna, Polonia, Lussemburgo, Repubblica Ceca, Moldavia, Kyrgyzstan in Europa, Filippine, Vietnam e Macao in Asia, Brasile, Argentina, Messico, Venezuela, Colombia, Cile e in America Latina, Capo Verde, Camerun e Senegal in Africa.

Questo ha consentito alla Fondazione di creare una vera e propria rete di contatti internazionali che hanno contribuito, ciascuno per la sua parte, ad aggiungere, tassello dopo tassello, non solo contenuti al progetto ma anche positivi interscambi e avvio di collaborazioni. E' stato così possibile contribuire in qualche misura a riattivare le forze vitali presenti nelle società civili per dare ossigeno all'azione degli Stati, rivolgendosi, in primo luogo, ai docenti universitari a memoria della grande funzione che le Università ebbero nel Medioevo occidentale: foro di proposta e di valori per le società che andavano faticosamente costruendo se stesse dopo la caduta dell'Impero Romano.

Tale importante impegno è stato subito salutato con ammirazione dalle massime cariche dello Stato italiano ed è sfociato in un importante Protocollo d'intesa siglato tra il Ministero degli Esteri e la Fondazione Cassamarca che, riconoscendo i rispettivi ruoli, si sono impegnati a promuovere reciproche azioni in ambito culturale a sostegno della cultura italiana all'estero. La Fondazione Cassamarca è stata inoltre inserita tra i soggetti benemeriti nel sostenere iniziative di reciproco scambio culturale in specifici protocolli culturali siglati dallo Stato italiano con alcuni governi stranieri, nella fattispecie Australia, Canada e Quebec.

Altri importanti riconoscimenti sono giunti dal governo australiano, che ha sempre manifestato il suo appoggio alle iniziative della Fondazione attraverso rapporti di cordialità e amicizia di tutti gli Ambasciatori australiani a Roma che, almeno una volta, nel corso della loro missione in Italia, hanno voluto testimoniare, con la loro visita a Treviso, il legame con la Fondazione Cassamarca. Altre testimonianze sono state quelle con la Fondation Communautaire Canadienne Italienne du Quebec di cui Fondazione Cassamarca è unico Socio Governatore, la Commissione Fullbright Italia, l'Unione Latina di Parigi, l'UNESCO, il Centre for Migration Studies di New York, il Warburg Institute di Londra ed altri ancora.

In termini economici, dal 1992, l'impegno di Fondazione in questo settore si è concretizzato nell'adozione di 70 delibere erogative per un totale di 31.892.336,21 euro in favore di interventi nel settore emigrazione-

umanesimo latino. Se confrontato con il totale erogativo complessivo, si tratta di una percentuale pari al 24,71%.

L'impegno maggiore in termini organizzativi, ma anche economici, è stato rivolto alla costituzione di Cattedre di Italiano all'estero, principalmente in Paesi di area anglosassone, laddove la perdita dell'insegnamento dell'italiano, imposta nella maggior parte dei casi da tagli governativi ai budget universitari, non potrebbe essere facilmente recuperata. L'intervento di Fondazione Cassamarca, spesso come partner alla pari della stessa Università coinvolta, ha permesso non solo il mantenimento del corso di laurea, ma anche l'aumento delle ore di lezione, la stabilità del corso, e di frequente il raggiungimento di livelli di assoluta eccellenza. La caratteristica principale di questo modus operandi è stata quella di non imporre modelli prestabiliti, ma di studiare forme di collaborazione specifiche e diverse da Paese a Paese, calibrate sulle caratteristiche di ogni singola Cattedra e di ogni singolo progetto per poter meglio rispondere ai bisogni della comunità. Dal 1992 ad oggi, Fondazione Cassamarca ha deliberato la somma complessiva di Euro 23.217.500,00 per la creazione di cattedre di italianistica in Australia, Canada, Gran Bretagna, Brasile, Argentina, Spagna, Portogallo.

L'intervento più significativo, e senza dubbio caratterizzante l'impegno di Fondazione Cassamarca, è stato quello rivolto al finanziamento di tredici Cattedre di Italianistica in Australia. Per molte ragioni questo intervento si distingue dagli altri. In primo luogo si è trattato del primo finanziamento rivolto a questo scopo. La sua data di nascita infatti è il 1999. In secondo luogo è stato anche l'unico che ha, in qualche misura, coinvolto un intero continente. Dal punto di vista pratico il lavoro svolto in Australia è stato sempre un lavoro esemplare, come hanno dimostrato, negli anni, non solo i risultati in termini di adesioni e iscrizioni ai corsi, ma anche i prestigiosi premi vinti dai docenti delle Cattedre Cassamarca, riconosciute per il loro alto livello di eccellenza. Molti docenti australiani, che hanno lavorato presso le Cattedre Cassamarca ora ricoprono prestigiosi incarichi nelle più importanti università del mondo, da Harvard a Cambridge e Oxford a testimonianza che il livello di competenza e preparazione è sempre stato molto alto.

Il Progetto avviato con l'Australia ha anche permesso di portare in Italia molti studenti che frequentano questi corsi, attraverso l'organizzazione di periodi di studio, anche a Treviso, attivati da alcune delle università coinvolte nel progetto in collaborazione con la Fondazione Cassamarca che ha messo a disposizione le proprie strutture MasterCampus e ha collaborato, per quanto possibile, alla migliore riuscita di queste esperienze.

Per concludere non possiamo trascurare che un altro elemento che ha sempre caratterizzato questo progetto è stato il tratto cordiale, disponibile

e altamente professionale che ha caratterizzato il rapporto di collaborazione con tutti i responsabili del Progetto Australia, i docenti e lo staff organizzativo. Un elemento che ha aggiunto valore umano a quello altamente professionale che ha caratterizzato questo Progetto.

Italian Studies and the Cassamarca Foundation: A Brief History

Loretta Baldassar
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The announcement in 1999 that the Cassamarca Foundation was to grant three billion Italian lire, over three years, to Italian Studies in Australia was received by Australia's Italianists with equal measures of elation and astonishment. This extraordinary gift, which became known as the Cassamarca Australia Project, was subsequently extended for a further three years. Dancing in the streets was warranted when in its seventh year a fund was established to ensure the perpetuity of the grant. The Cassamarca gift represents one of the largest-ever philanthropic donations to Australian universities' Arts and Humanities Faculties. There is no doubt that it has had a significant impact on the health and vitality of Italian studies in this country, but also internationally through its many research, teaching, conference and publication outcomes. The gift has been particularly important for strengthening the future of Italian studies in Australia, through the opportunities it has provided to several junior academics to begin academic careers.

The initial funding came just as extensive cuts to the tertiary sector, and to the Arts and Humanities in particular, had left Italian Studies departments across the country, in the worst cases defunct, and in the best cases, struggling to survive. Implementing the Cassamarca grant however also represented an enormous challenge to all involved. What was the most effective way to spend this money to ensure that Italian studies was given the boost it so badly needed and to guard against returning to the same scenario once the money had been spent? I shall therefore outline here some of the history and key issues facing the Australia Project Committee (APC), established to make recommendations for the best use of the Cassamarca's extraordinary funding and then oversee its use. I shall also describe briefly how the initial allocation of the funds was made and what additional support has subsequently been provided by the Cassamarca Foundation.

Background

As Antonella Stelitano has indicated, the Cassamarca Foundation supports the *Unione Latini nel Mondo* for the promotion of the values of Neo-Latin cultures in the world. The Hon. Dino De Poli, President of the Foundation, is especially interested in the preservation of these values amongst Italian migrant communities and in particular, their newest generations. It is his commitment to the diffusion of Italian language and culture which underpins this generous grant. The Foundation was established on 29 July 1992, as a result of the new legal requirement to restructure the Cassa di Risparmio della Marca Trevigiana into two separate entities: a bank (Cassamarca S.p.A) and a foundation for social purposes (Fondazione Cassamarca — Cassa di Risparmio della Marca Trevigiana). This transformation is to be seen in the context of changes that have taken place in the Italian banking system with the approval of the Treasury. These changes have allowed for important innovations in the way Foundations can achieve social and economic development in their territory of operation. Mindful of the very important contribution that migrants have made throughout the past century to the growth of the region, the Cassamarca Foundation includes in its objectives the promotion of Italian language and culture in countries where migration has been prevalent, through the sponsorship of short- and long-term educational programs. Dino De Poli has personally been the initiator of the *Unione Latini nel Mondo* for Italy and has sponsored several events to discuss the theme of Latin Humanism in the context of globalisation. To illustrate the range of those events: between 1997 and 2000 alone, international conferences on Latin Humanism took place in Treviso, Tolouse, Craiova and Costanza, San Paulo, Caracas and Maracaibo, Capo Verde, Manila and New York. The New York conference brought together a very large number of international scholars and was attended by lecturers, postgraduate students and representatives of Italian community organisations from Australia.

The Australian Project

Dino De Poli came to Australia early in 1998 on a visit organised and coordinated by Dr Loretta Baldassar (University of Western Australia) and Dr Ilma Martinuzzi O'Brien (Victoria University of Technology) to explore the state of Italian Studies in Australian universities. During his visit, he met with representatives from universities in all the relevant states and nominated a committee, the APC, comprising Dr Loretta Baldassar, Chair, (University of Western Australia), Dr Marinella Caruso (Flinders University of South Australia), Dr Piero Giorgi (University of Queensland), Dr Ilma Martinuzzi O'Brien (Victoria University of Technology) and Professor Roslyn Pesman (University of Sydney). He invited the APC

to assess the state of Italian Studies in Australian universities and to make recommendations to the Cassamarca Foundation about the funds needed to reverse the decline of Italian Studies teaching in Australian universities. The submission prepared by the Committee outlined the massive cuts Italian Studies had sustained in recent years, with reductions and closures of courses in most universities.

At the time the APC prepared its submission to the Cassamarca Foundation, it had no idea what level of funding would be forthcoming. A call for applications had been sent out to universities, but in the absence of a clear indication of funding or a clear rationale for this funding, not all departments chose to respond and the applications which were received represented a diverse set of initiatives including requests for staff appointments, research projects and ideas for new courses. These applications were all forwarded to the Foundation for consideration, but without specific recommendations. In an effort to determine the level of funds that the Cassamarca was interested in providing, the APC developed a separate submission proposing an input significant enough to ameliorate the state of Italian studies in Australia. The committee had by this stage become aware that Dino De Poli was mainly interested in funding staff positions rather than research projects. The submission therefore requested that eleven lectureships be funded for at least three years at level B and distributed across the states. In addition, it suggested that monies might be made available for student scholarships, a web-site, development of multimedia teaching materials and a small publication fund. To the pleasure and satisfaction of the APC, the Cassamarca Foundation confirmed the allocation of three billion lire to support these recommendations.

Since the Cassamarca funds, while extraordinarily generous, were not sufficient to replace all the lost staff, a number of difficult decisions had to be made. What was the best strategy of ensuring at least the survival and, if possible, the growth of Italian Studies in a cold financial climate? Should, for example, the eleven lectureships be distributed as widely as possible across universities to guarantee at least some access in most places? Or should a policy of concentration of resources be followed to ensure strong research and teaching centres in a limited number of institutions, perhaps no more than one in each state? Should support be directed towards trying to ensure collaboration among increasingly competitive institutions by establishing joint appointments? How far should the funding be used to help extend Italian Studies beyond the traditional fields of language and literature into the social sciences: linguistics, history, social and political studies, including migration and diaspora (Italo-Australian) studies? These decisions all had to be made at a time when the future of Italian studies seemed very fragile and unpromising.

The state of Italian Studies

The opportunities given by the Cassamarca Foundation were indeed unique in enabling Italian Studies in Australia to consolidate and move forward into the third millennium. At that time the state of Italian in Australian universities seemed dire. Departments of Italian had been closed at James Cook University (Townsville), the University of Tasmania (Hobart) and Victoria University of Technology (Melbourne). Italian could no longer be taken as a major at a number of universities including Murdoch University (Perth), Edith Cowan University (Perth), the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and Swinburne University of Technology (Melbourne). Staff losses had occurred in every department of Italian. In addition, chairs of Italian had not been retained upon the retirement of professors. Most departments had undergone restructuring, usually as a cost-cutting measure, and had been subsumed under School structures of European languages. The severity of these cuts meant that the delivery and organisation of Italian Studies needed to be carefully considered to ensure the best chance for its survival in the future 'economically rational' university system.

It was therefore very important to formulate criteria for determining the allocation of the funding which would permit not only the greatest benefit for the teaching of Italian language and culture, but also the creation of a solid basis on which to build the future of Italian Studies, in order to avoid a repetition of what had happened in previous years with the teaching of languages in general in Australian universities. Second language (L2) education in Australia has had a patchy history, dictated by the mentality that languages are not an integral part of a person's education, and the policies on the financing of L2 teaching, both at State and Federal levels, have therefore been less than coherent. The funding of teaching of L2 in the universities had been characterised by a strong expansion in the 1980s followed by restructuring and heavy reduction in the 1990s. In the early to mid-1980s, supported by a relatively energetic policy of multiculturalism, many courses were introduced under the banner of so-called 'community languages'.[1] Like others, Italian experienced a strong expansion in both the more established universities and the Colleges of Advanced Education, on the premise that children of immigrants would choose by preference their parents' native language, and that, at the same time, other students would be motivated to choose these languages. Many language courses were established with State Government Grants for three years on the assumption that their continuation would

1. Carsaniga, G., 'Teaching and learning — A language-based perspective', in B. Bennett (ed) *Australia in between Cultures,* Canberra, Australian Academy of the Humanities, 1999, pp. 37-43.

be financed by the Federal Government. However, in the early 1990s, the Federal Government introduced a White Paper on Education inspired by the principles of economic rationalism and began reducing funding for Arts subjects, including languages. The financing of courses became much more rigidly tied to the number of students enrolling in the courses.

These changes had very important repercussions within universities with restructuring of faculties and departments, and the reduction, and in many cases complete elimination, of courses considered expendable because they were seen to be 'less vocationally oriented' or because they were attended by too few students.[2] The universities which were best able to survive the restructuring of the sector — even with reductions — were those with a longer, more established history of language teaching, with a critical number of staff members, and in which the language courses were supported by allied subjects, such as European History, Art History, Linguistics, other languages etc., which gave students the possibility of diversifying and complementing their choices. Cases in point included the University of Western Australia, the University of Sydney and the University of Melbourne. By contrast, the University of Tasmania lost the battle with the Federal Government for the teaching of Italian, in spite of the offer of a grant by the Italian Government to continue the subject. On the other hand, the institutions where Italian courses were closed completely were the 'new' universities, such as Deakin University, Murdoch University, and the former Colleges of Advanced Education, where languages had been introduced in the mid-1980s, often coordinated by a single permanent staff member and in which complementary subjects in the Humanities were not available — for example, at Victoria University of Technology, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Phillip Institute of Technology-Footscray Institute of Technology, Edith Cowan University and Swinburne University of Technology.

The two main reasons for these severe reductions and closures were, first, that too many courses had been introduced at the same time in too many institutions – too many for the number of students interested in enrolling, so that when the criterion of user-pays was introduced, the courses became unviable – and, second, because the government's focus shifted in the early 1990s from European to Asian languages and many students followed the new emphasis. In addition, the traditional focus on 'language and literature' in most Italian departments was not easily adaptable to changing interests in literary studies (theory, cultural studies,

2. Jayasuriya, L., 'Understanding diversity and pluralism for education and training', *Immigration and Multiculturalism in Australia - Selected Essays,* Department of Social Work and Social Administration, University of Western Australia, Perth, 1999.

etc). Consequently, it was difficult for some departments to move with the times and remain competitive in student enrolments. Language departments have traditionally been separated from the sociology, anthropology, and politics disciplines that have strongly influenced the development of (English-language) literary studies elsewhere. This problem has been culpably compounded by the determination of many universities to see language-learning as a kind of simple technical skill (like learning to use a computer) that can be achieved without any knowledge of the society or culture of the target language. A further problem was the importance of grantspersonship in academic budgets.[3] Traditionally language teachers did little research although they often prepared highly innovative materials which were not, however, counted as research — and the literary scholars did not need large research grants to pursue their essentially individual and text-based research. Thus, it was harder for staff in Italian and other language departments to present themselves as capable of obtaining large grants from peak funding bodies such as the Australian Research Council or others, than for some of their arts/humanities colleagues in the social sciences. The problem has long been further aggravated by the difficulties of getting a flow-on of secondary-school students of Italian into universities. This phenomenon has several causes: most students of Italian origin try, if they go to university, to become professionals. Knowledge of Italian has been seen as of no special use to a doctor, lawyer or vet. In addition, the over-ambitious plans in the 1990s to introduce arguably more difficult languages in schools (Japanese, Mandarin, etc.), with far too few competent teachers, tended to give students a boring or incomprehensible compulsory language learning experience, which turned them away from the study of any language at all. The international dominance of English seemed a good reason not to have to bother with any languages — and, unlike Europe, Australian youth has rarely been shown, or experienced directly, the cultural and other advantages of comprehending its non-English speaking counterparts.

Initial and subsequent support by the Cassamarca Foundation

The University of Western Australia was appointed by the APC to act as the administering body for the grant, overseeing its distribution to universities as directed by the Committee. As requested by the Cassamarca Foundation, the lectureships were to be named the *Fondazione Cassamarca - Unione Latini nel Mondo* Lectureships. The Australian Project Committee therefore appointed a Selection Committee comprising Professor David Moss, Chair, (Griffith University), Dr Margaret Baker (Flinders

3. Lo Bianco, J., 'Italian the most widely taught language. How much is learned?', *Italian 2000.* Proceedings of the International Conference, Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne, 22-24 September, 1994, pp. 148-154.

University), Professor Giovanni Carsaniga (University of Sydney), Professor Bill Kent (Monash University), Professor John Scott (University of Western Australia) and Dr Piero Giorgi (University of Queensland). Using criteria formulated by the APC for the allocation of the lectureships among universities, the Selection Committee was charged with the task of ranking the submissions and recommending a distribution of the lectureships. Professor Joseph Lo Bianco (University of Canberra) was appointed as an independent consultant to the Selection Committee to provide external advice to assist the Committee's decisions. The Committee decided that it would not give a priori preference either to the concentration of Italian Studies in a few universities or to their diffusion on as wide a scale as possible, but rather would make its recommendations according to the strengths of the cases for the development of Italian Studies, broadly conceived, outlined in the applications. On this basis the Committee awarded the eleven lectureships to departments in nine universities, from oldest (Universities of Sydney and Melbourne) to newest (University of the Sunshine Coast). Its report, providing further details and summarising the procedures followed, is attached in the Appendix below.

Subsequently the Cassamarca moved not only to establish further positions but also to ensure the continuation of support for all its lectureships. On the first count, it awarded a twelfth lectureship to Swinburne University of Technology to nurture the innovative idea of establishing an Italian language-and-culture stream in the business school. This initiative was the first to organise annual study abroad programs in Treviso, making use of the Foundation's extensive university programmes and developments there, including the impressive Palazzo Dell'Umanesimo Latino with its state-of-the-art lecture facilities. A further position, an inaugural chair in Latin Humanism, was awarded to the University of Western Australia, underlining the Foundation's commitment to the values and principles of Renaissance humanism.

Secondly, the initial grant by the Foundation covered the funding of the lectureships for three years. In 2001 this was extended for a further three years, and in 2004 the Cassamarca Foundation and the participating universities agreed to co-fund the lectureships in perpetuity. Under this agreement, the Foundation will give €900,000 per year over 13 years (amounting to a total of approximately $22.5 million). The Foundation contributes 50 per cent of an Australian university lectureship salary, while the remaining costs are met by the participating university. At present the Cassamarca-funded positions constitute about 20 per cent of all the full-time Italian Studies teaching positions in Australian tertiary institutions. The perpetual funding arrangement will help to ensure the health of Italian Studies in Australia well into the future.

Conclusion

A striking feature of Dino De Poli's vision for the support and nurturing of Italian studies abroad is his particular interest in the future of the Italian migrant generations. It is far more common to encounter a limited understanding and a kind of national amnesia about the massive human hemorrhage which saw over 25 million people depart Italy between 1861 and 1965, a number whose magnitude is evocatively captured when described as equivalent to almost half the total population of Italy today. De Poli's initiatives, including his Cassamarca Australia project, collectively represent one of the most impressive acknowledgments – and timely reminders – of this legacy.

In this regard, it is not appropriate to see the kind of initiatives taken by the Cassamarca Foundation abroad as somehow irrelevant to the Italian homeland itself. Elsewhere I have suggested that rather than endorse the negative perspective connoted by such terms as departure, depletion, loss, flight and abandonment, it is much more productive to emphasise the *circularity* of the Italian migration process.[4] Almost every departure from Italy was in fact a catalyst for continuing contact and connections as well as for returns and visits home. While the rate of Italian emigration was very high, so too was the rate of repatriation: indeed, more people returned than settled permanently abroad. Some 20 million Italians might have emigrated between 1861 and 1941, but the net loss of population over this period was only 7.7 million (approximately 39%). Again, while just over nine million left in the thirty years after 1940, the net loss was no more than 1.5 million (about 16.5%).[5] Moreover, if we were to count the visits home, the figure denoting total returns could conceivably be closer still to that for total departures. De Poli very clearly appreciates the circulatory nature of the migration process. In promoting and strengthening Italian studies worldwide, his astonishingly generous support has, of course, helped to ensure the future of these studies. However, it has also underlined the academic and practical importance of recognising and exploring the vital connection (both in the past and into the future) between Italians in Italy and Italians abroad.

4. Baldassar, L., 'Ritorni e Visits Home: La circolarità dello spazio migratorio', in Corti P. & Sanfilippo M. (eds) *Storia d'Italia. Migrazioni. Annali 24,* Turin, Einaudi, 2010, pp. 467-484.
5. Sori, E., *L'emigrazione italiana dall'Unità alla seconda guerra mondiale, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1979 p. 19.*

Appendix

Cassamarca Foundation – Unione Latini nel Mondo Lectureships Summary Report by the Selection Committee

Since the process of awarding the Cassamarca Lectureships has been a novel one, the Selection Committee felt it would be important for all applicants to receive a summary of its work, the procedures used to arrive at its recommendations and an overview of the distribution of the awards.

Composition of the Committee

The Selection Committee (SC) was appointed by the Australia Project Committee (APC) in July 1999. Its members were Margaret Baker, Giovanni Carsaniga, Bill Kent, David Moss and John Scott, with the addition of Piero Giorgi to serve as non-voting representative of the APC. David Moss was subsequently nominated as Chair. The Committee therefore contained a very wide range of disciplinary interests and considerable experience of Italian Studies programmes in different university settings.

Tasks of the Committee

The Committee was required to make recommendations for 11 awards of Cassamarca lectureships to the APC. The basis on which an application for a lectureship could be made was very wide, covering diverse fields of study (language, literature, culture, history, politics and society, especially migration studies) and enabling institutions which did not currently teach Italian to apply to establish or restore an Italian Studies programme. Advice was also given in the 'Call for Applications' that collaborative applications would be welcome and that universities could make bids for more than one lectureship.

Criteria for the Evaluation of Applications

In advance of receiving any applications the Selection Committee established criteria for their assessment, within the guidelines established by the APC. It established the work or project identified for the lectureship as the primary focus of evaluation, which would therefore concern in particular the strength of the case for the work and the evidence of the capacity to realise it. Given the likely variety of the applications, the SC identified five broad dimensions for evaluation: their contribution to the diffusion of knowledge of Italian language and culture (broadly conceived); their distinctiveness among other Italian programmes locally available; their planned innovations in content, mode of delivery and/or target audience; their enhancement of existing teaching or research strengths; and

the extent of their support, financial or other, from the host university or other sources.

The Evaluation Process

The Committee decided on a two-stage evaluation process. In the first stage, the five voting members would independently rank all bids into three broad categories of relative merit, omitting evaluation of any application made by the department with which they were, or had recently been, associated. The 'blind' individual rankings were to be sent to the Chair who would collate them and identify the degree of consensus and dissensus in each case. The results would then form the basis for further detailed scrutiny at the meeting of the Committee in Brisbane in early December. This procedure was designed to eliminate from the decision-making process the consequences of any bias deriving from the inevitable fact that applications would be submitted by departments to which SC members belonged or had recently belonged.

The Committee received a total of 27 applications for the 11 lectureships. It was therefore immediately clear from the number and the content of the applications that more valuable work was being done and planned for Italian Studies than could be rewarded from the number of lectureships available. Almost all applications reported a decline in staffing over the past three years. Since in many cases this decline has been accompanied by an increase in student numbers, the pressures on staff to combine a heavier teaching load and a greater commitment to research and publication have become intense. None the less, the applications provided unambiguous evidence of the widespread energy and imagination devoted to the defence of the quality and quantity of Italian Studies programmes, too often in the face of hostility or indifference to language programmes at senior university levels.

The Evaluation Outcome

Given the possibility of wide variations in the evaluations made by Committee members from different disciplinary backgrounds who were scrutinising different kinds of projects, it must be recorded not only that an overwhelming consensus on the relative merits of the great majority of bids was evident from the first independent rankings by the five members but also that the final recommendations for the awards were reached unanimously.

The 11 lectureships were recommended for award to 12 departments across 5 states. Classified by broad field of study, seven lectureships were recommended for award to language and literature programmes, one to language and cultural studies, one to Renaissance history/literature, and

two to migration studies. The Committee felt that this distribution reflected the primary concern of the Cassamarca Foundation to support the study of Italian language and literature and accommodated also its determination to promote the study of Italian history and migration. In terms of the distribution by state, Victoria received the largest number of awards (3); other states (WA, SA, NSW, Qld) received 2 lectureships each. The overall outcome has therefore ensured that the largest number of awards has gone to the largest category of applications (language and literature programmes) and to the state from which the largest number of applications was received (Victoria).

Final Comment

As noted above, the Selection Committee was well aware that, despite the large number of lectureships to be awarded, the much larger number of applications ensured that the majority of applicants would be disappointed. Under these circumstances, the non-award of a lectureship can in no sense be taken as a reflection on the quality of a department's work or its contribution to Italian Studies. Indeed, in the light of the evidence presented in the applications which testified to this work, the Selection Committee has encouraged the Australia Project Committee to examine ways in which further support for Italian Studies might be secured in the future.

5 December 1999.

Il Progetto Australia – Mission Accomplished

Peter Leunig
Former Director, Office of Development and Alumni Relations, University of Western Australia

Growing up in Perth, Western Australia in the 1950s and 60s, I was unknowingly immersed in Italian culture. At Catholic school we not only learnt and recited Latin for our Sunday and daily Masses, but five years of Latin study was integral to my high school curriculum and prerequisite for entry into some University courses. Many of my schoolmates were Italian or of Italian descent, children of skilled immigrants who had become our local artisans: builders, stonemasons and carpenters. Other Italian immigrants had developed the darkly luscious lands between our home and the beach, which became known as the 'market gardens' producing the very freshest fruits and vegetables possible. My Dad, who loved Italian food, would take us regularly to Mamma Marias in North Perth or the Roma Ristorante in Fremantle for bolognaise and scallopini with spinach and pasta, followed by cassata, instead of our regular English fare of roasts or grilled chops, peas, potatoes and puddings. Mum, on the other hand, had a passion for Italian art and we learned at a very young age of the glorious works of Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci. Our family had a great love of the Roman Catholic Church: pronouncements from the Vatican and *il Papa* in those days had great impact on us. Saints like Clare, Cecilia, Francis of Assisi, Vincent de Paul, Maria Goretti and Gerard Majella were our inspiration and exemplars for lives to be led along principles of Christian love and charity, their names taken upon profession by the nuns and brothers who taught us.

Over time, Italian influences on our lives were more obvious and commonplace. Australians adopted pizza, salami and gelato as staple treats. Once we got to University we drove second-hand Fiats and Alfa Romeos, or equipped our Holden Monaros with Pirellis, aspiring to the greater marques of Lamborghini and Ferrari… as we still do! In our homes Alessi, Indesit and Zanussi added a touch of the exotic to our everyday lives. It was quite a surprise to discover that our 1970s Bendix washer with its upmarket electronics was designed and manufactured by Philco in Italy. In the world of fashion Italian style was setting global trends. Sophia Loren, Claudia Cardinale and Gina Lollobrigida were gracing our screens. And

in the tiny city of Perth, the remotest on the planet, Benetton, Versace and Dolce & Gabbana became household names and helped shape the way a new generation was thinking and dressing.

In fact, the language, culture and land that had so fascinated Shakespeare, providing him with the sonnet form and settings for his plays like Mantua and Venice brought us so much more than a code of living, Gregorian chant, Palestrina, Prada, Maseratis, parmesan cheese and espresso. It inspired much of the built form of Perth and its environs, such as the characteristic Italian-style villas with low-pitched or flat roofs, terracotta tiles and deep stone walls. Like a testament to a growing civilised culture in our far-away land stand the monumental heritage buildings of the University of Western Australia. Built in 1932, UWA is Perth's major cultural and educational landmark. Its magnificent Southern European-inspired architecture is reminiscent of Italian *torri, piazze* and *edifici,* and resides in a natural stateliness, the Juliet balconies of its stunning Winthrop Hall overlooking its beautiful and serene setting by the banks of the Swan River.

As media and international transfer of information became faster through the 1980s and 1990s, our understanding of the world beyond Australia developed further. Perth's cultural life matured, our orchestras and opera company became world-class, and we were thrilled to be transported to Italian times and places as we heard the musical repertoire of Monteverdi, Gabrieli, Verdi, Puccini and Respighi. UWA's Perth International Arts Festival brought Fellini, Bertolucci and Pasolini into our consciousness, shocking, inspiring and jolting us out of our naiveté all at the same time. This enormous impact worked a forceful magic beyond entertainment and education which challenged small-town beliefs, repositioning our isolated island continent's philosophies and comprehension of its place in the world. Italy and Italians became even more visible and important, and Italy's leadership in many areas of life even more pervasive and desirable.

My own formal association with UWA goes back a long way, from my first degree in science and a long period spent in the medical sciences, followed by a second degree in music and work in the Music School. So when in my later role as Director of Development at the University, the Cassamarca Foundation presented me with the chance to contribute to encouraging the understanding and importance of Italian language and culture, it seemed only natural to explore every aspect of this opportunity and to support this civilising force which I felt was characterised by a love for life in itself and for all things Italian in nature. I was to discover this had a name - Latin Humanism - and that this 'force' was greater than an 'influence' on our daily lives. It was integral to our ethics, philosophy and laws, rooted in fact in the genesis of our civilisation, and at the very core of our own Australian version of humanity.

The study of European languages had always been considered essential in Australian universities but despite their importance, these courses suffered severe funding cuts in the 1980s. Who could have predicted that the chance meeting between one of the University's then junior lecturers, Loretta Baldassar, and the President of Italy's Fondazione Cassamarca, Dino De Poli, would ultimately result in Australia receiving the largest international grant for Arts and Culture in the nation's history and would reverse the ominous decline in academic Italian studies? Indeed, I remember well my own first meeting with Loretta. The University's new Office of Development had been established in early 1998 with a brief to stimulate efforts to find forms of external support for the University. On reflection, it seems quite natural that the Fondazione Cassamarca's vision to promote Latin Humanism in Australia should have been borne by such an enthusiastic and visionary person as Loretta. She understood this vision and saw an opportunity others had been unable to imagine or grasp. And it seemed natural for her to land on the doorstep of our fledgling development operations.

Somehow it also seems natural that Vice-Chancellor Alan Robson and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Margaret Seares should have given their blessing and support for us to assist in the conception and birth of the Fondazione's *'Progetto Australia.'* The University was always seeking ways to engage on the international stage and it has enjoyed many international connections and projects. The *Progetto* was unique, however, because of its global scope, its multiple Australian university connections and the resultant magnitude of work to be undertaken. The funds were to be managed through a Trust arrangement that had several models already working well in the University, which itself has an impeccable record in managing its plentiful endowment funds. So, armed with this confidence, we sought and won approval from the Fondazione for funding for eleven lectureships and scholarships for an initial period of three years, later extended to six. With an inaugural grant of three million dollars, a trust fund and a steering and management committee established under the umbrella of ACIS, everything possible was done through the meticulous preparation in planning and documentation to ensure that the *Progetto* was properly supported through its infancy. Our approach built the Fondazione's trust and it was politely commented that we had a very 'Anglo-Saxon' attention to detail in all our dealings.

Mindful that funding would expire after six years, we then addressed the question of how to ensure that this great work could continue. I therefore made a trip myself to Treviso to explore the possibilities with the Fondazione and to find ways in which the universities which had benefited from the Cassamarca's generosity might make a contribution of their own. After much discussion, an audacious proposition was put to the Fondazi-

one for an endowment to continue the *Progetto* in perpetuity. Full endowment was thought inappropriate and ACIS decided that Australian universities should be asked to match any future funding from a Cassamarca gifted endowment fund. I then coordinated a small delegation – Bill Kent, Ros Pesman, Loretta Baldassar and the then Dean of Arts at UWA, Anne Pauwels – to go to Treviso to present our proposal to President De Poli – with support via telephone from Deirdre De Souza, our Manager back home at UWA. To our delight the Cassamarca agreed to this proposition, ensuring that its support for Italian Studies will continue forever. The increasing complexity of managing the funds through arrangements involving many universities led to the creation of the position of part-time administrative officer, filled successively with enthusiasm and skill by Olivia Mair, Bianca Galipo and (currently) Melissa Hasluck.

Meanwhile President De Poli visited the University campus several times over the years to communicate his vision of Latin Humanism and to advance the Progetto. Meeting him and his wonderful family and staff are lifetime experiences that one could never forget. A man of as much foresight and power as he is gentle and loving, he felt very much at home in Perth, and when in 2001 an honorary doctorate of letters was bestowed on him by 'our University' as he called it, the relationship was truly cemented. The visits which I made to the Cassamarca headquarters at Treviso always seemed to me like a homecoming too, welcomed with open arms by Antonella Stelitano who not only provided practical help at all points during our discussions but also ensured that each meeting should be a special experience for us all.

On one occasion, indeed, Antonella had arranged for me to play the ancient pipe-organ in one of Treviso's churches which had been restored by Cassamarca. The opportunity was presented as a special surprise. As I had none of my music with me, I chose to play the simple but beautiful *Largo* from Handel's opera *Xerxes.* Perhaps his best-known melody, it was transcribed for organ from the opening aria *Ombra mai fu* where King Xerxes of Persia sings to his cherished plane trees. Handel adapted his opera from that of Giovanni Battista Bononcini who in turn had adapted his from another famous Italian composer, Francesco Cavalli. To play on such an ancient instrument in this beautiful *chiesa* was the most incredible and thoughtful gift imaginable.

We always enjoyed and shared such wonderful hospitality and celebrated in true Italian style our new friendships and our important and blossoming international cooperation. For me, the establishment and development of relations with the extraordinary Cassamarca Foundation remains as one of the greatest and fondest memories of my working life.

Part 2

‘Per realizzare una globalizzazione efficace, bisogna che le differenze siano esaltate. Le differenze e le diversità sono una ricchezza da valorizzare, altrimenti la cultura viene mortificata e appiattita.’

ACIS Management Committee members
2000-2011

CULTURAL COUNTERPOINT: ITALY AND AUSTRALIA

Part 2 reprints a set of essays – some revised or updated – by members of the ACIS Management Committee or its sub-committees, supplemented with essays by Yasmin Haskell, Tony Pagliaro and Nina Rubino and an introduction by Carolyn James to a hitherto unpublished essay by Bill Kent. They revolve around two sets of themes: the study of Italian topics to which Australasian scholars have made notable contributions, and the scrutiny of some of the ways in which the teaching of Italian language, society and culture have been undertaken in Australasia. The work of reflection, cultural counterpoint, is present in all of them in different ways. In some cases the contributors reflect directly on features of Italian history or culture. In others, they explore the ways that issues in Italian culture, history and language have been, or might be, tackled in our university curricula. In still others, they examine the ways that Italian authors with knowledge of Australia or Australians with experience of Italy have incorporated that experience and knowledge into their lives or works. We do not of course make any pretence to have included either a sample of all work by Italianist scholars in Australasian universities on those themes or to have illustrated the full range of Italian topics on which they have worked. If we note that as many as one-third of the contributors to the most recent international guide to postwar Italian culture, society and politics, the 800-page *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Italian Culture* (Routledge, 2000), came from Australasian universities, then the impossibility of illustrating the importance of their work in the small compass available here is clear. Since this is a volume celebrating the support of the Cassamarca Foundation for Italian Studies here, we have selected examples from the work of those people most directly connected to the promotion and implementation of the Cassamarca initiatives from the beginning, adding the essays on Latin Humanism and Italian language in Australia and New Zealand which have been at the centre of the interests of the Cassamarca Foundation in promoting via ACIS the study of Italy.

ACIS was set up in mid-2000 by members from the Australia Project Committee and the Lectureships Selection Committee to take advantage of the intellectual momentum generated by the new lectureships. The Cassamarca Foundation provided further funding of $150,000 to support

activities such as conferences and small research projects which would enable Italianists often working in very small and widely dispersed units to come together regularly and to develop new modes of collaboration. An ACIS Management Committee was therefore established with three primary functions: first, to decide how best to use those funds; second, to provide a local point of accountability to the Cassamarca Foundation; and, third, to serve as an interlocutor for the institutions which had been awarded the lectureships and found themselves having to resolve unexpected and usually complex issues related to their terms and conditions. The Management Committee is itself accountable to the University of Western Australia through which all Cassamarca funds pass. The Committee's membership has been designed to include voices from the states in which Italian is taught and the principal intellectual fields in Italian Studies. It has always been envisaged as an open-minded Executive rather than a representative Parliament, initiating ways to bring Australasia's Italianists together, receptive to innovative ideas for which limited financial support will be provided whenever possible, encouraging the work of early research students, and ensuring a regular turnover in its (unpaid) membership.

Apart from responding to issues arising from the lectureships, the main activity of the Management Committee has been to plan and oversee the biennial ACIS Conferences. The inaugural conference was held at the Australian National University in September 2001, a week after 9/11 and the collapse of Ansett Airlines but which still managed to draw more than one hundred national and international participants. Subsequent conferences, with similarly high levels of attendance, have been held at the University of Western Australia (2003), the Cassamarca Foundation's Ca' dei Carraresi at Treviso (2005), Griffith University (2007) and the University of Auckland (2009). The Melbourne conference of 2011 will therefore celebrate ten years of conference organisation. Finally, ACIS has given support to initiatives to encourage collaboration among Italianists: a workshop on innovations in language teaching at Griffith University in late 2000 (proceedings published online in December 2002); construction of a database of materials on Early Modern Italy; archaeological excavation in Italy; and the development of resources for teaching Italian film studies. When the financial constraints of recent years ease, we hope to renew support for these kinds of collaborative activities.

What's So New About Neo-Latin?

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Those of you who've never heard the term 'neo-Latin' may be forgiven for thinking it's a new South American dance craze. lf you're puzzled when I tell you it has something to do with the language of the Romans, take heart, over the years many classicists I know have confessed they're not really sure what it is either. Some have assumed it was the so-called 'late' Latin written at the end of the Roman Empire; others have supposed it must have something to do with the Middle Ages. Or perhaps it's that pseudo-Latin which my five- and seven-year-old boys seem to have gleaned from the Harry Potter books, useful for spells and curses as they zap one another with makeshift paintbrush wands? No, in fact, neo-Latin is more or less the same as the Latin that was written in the ancient world – classical Latin. So, what's so *new* about it?

Neo-Latin is basically the new (or at least, not very old) Latin which began to be written in Europe from around the time of the Italian Renaissance – roughly speaking, from the fifteenth century – in conscious imitation of the Latin of the ancient Romans. As such it's bound up with the Renaissance intellectual movement known as 'humanism' – from which, ultimately, our modern concept of the 'humanities' is derived. The Renaissance humanists were a new breed of scholars who threw themselves into learning the ancient languages (Latin and then later on, Greek), recovering and translating long-lost manuscripts of the classical authors, and promoting a fashionable new programme of studies based on the ancient texts, the so-called *studia humanitatis:* grammar, poetry, rhetoric, history and moral philosophy.

Now this may not sound very 'new' to twenty-first-century ears, but the quiet revolution of the humanists was a determination to understand the ancients as real historical actors, as human beings who had lived full and interesting lives (lives more glamorous than ours!) — not just as disembodied voices quoted out of context, as they often were in the medieval texts the humanists loved to hate. (As a matter of fact, medieval Latin literature was much more multifarious, rich and sophisticated than many

classicists today realise, so profoundly has our discipline been shaped by the humanist 'invention' of the myth of the Dark Ages — but that's another story ...) At the root of the humanist project was a commitment to language and *style* which might strike us today as pedantic. The 'new' Latin of the humanists was strictly modelled on that of their Roman heroes, and they were always proclaiming its superiority over the university Latin lingo of the later Middle Ages, which they deemed 'barbaric'. Why? By studying and obsessively imitating classical Latin the humanists were straining to hear the authentic voices of the ancients over the crackle of the intervening centuries. They were reaching out to them — both literally and metaphorically trying to *speak the same language.* But the term 'neo-Latin' is also used today in a rather looser sense to refer to just about *any* Latin written between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, and a good deal of *that* isn't particularly humanist or high-brow. Much of it is, in fact, pretty workaday since, until not so long ago, Latin functioned in the West as a scientific, scholarly, and diplomatic lingua franca — much like English does today. Doctoral dissertations at the University of Uppsala in Sweden, to cite just one example where a statistical survey has recently been conducted, were published almost exclusively in Latin well into the nineteenth century. The story is often told of Latin's battles with the vernaculars in the early modern period, a story with its climax in the eighteenth century, when the dusty old language, together with all sorts of outmoded and élitist ideas, was swept away by the cleansing broom of the French Enlightenment. It would be truer to say that it was swept under the carpet. D'Alembert, mathematician, modernizer, and editor, with Diderot, of that great monument of Enlightenment publishing, the *Encyclopédie,* delighted in pouring scorn on the Latin poetry that was composed in his day; at the same time he conceded that Latin was an ideal medium for international scientific communication (although the *Encyclopédie* was, tellingly, written in French).

The fact is that Latin never really went away. While many educated people may still be aware of this fact, few perhaps are aware of the vast extent of neo-Latin literature in the early modem period. Literally *thousands* of documents, official and ephemeral, literary and scientific – textbooks, treatises, letters and diaries, learned journals, poems and plays, satires and even novels – remain untranslated to this day. (And I should point out, too, that a huge volume of early modern translations of vernacular works *into* Latin – translated to be enjoyed by a wider, international audience – is now beginning to receive attention from social historians of language.[1])

1. See P. Burke, 'Translations into Latin in Early Modern Europe', in *The Cultural History of Translation in Early Modern Europe,* ed. P. Burke and R. Hsia (Cambridge, 2007), 65-80.

Within the past decade, Harvard University Press has launched a new series of 'must-have' Latin writings from the Italian Renaissance, with Latin text and English translation on facing pages. (It's modelled on Harvard's venerable 'Loeb Classical Library', on which generations of students have cut their teeth on the *ancient* classics.) The general editor, James Hankins, writes tantalisingly of a 'lost continent' of neo-Latin literature, which he hopes to 'raise ... to the surface once more and allow students and scholars to explore its hidden treasures'.[2] A noble goal, but we should bear in mind that, in spite of the best efforts of Hankins and his team of scholarly marine archaeologists, bilingual book series can only ever salvage a *fraction* of what's down there.[3] The lost continent threatens to slip even deeper into a sea of general oblivion if Latin continues to be taught – as is the case in most Classics departments throughout the English-speaking world – as an exclusively ancient language. What Hankins' Atlantis metaphor perhaps obscures is the fact that the lost continent isn't somebody else's. It is in fact the record of our *own* past which is slowly sinking under the waves.

But why, I can hear you mutter, should we care so much about the pompous Latin poetry composed since the Renaissance by dead white European males? Well, first, we shouldn't assume that writing in Latin was only for dilettantes, or that Latin was reserved for works of a stuffier nature. The literary vernaculars of Italy and France grew out of Latin, struggling, at first, to mimic the expressive range of their more sophisticated parent. In the Renaissance, the Italian, Giovanni Pontano, composed lilting Latin lullabies for his children, and celebrated the humble joys of married life – to say nothing of his adventures with Neapolitan prostitutes. The Frenchman, Joachim Du Bellay, is much more personal in his Latin poetry than his native French. As for the English, Milton was genuinely torn between his vocations for Latin and English verse. The roots of such literary bilingualism are not difficult to discover. Not only was nearly every early modem schoolboy raised to appreciate Roman poetry, he was also, whether he liked it or not, a *de facto* Latin poet. In the eighteenth-century Jesuit college of La Flèche, in Paris, schoolboys composed Latin poems on games and sports – badminton, football, billiards, chess, snakes and ladders ... – and the very composing of such poems was itself a kind of competitive sport.

And by the way, Latin wasn't only written by men and boys. Among the many brilliant women Latinists of the early modem period we might

2. Quoted from *http://www.hup.harvard.edu/itatti/intro_series.html*.
3. And, by the way, the Harvard collection is not the first, and probably not the last, to hit the shelves in recent years. Other English-language series include 'Neo-Latin Texts and Trans lations', published by Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies for the Renaissance Society of America, and 'Bibliotheca Latinitatis Novae', published by Van Gorcum in the Netherlands.

single out Elizabeth Jane Weston.[4] 'Westonia', as she was known, was the stepdaughter of the Irish alchemist and medium, Edward Kelley, and grew up in exile in the Prague of the arts-loving (and occult arts-loving) Rudolph II. She became an accomplished poet already in her teens, and, when the family fortunes turned – Kelley had fallen out of favour with the Emperor and died, possibly of an overdose of his own alchemical 'elixir of life' – Weston used Latin verse to reach a wide international audience and garner sympathy and material support. But it isn't just the writings of women providing rich, new pickings for neo-Latinists. To return to Hankins's metaphor, there are *multiple* lost continents of Latin still waiting to be discovered.

Latin was carried around the globe by European colonists and missionaries in the early modern period — to the Americas, Africa, and Asia. A huge volume of neo-Latin literature is concerned with New World subjects, and exciting new research is being conducted, for example, into the colonial Latin heritage of Mexico and Brazil from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. Indigenous Mexicans were such talented Latinists that they put many European noses out of joint – their facility with the language led some to accuse them of possession by the devil! Indeed, Latin became the preferred language, over Spanish, for the expression of Mexican cultural identity.[5] This brings me to the 'relevance' of the study of Latin in twenty-first-century Australia. *Terra australis* was only colonized by Europeans after the suppression of the Jesuits, the crack troops of the Catholic Reformation who carried a Latin humanist education to far-flung missions in the Americas, India, China, and Japan. If it had been Jesuits rather than Lutheran missionaries who first made contact with Australia's indigenous people, who knows, students in our high schools might now be reading Australian neo-Latin classics about 'country' — there is an eighteenth-century example from Latin America, the Rusticatio Mexicana, or 'Mexican Country Life', by the Guatemala-born poet, Rafael Landivar, which lovingly documents the natural history and culture of his native land.

Alas, Latin in Australia still bears the taint of elitism and monoculturalism – a legacy, no doubt, of its historical association here with British Empire, privilege and posh schools. An Italian mature-age student of mine

4. *Weston's Collected Writings* have been edited and translated by D. Cheney, B.Hosington and D. Money (Toronto, 2000). See also J. Stevenson, *Women Latin Poets: Language, Gender, and Authority, from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2005).
5. A useful introduction to Mexican Latinity is provided by A. Laird in *The Epic of America: An Introduction to Landivar and his* Rusticatio Mexicana (London, 2006). See also A. Laird, 'Latin in Cuauhtémoc's shadow: humanism and the politics of language in Mexico after the conquest', in *Latinity and Alterity in the Early Modern Period,* ed. Yasmin Haskell and Juanita Feros Ruys (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 2011).

tells me that, as a schoolgirl in Sydney after the war, she had longed to join the Latin class. Her grades in maths and science were excellent, but the headmistress flatly refused her request - Latin would be beyond her, apparently, because, as a native Italian speaker, her English wasn't up to it! I would like to put in a plea here for a more multicultural perspective on Latin: first, and most obviously, as the linguistic foundation of so many modern Latin languages and cultures such as French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese; secondly, as a significant literary language in early modern times even for *non*-Latin cultures (most European countries, from the Swedes to the Southern Slavs, from the Irish to the Hungarians, have a rich and extensive neo-Latin literature); and thirdly – and this may come as something of a surprise – as a language of real historical importance *in Asia.* It's a paradox that much more Latin was written in and about countries like China, Japan, and India in the early modern period than in or about Australia. Many early Latin works on Asian history, natural history, medicine, linguistics, astronomy, economics, religion, and even interfaith dialogue, have yet to be translated or explored in detail. It could be argued, then, that Latin is indispensable not only for a proper understanding of Australia's long *European* history, but also for a better appreciation of the history and cultures of our region.

Nearly twenty years ago I began my own voyage of neo-Latin discovery when I chanced on a fascinating book about the Renaissance philosopher, Giordano Bruno – that bold freethinker (and perhaps magician) who proclaimed an infinite universe of innumerable worlds, championed the heliocentric theory of Copernicus, thumbed his nose at the Catholic Church, and who, for his troubles, was burned at the stake in Rome in 1600. Bruno's use of Latin poetry as a medium for his iconoclastic modem philosophy was a revelation. An indulgent doctoral supervisor allowed me to continue on what was then a rather eccentric path, and I have never looked back. Of course, that was BI, before the Internet. In the 1980s and 90s it wasn't so easy to get hold of neo-Latin texts in Australia. Today, I am amazed, nearly every time I turn on the computer, to see how much of the world's literature is becoming available on-line. Yes, slowly but surely, even the lost continent of neo-Latin literature is resurfacing on the World Wide Web. Rare titles – access to which once required the purchase of expensive microfilms, overseas research trips, and carefully worded letters of introduction to librarians in French, Italian, even Latin – are now unceremoniously spat out at me while randomly googling. Of course, one has to wonder how many people actually browse these proliferating digital libraries; English translations are rarely supplied and it's impossible to translate it all, given the quantity of material out there. So, since it's a job too big for 'Babelfish', in the end there's no substitute for learning the language.

Please, let's *not* allow Latin to die in Australian schools and universities thinking there is nothing new to know or write about a 'dead' language. And please, please, let's not kid ourselves that the history of the Europeans who colonized Australia began with the First Fleet.

Death In Florence: Bill Kent's Essay on Lorenzo's Final Days

Carolyn James
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"Lorenzo [de' Medici] was a man born for all great deeds, who so trimmed his sails to fortune's ever varying winds, that it is hard to say whether he was more constant in prosperity or more unmoved and steadfast in adversity. His genius was so great, so versatile and so far-reaching that ... he outstripped all rivals, in all things equally." (Angelo Poliziano, in a letter dated 18 May 1492 to Giacomo Antiquario).

In the late 1980s Bill Kent was commissioned by the University of California Press to write a biography of Lorenzo de' Medici for its series devoted to great leaders of the past. The commissioning editor had in mind a quick and impressionistic study that captured the essential features of Lorenzo's life and personality against the vivid backdrop of the Florentine Renaissance. Almost at once, however, Bill realised that his project would be a long one. The challenges of drawing a coherent biographical portrait of a man whose enigmatic and seemingly contradictory character excited controversy from his own day until ours were daunting, as was the task of coming to terms with a veritable mountain of material concerning his subject's life and times. The publication of the much-anticipated critical edition of Lorenzo de' Medici's correspondence was well underway by the time Bill began writing his biography but this too was a project that would take many more years to complete than originally planned. Bill inherited from his teacher and mentor, Nicolai Rubinstein (who died at the age of 91 in 2002), the task of overseeing the edition to its completion. Volumes 15 and 16 of the letters will appear this year, but work on the correspondence associated with the last period of Lorenzo's life is still incomplete, and at least several more years will pass before this great resource is fully published.

Understandably, the awareness that Lorenzo's more than 2000 extant letters had the capacity to provide a greater and more nuanced under-

standing of their writer prompted Bill to delay tackling the final chapters of his book until he could integrate the new insights that the still unedited correspondence of the late 1480s provided. Sadly, the studious retirement that would permit this energetic scholar to set aside the myriad committees and projects in which he was involved, so that he could devote his whole attention to Lorenzo, was suddenly snatched away by an illness that was soon revealed to be terminal. Knowing he could not finish the biography on which he had worked for so long, Bill prepared what he had already written for publication by shaping the work as an analysis of the Lorenzo's early life and career. This book will now be published by Harvard University Press.

The essay which follows was written several years ago, not long before Bill was diagnosed with a life-threatening cancer. It was envisaged as the first chapter of the biography, a rather unconventional beginning to an analysis of Lorenzo de' Medici's life that tackled head on the lack of consensus about his role in Florentine history and introduced the author's intention to pin down more firmly what kind of man the de facto leader of Florence really was. Now edited so that it constitutes a stand-alone essay, these aims remain clearly in the foreground and are pursued vigorously by a detailed examination of the dramatic events that preceded Lorenzo's untimely death at the age of forty three. The essay analyses, too, the raw, divisive emotions that were unleashed when news reached the Florentine population that the man who became known as *Il magnifico* had finally died, after years of uncertain health. Bill argues that the myths and exaggerations that circulated in Italy about the circumstances of the Florentine leader's death were symptomatic of his larger-than-life status in the minds of contemporaries. The mixture of relief and fear that people felt on hearing the grim news of Lorenzo's demise was indicative of the ambiguity that Florentines felt about a man whose ever more autocratic leadership of the republic they resented but whose sure-footed diplomacy and intelligence they relied on.

In this essay, the author uses evidence gathered during many years of research in the *Archivio di Stato,* Florence, from private Florentine archives such as that of the Guicciardini family and from Renaissance chancery collections in the north of Italy left by the seignorial rulers of Milan, Mantua and Ferrara. The account of Lorenzo's death in this essay is full of new details and insights and is, I think, a melancholy but fitting testament to the career of a committed and talented scholar. Bill's assiduous and highly professional research, funded with the support of the Australian Research Council and Monash University, as well as by fellowships at prestigious institutions such as Harvard University's Villa I Tatti, has borne much scholarly fruit. It has informed a very large body

of world-class publications and helped to establish Australia as a well-recognised centre of Italian Renaissance studies. His legacy lives on in a younger generation of scholars who were inspired by his charismatic teaching to become academics themselves. They were well trained by Bill and painstakingly acquired the linguistic, palaeographic and other skills that enabled them to go into Italian archives and to analyse documents in the same rigorous way that he himself had been taught in London in the 1960s.

The Cassamarca Foundation now plays a vital role in supporting Italian Renaissance Studies in Australia. It is gratifying but no accident that in a period that has seen a diminution of undergraduate courses devoted to this field in the United States there has been no lessening of enthusiasm among Australian undergraduates, many of whom have a very strong sense of connection with their European roots. Some of these students will become academics and among them will be those who will continue Bill's scholarly legacy in the field of Italian Renaissance Studies.

The Death of Lorenzo: 'The World Turned Upside Down'

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On 9 April 1492 three Florentines were officially reported to have just died: the (unnamed) young son of one Stefano della Pieve, Zanobi Biliotti from a prominent family and "Lorenzo, the son of Piero de' Medici."[1] Death may be the great leveller, but even in the sober folios of Florence's books of the dead, Lorenzo's name is given some visual prominence. It positively leaps out, however, from the pages of the mortality records kept by the magistracy of the Officials of Abundance. Two large marginal fingers point to Lorenzo's name which, illuminated in blue and red and taking up four times the space given to poor Biliotti and to the anonymous boy, is anyway hard to miss.[2] But, then and now, there was no overlooking Lorenzo di Piero di Cosimo de' Medici, despite the contemporaneous existence of two Medici paternal cousins also named Lorenzo.

His early death, aged just forty three, hardly came as a surprise to Florentines, and Italians more generally, who for weeks, even years, had been trading information and rumours about his see-sawing health. Ambassadorial reports home to Milan, Mantua and Ferrara chronicle and analyse Lorenzo's decline, which despite periods of respite began in earnest from 1490 onwards. Citizens writing to relatives and friends away from Tuscany added to this chorus of speculation and concern, which made abundantly clear the powerful role the leader of the city's oligarchic regime played in Florentine politics and the wider affairs of late fifteenth century Italy; and the marked degree to which he had already captured the contemporary imagination, for better or for worse. February 1492 had been the cruellest month so far. The Ferrarese envoy reported him "much tormented and in pain for several days" on 11 February[3]; this was little wonder, as Lorenzo, according to his son and heir apparent Piero, writing to Piero Alamanni, a close oligarchic ally of his father, was at this time "troubled with gouty humours in his feet and hands, and they are

spreading all over his body, under the skin and in the joints and muscles". He had no fever and was otherwise "strong and robust", the son added, though very restless and unable to attend to any business.[4] As had always happened so far, Lorenzo rallied a day or so later and soon was able to contemplate resuming his punishing work routines, as he himself told Alamanni. Indeed he was to continue dictating letters at more or less his accustomed fast and high rate until a few days before his death.[5] More pessimistic rumours must have continued, nevertheless. So on 24 February Bartolomeo Dei, who worked in the city's chancery, set out to quash them by informing his uncle Benedetto Dei "that the people as usual write and talk wildly, the news getting worse as it passes from mouth to mouth".[6] Bartolomeo would have taken it for granted that his uncle, a very assiduous chronicler also famous as "the trumpet of truth" for the newsletters he dispatched all over Italy, would broadcast this - one might almost say official - version of events.

The news did become worse again during March, and Lorenzo's plight was not helped by the intense cold to which a number of sources refer. He appears to have been particularly susceptible to chill weather. They also note some improvement in Lorenzo's health and spirits towards the end of the month as spring, the season of hope and renewal he had so celebrated in his poetry, approached. But from then on, it seems, most people other than the principal doctor attending him, Maestro Piero Lioni - and some of those close to Lorenzo who wanted to believe that very distinguished practitioner's optimistic prognosis - began to fear the worst. Piero de' Medici was almost certainly trying to allay the fears felt by his father's former secretary and devoted friend, ser Niccolò Michelozzi, away in Naples as ambassador, when he wrote in the last two days of Lorenzo's life that "his progress has been good rather than otherwise, and he has had no pain other than some stomach wind, the fever having substantially lowered, leaving him just full of lassitude and weary all over." He was even contemplating taking a horse ride into the country, his son added. Lioni had in fact earlier pressed upon his famous patient the beneficial effects of vigorous riding, to which pastime Lorenzo had been addicted in his salad days. But Medici also wanted "to flee the tedium and discomfort that he would have" on account of the visit of Ercole d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, who arrived in Florence on 5 April,[7] despite Ercole's political prominence and the close ties between the two houses. Only two days later Lorenzo was reported by a well-informed Florentine to have "vomited blood and other horrible stuff," which his doctors took to be a hopeful sign, but by the evening of the next day,[8] April, he was dead at Careggi, his country house just outside the city.

This talk of stomach wind and vomit perhaps serves the useful purpose of helping to demythologise one of European history's most famous myths,

and mythmakers, while also rendering him a more knowable figure who for all his "magnificence" and power can win our sympathy. But this very contemporary obsession with every aspect of Lorenzo's life, illnesses and death also underlines how much he had come to occupy a place at the very heart of his city's existence. Ercole d'Este, who failed to speak to the dying man despite his eagerness to do so, was in no doubt where the honorific and power centres of the Florentine Republic might lie after Lorenzo's two decades of ascendancy. His ambassador there reported home disdainfully to the Duchess that when her consort's party was formally welcomed by the Signoria, the Republic's elected highest magistracy, it consisted of "eight men of bad and sad appearance, and an even worse Gonfalonier [head of state] who touched the Duke's hand gloves in hand".[9] The historian of Florence can quickly add, by way of glossing this snobbish remark, that the unhappy Gonfalonier at that time was in fact a member of a distinguished patrician lineage, the Federighi, although it is true that several of his colleagues among the Priors came from families – the Del Nero, the Salvetti - whom such a Florentine patrician might himself have well looked down on.[10] All were close Medici partisans, however, and Lorenzo's hold on authority in the city had largely depended on them. But it was Lorenzo that Ercole wanted and needed to meet, a very powerful man whose manners, polished by years of diplomacy conducted with the ruling families of Italy, he would not have found wanting.

Lorenzo died as he had lived, with dramatic intensity and surrounded not just by fanatically loyal friends and familiars but by an atmosphere of rumours and, at the end, dark controversy. His own feelings during the last few weeks of his life must have been in turmoil, as his symptoms waxed and waned, his medical diagnoses, at least as reported by onlookers, varied from optimistic to deeply pessimistic, and all the city fell prey to contradictory stories that were duly broadcast around Italy. No doubt to console and reconcile himself, Lorenzo had for some months resumed writing "religious poetry, and hearing offices", as he wrote in April 1491. It was very likely in the last few weeks of his life that he composed the stark *lauda, Ben arà duro core,* which enjoins the sinner to acknowledge that Christ had died for mankind's sake –"He died that you might live// He became a man that you might be like a god" - and to accept His "so sweet and holy yoke", an image used by the Medici themselves to describe the nature of their gentle subjugation, as they saw it, of Florence.[11] Late in February Benedetto Dei, hearing in Bologna a Milanese report that Lorenzo was in extremis, "which news makes me extremely melancholic, if true", begged his nephew to tell him the truth, whatever it might be.[12] The recent agonising death from an attack of quinsy of the sculptor Bertoldo di Giovanni, a man "he loved…as much as any of his familiars", in a contem-

porary testimony, must have lowered Lorenzo's own spirits: the artist had lived with him for some years and had created striking bronzes for his protector.[13] Early March brought a joyful event that consoled a chronically ill man for whom dynastic imperatives had always been paramount. His second son Giovanni, recently created a cardinal, made a triumphal entry into his native city for his investment ceremony, to be received and entertained by the Florentines and his father in a sumptuous style that local and ambassadorial letter writers described in extreme detail. "The city's in festive mode, thanks be to God", the Florentine Iacomo Giannotti declared, not least because "our boss, *maggior nostro,*" is better, and "all the people of Florence without exception feel love for, and devotion to, the worthy Cosmean house of Medici".[14] Lorenzo, for whom Giovanni's elevation to the purple had been "the most important thing ever done by our house",[15] must have felt renewed vigour at his son's warm reception. All the same, he was far sicker than Giannotti knew, or at least said. The celebrations had been "magnificent", another man wrote, "but would have been much more so had Lorenzo been in good spirits, but he's in such a state that many people despair for him".[16] He had only managed very briefly to attend the grand dinner for the new cardinal held in his own palace, "to see the Cardinal and us other guests dining", as the Ferrarese ambassador reported.[17]

Close friends were seized by premonitions of disaster, by a sense that not just their personal existences but politics and life more generally would be changed irreversibly by Lorenzo's death. The 1490s were indeed to prove to be a decade of "epidemic poverty" and internal warfare for Florence, and of foreign invasion for all Italy.[18] Michelozzi observed in the months just before Lorenzo's death that he knew that since he had gone to Naples on a diplomatic mission in January that "the world has turned upside down".[19] When the news he received from Florence was good, ser Niccolò felt himself "released from hell", while the increasingly bad tidings turned him "inside out".[20] He exhorted Piero de' Medici to keep him minutely informed, "not so much to satisfy those here who ask me all the time about it, but to relieve this constant anxiety that's killing me".[21] Lorenzo's death a few days later was to elicit tens of thousands of flowery words from foreign rulers and states, subject towns and prominent Florentines, only a small percentage of which were much more than standard exercises in the rhetoric of condolence. But when Michelozzi confessed to his brother that "I am so beside myself because of the disaster of Lorenzo's death that I hardly know if I'm dead or alive",[22] one knows he meant it. It must have increased ser Niccolò's anguish to hear from his friend ser Pace di Bambello that he was not alone in thinking that "if you had been here [in Florence to oversee things], Lorenzo wouldn't have died."[23]

The public mood of foreboding grew more intense as things came to their conclusion in early April, the private fears of an increasing number of individuals taking on a collective life of their own. Medici partisans and enemies of the family, neutral Florentines and outside commentators, all describe in letters, diaries and chronicles a series of strange and unfathomable events that seemed to portend not only Lorenzo's end but disaster for his city as a whole. On 5 April, a lightning bolt literally from the blue struck Brunelleschi's cupola on the cathedral, causing some 20,000 florins of damage within and without the church. Lorenzo had much occupied himself with the embellishment of this great civic building, especially over the last decade. If the banker Luca Rinieri miraculously escaped death when tons of Carrara marble collapsed on his nearby houses while he slept, as contemporaries love to tell us,[24] one of those chroniclers – the pious pharmacist Luca Landucci – recounts that when Lorenzo heard in his sickbed that the debris had also fallen in the direction of the Medici palace, he prophetically proclaimed himself to be a dead man.[25] Another artisan diarist tells us that some people were saying that precisely at the moment the bolt had struck, Lorenzo "because he was very ill at the time" had like some magician released a "spirit" which he had kept imprisoned in a ring for some years.[26]

It was not only the Florentine populace that relayed such tall stories. Agnolo Poliziano, Lorenzo's closest intellectual companion and one of the greatest humanist scholars of his day, mentioned still other astonishing signs in a classic account of his master's death written a month afterwards: a hovering star over the villa of Careggi which plunged from the sky at the moment of his passing, a fight to the death by two of the lions kept on public display in Florence, symbols of the noble city itself. Perhaps at this fraught time, Poliziano and other learned Florentine friends of Lorenzo recalled with a mixture of hope and dread the passage in Suetonius describing how the death and subsequent deification of Augustus himself – the late Roman republican figure becoming more and more, one suspects, a (privately entertained) role model for Lorenzo – "were known in advance by unmistakable signs", including a lightning flash.[27] One might add that 5 April was the end of an era in yet another sense. On that day Lorenzo, a letter-writer supreme, dictated his last missive, appropriately enough a standard letter of recommendation on behalf of a client to the captain of Volterra , the city the Florentines and their allies had conquered and sacked just twenty years before.[28]

The most detailed, and least well-known, account of the atmosphere in Florence as Lorenzo lay dying can be found in a long private letter Niccolò Guicciardini wrote to his distant cousin Piero Guicciardini, who then held an administrative post in Pisa. The Duke of Ferrara had come

and gone without meeting Lorenzo, Niccolò reported on 7 April, and two days earlier both the Dominican Girolamo Savonarola in San Marco, and a preacher in the cathedral and Santa Maria Novella, had warned that the city would endure terrible suffering if the Florentines did not mend their morals, above all by giving up sodomy. During the apocalyptic sermon in Santa Maria Novella, Niccolò recounted, an elderly tertiary nun - "such a good woman" who was said to have foreseen the Pazzi Conspiracy of 1478 that had left Lorenzo's brother dead and himself wounded - shouted out that she saw a horned bull trampling upon the Church. Then came a great wind and the lightning strike on the Duomo in the evening, the preachers disagreeing among themselves, however, about whether lightning was indeed the cause of the damage. One view abroad was that the event was a warning against sodomy, Niccolò Guicciardini continued, "so that our entire crowd is utterly terrified, especially I. God help us."[29]

Guicciardini and his companions evidently practised those forbidden friendships that were almost a rite of passage for many younger Florentine males, if anathema to Christian moralists such as Savonarola. Earlier in the century one preacher had made the accusation that homo-erotic friendships were so extensive as to form a basis of party factionalism in the city. They were in effect tolerated under certain circumstances by successive regimes including, it has been suggested, Lorenzo's. Niccolò went on to tell how one "Salvi di Panuzzo" had on that same day, 5 April, been very heavily fined by the police magistracy of the Eight for a sexual transgression in the Duomo. But the preachers thought that punishment still too lenient, whereupon they enjoined the culprit's re-arrest amidst an outcry in the streets to have Salvi burnt for his sins. A little later, the Eight and their retainers swept through the city arresting and questioning some twenty young aristocrats about their sexual liaisons, further feeding Niccolò Guicciardini's sense of panic.[30] This Salvi di Niccolò Panizzi, a notorious middle-aged sodomite who had also held high office in the government, including as a member of the Eight which was now prosecuting him, had touched the private parts of a youth during a sermon, according to the criminal records, "in the presence of the most sacred body of our Lord Jesus Christ and in contempt of Almighty God and the Christian religion", not to speak of Florence's statutes and "sound morals".[31] The incident was also mentioned by Benedetto Dei, no stranger to the pleasures Panizzi preferred, who noted at the end of a letter sent him that "one of the Panizzi was condemned for celebrating the feast of the Carmine between Compiobbi and Bruccianesi [two villages on either side of Florence]", a private and jocular allusion the sexual meaning of which is, generally speaking, clear enough.[32]

For many Florentines, however, the Panizzi story epitomised the dan-

gerous times in which they lived, seemed to signal drastic changes to come. For the Savonarolans it meant the destruction of their city if such sins were not extirpated. For many other citizens such as Niccolò Guicciardini the incident spelled the violent end of special friendships, and indeed a whole way of life, were the heavenly Jerusalem in fact to be created in the streets and piazzas of Florence. What Lorenzo might have thought of the Panizzi incident we cannot say – his friends, clients and acquaintances included not only Savonarola and other strict observant religious but also several known sodomites and men accused of the act, including Poliziano[33] – and he was perhaps too far gone by that time to care. But his death amidst such dramatic, threatening and divisive events seemed both to reflect and to herald a world about to turn upside down.

2

All the remaining sources insist on Lorenzo's having died a good Christian death as that age understood it, apparently untouched by the sense of dislocation and panic engulfing the city. He did, however, find the occasion as he lay dying to deliver in private a shrewd political maxim – conceived in the world of realpolitik in which he had always lived – to a trusted secretary: "one should know how to recognize who one's friend was, and who one's enemy.[34] Only one account, that of Bartolomeo Cerretani, a well-informed chronicler but not an eye-witness, says that at one point in his death throes he shouted " I'm dying, I'm dying, I'm dying, and no-one's helping me".[35] Several unnamed friars had visited him in the weeks beforehand, and he had been bathed and anointed by a party of pious women on one occasion.[36] On the last day Savonarola himself came, Lorenzo "taking great comfort from the visitation" Carlo del Benino tells us; "he spoke with [the friar] at length, commending himself to his prayers with great effect, and wanting his blessing". This the Dominican gave, in Poliziano's account, despite a tenacious late Savonarolan tradition to the contrary, and Lorenzo died, del Benino goes on to say, "having had all the sacraments and with good and perfect understanding until his final breath".[37] As the gospel passages describing Christ's last passion were read to him, in Poliziano's polished words Lorenzo "cast his eyes down and gazed upon the silver figure on the crucifix, which was superbly set in pearls and gems, and ever and anon he kissed it, and so he passed away".[38] No devout religious could have died better, Lorenzo's son dutifully informed Michelozzi in Naples on the very day of his death.[39] For Bartolomeo Dei, Lorenzo, by "saying such holy words", had been in death nothing less than "a new St Jerome". As it happened, an illuminated manuscript of Jerome's *Commentary on the Minor Prophets* dedicated to him had been completed just

four days before.[40] Even at the end, Lorenzo's princely love of fine codices and precious, bejewelled, objects is somehow in evidence.

"The funeral was simple and without pomp, as Lorenzo and Piero had said they wanted", the Medici partisan ser Francesco Baroni reported to Piero Guicciardini in Pisa on 10 April.[41] Other Florentines and ambassadors alike concurred in this description. Lorenzo's body had been brought to San Marco from Careggi on Monday 9 April, being taken later in the day to the Medici parish church of San Lorenzo. At some point during these proceedings, a sense of sombre occasion was invoked by the playing of the Flemish composer Heinrich Isaac's moving dirge for his dead patron, to which Poliziano had set words inspired by *Jeremiah,* 9, i - "Oh that my head were waters, /and my eyes a fountain of tears"- that seem also deliberately to refer to the most portentous event preceding Lorenzo's death: "The laurel by the blow of the thunderbolt lies there".[42] It had been a Medici family tradition so to bury its men, simply in the citizen tradition, despite – or perhaps because of – the de facto authority Cosimo and his son Piero had wielded for much of the century. Almost at once, however, the unique position their descendant had come to assume in Florence's polity and imagination asserted itself. Lorenzo's body at rest in San Lorenzo became a magnet, some 16,000 people – a decent percentage of the city's population –coming to pay their respects on the Tuesday, according to one witness, "and all the magistracies, and one saw only the colour black".[43] Perpetual masses for Lorenzo's soul were instituted at his parish church and within a few days there were to be commemorative services in other churches. The chapter of the Duomo voted to celebrate such a mass, while the special commission of the Wool Guild, referring to the dead man as "their colleague", decreed that his body should be honoured by a gift of a roll of costly mourning cloth.[44] Lay religious confraternities to which Lorenzo had belonged such as Sant'Agnese and San Paolo joined in,[45] as did two charitable institutions in provincial Prato. The latter both solemnly voted to commemorate Lorenzo in the new church of Santa Maria delle Carceri, the architect of which - his favourite Giuliano da Sangallo - he had more or less imposed on the local Pratese officials.[46]

Then came the pilgimages to Piero's house in Via Larga by citizens wanting to offer their condolences and, just as importantly, to pledge their support to the young man who, within a few days, as was reported all over Italy, was to be confirmed by law in all the offices and privileges his father had enjoyed, even when he was technically under age.[47] This legalistic insistence on formal arrangements that were, however, contrary to the spirit and intention of the republican constitution, had been a leitmotiv of Lorenzo's modus operandi as leader of the regime. He and his close allies had consolidated the traditional Medicean grip on the informal processes

of clientage across much of Florentine society, making the family's head, now Piero, the font of almost all significant favours and political action, the *maestro della bottega* as Lorenzo had increasingly come to be called. So, in the Sienese envoy's words, when visiting the Medici palace he had found there "an infinite number of people of all conditions," del Benino adding that down to the last porter the city had paid its respects.[48] Among them was Niccolò Guicciardini, whom we have met, who dressed in mourning accompanied others of his distinguished family which had long supported Piero di Lorenzo's ancestors.[49] One of the latter's first tasks was to announce the news of Lorenzo's death to the rulers and governments of friendly states and to Medici supporters throughout the peninsular. In a strict sense Piero's letters were personal, and in writing them he was maintaining that dual diplomacy that had been the hallmark of Lorenzo's handling of foreign affairs. The Florentine magistracy in charge of such business also wrote officially to the city's ambassadors abroad.[50] The flood of letters of commiseration that flowed back to Florence therefore separated into two streams, one consisting of official letters addressed to the government, the other to Piero himself. Many of these latter are gathered together in a file in the family archive. Almost a month after his father's death, Piero could still say to Michelozzi that he was very busy engaged in writing letters "to just about everyone in the world".[51]

Private letters and messages, too, quickly spread the dire news, and surrounding rumours, which by 10 April had reached Ticino in far northern Italy, where Poliziano's correspondent Iacopo Antiquario heard them from the local castellan. Upon his return to Milan, Antiquario found the city already abuzz with speculation about the manner of Lorenzo's death, a subject to which we will shortly come.[52] Benedetto Dei, in Bologna, was busy receiving and sending letters about his former patron's demise. He used all the information he could glean to write in a chronicle one of his characteristic lists –a series of dot points avant la lettre – summarising the events surrounding it.[53] In Rome, the new and so recently bereaved teenaged Medici cardinal became at once the focus of attention. "There's no other news than the death of the magnificent Lorenzo", a Ferrarese in Rome told his duchess on 14 April, "which certainly affects an infinite number of people". The commemoration of Lorenzo's death in Rome was by all accounts more lavish than in Florence itself.[54] In Naples, a bishop, Aurelio Bienato, quickly delivered a Latin funeral oration in Santa Maria la Nuova celebrating Lorenzo and the Medici in the context of a laudatory account of Florence's famous men: in part a political act to reinforce Medicean and Neapolitan ties.[55]

The letters of condolence written to Piero de' Medici and the Florentine government were 'it goes without saying' universally, if in different

registers, laudatory about his father. Kings and princes, the Pope and prelates, kinsmen and citizens, sang the chorus of praise in Latin and the various Italian vernaculars. Manuals of letter writing, well-established chancery practices, informed the content and structure of these epistles, which were in almost every case meant to be read aloud or otherwise shared around. Inevitable themes were Lorenzo's personal and public virtues and achievements, the lustre of his dynasty and the sense of loss the writer and his family or community felt, followed by an admonition to accept God's will since all things were mortal. Many letters announced the dispatch of special envoys to Florence, and indeed so many arrived over the next month that the government was forced to pay out a large sum to cover their expenses. Something of Lorenzo's genuine importance in Italy emerges from the epistolary rhetoric. For many letter-writers he had not only been the common father of themselves and Piero de' Medici but of all Italy, of which he was also the glory and "ornament".[56] Citizens frequently referred to him as the father of his city and fatherland, a statement that echoed the official posthumous title given his grandfather Cosimo in 1464 and reflected, too, his own informal control of Florence's networks of patronage.[57] A number refer to Lorenzo's diplomatic role as, according to his kinsman Iacopo de' Medici, "the sole …head and cause of the preservation of peace [in Italy]",[58] a judgement to which at least some modern scholars would give their qualified approval.

Churchmen stressed the dead man's piety, the General of the Servites lamenting "the very bitter loss of your immortal father".[59] Pious and magnanimous the friar Girolamo da Prato also judged Lorenzo to be, but shrewdly noted too his "cesareo animo", his imperial spirit.[60] If these were perhaps largely standard tributes, more interesting is the almost religious reverence for Lorenzo that emerges in several citizen letters, a reminder of the quasi-sacerdotal authority he and his family had been slowly accorded, hardly against its will, over the preceding decades. Matteo Franco, long a clerical retainer of the family who described himself as a Medici "puppy dog, a whelp", wrote to Piero of his eighteen years in "your holy school";[61]a friend of Benedetto Dei's confided that "I held [Lorenzo] to be a true and living God".[62] Other partisan expressions of loss and pledges of loyalty came from allies such as Pierfilippo Pandolfini, perhaps Lorenzo's most trusted political lieutenant by the 1480s, who told Piero from Rome that "I find myself so got down that I can hardly write or think anything. May God grant us the grace to bear the harm received, both public and private."[63] There of course flourished at the time a language of clientage that could be as formalised, and to modern ears as insincere, as consolatory rhetoric, and yet such men as Pandolfini, who had served their Medici masters long and well, indubitably spoke from the heart. Just occasionally, however,

there surface, even in this consolatory genre, the nuts and bolts of the Medici client networks that such courtly language justified and sustained. One citizen letter of condolence to Piero could not resist adding, very inappropriately, the customary request for a political favour.[64] Another, from the Captain of Arezzo, tells us how "headmen from the countryside" had come to town to offer their condolences, precisely the peasant leaders of local militia on whom the Medici had relied for political support in the past.[65]

The very complicated relationships Lorenzo had cultivated with his city and contemporaries, the variety and nuances of reactions to him and his role in public life, are most evident in the chronicle accounts of his death. Written in the main by men who were in Florence at the time, some of whom were well-informed, most belonged to the Florentine *ricordanze* tradition, family diaries intended for descendants and only occasionally shared with other relatives, let alone outsiders. Almost all take a clear and strong line, for or against Lorenzo as it were, although there are several simple factual recordings of the event, one of them inserted by an anonymous man towards the end of the account he kept of the sermons he had heard.[66] Even so, Francesco Gaddi's three-line version in his *priorista*, which confines itself to observing that Lorenzo might have expected to live longer and that Piero had been confirmed in his father's privileges, could be said implicitly to express criticism by its very reticence. Gaddi had served as Lorenzo's confidential agent before a falling-out that he records elsewhere in his private papers.[67]

Among Lorenzo's indubitable admirers was Tribaldo de' Rossi, a man from an old magnate family who had had recent business dealings with him; "generally, everyone grieved", he noted in his diary.[68] From the opposite end of the social spectrum, the coppersmith Bartolomeo Masi, proud of the fact that his son was a member of a religious confraternity to which Lorenzo's sons belonged, clearly regretted the passing of "a talented man in all manner of things and of such counsel that he was considered one of the wisest men in all Italy".[69] The pharmacist-diarist Landucci, while reflecting on the vanity of all worldly things, agreed that Lorenzo was "truly a wise head", who had ennobled not just his family but the whole city.[70] The most detailed and eulogistic account of all was Bartolomeo Cerretani's, in his late teens at the time but apparently quite well informed because of his close family connections with the Martelli, old friends and neighbours of the Medici in San Lorenzo parish. Even so, Cerretani conceded that "it was known that he could be somewhat vindictive and jealous".[71]

The most ferocious attack on Lorenzo in death was the work of an alienated boyhood friend, Alamanno Rinuccini, the humanist scholar and political figure who in the aftermath of the Pazzi Conspiracy had

denounced Lorenzo as a tyrant, perhaps the first but not the last person to do so. He could hardly have made public the extreme views he expressed in his family *ricordanze.* Writing of the lightning strike on the Duomo, the locus classicus for those who dreaded what Lorenzo's death would bring, Rinuccini argued that "if the citizens had taken advantage of it, it presaged something very good", that is, the downfall of the man he accused of corrupting the republican body politic and of plotting to become a Florentine Julius Caesar. This patrician felt compelled privately to commit his views to an uncertain posterity in order to give the lie to the "many false writers and pernicious flatterers" who would sing Lorenzo's praises.[72] As one half-drowns in the hundreds of pages of eulogy, some of it written by men such as Lodovico il Moro, the ruler of Milan, whom we know to have loathed Lorenzo as much as Lorenzo did him, it has to be said that the scholar-politician had a point.

While Rinuccini concedes that Lorenzo was very versatile and brilliant, his hostility is so palpable as to be counter-productive. A far more nuanced and credible dissection of Medici's achievements and failings, and of the city's mixed feelings about him, came from Piero Parenti in his chronicle. Politically very acute, Parenti belonged to a small and new, traditionally republican, family which was closely related to the Strozzi, a rich and clever lineage most of whose members long maintained a healthy reserve about Medicean ambitions even when, upon return from exile, they co-operated with Florence's leaders. If Parenti's predisposition was therefore to be sceptical about the Medici and protective of civic traditions, still he made it clear that Florence had "truly…never before had so powerful a citizen, and he controlled the regime and [the city] as if he were nothing other than its lord [signore]." So singular was Lorenzo's genius, and so devoted was he to worthy things, that "his fame was not undeserved".

And yet reactions to his death in the city were varied, in Parenti's detailed dissection of the situation. The lower classes were actually happy, as they hated several recent fiscal measures passed by Lorenzo's regime. For the same reasons, and because of the tax burden, those somewhat further up the social ladder, the *gentilotti* with their social pretensions, were hardly grieving. The city's leaders, the *principali*, were divided in their reaction to his removal from the scene, in this analysis. "Those very close to Lorenzo, and who shared in the government, were very upset, thinking they must lose status and perhaps political authority", while those not in his favour "were quickly happy, feeling the republic might regain its liberty and they emerge from servitude". Overall, Parenti concluded, "secretly" Lorenzo's death was not much lamented - "was accepted", as he puts it, though no one admitted this publicly - "because under his power the city had been oppressed". As for foreign rulers, they "were not

displeased" at the removal of so powerful and charismatic a rival[73] who, in the discerning judgement of the French diplomat Philippe de Commynes, was "one of the wisest men of his time, who ran that city almost as if he were its lord (presque comme seigneur)."[74]

Like letter-writers, diarists and chroniclers all over the peninsular, Piero Parenti recounts the immediate and sensational sequel to Lorenzo's apparently dignified death during the evening of 8 April: the discovery next morning of the drowned corpse of his doctor, Lioni, in a well on an estate at San Cervagio owned by one of the Martelli family. "There spread around many opinions", Parenti says, though he perhaps believed the majority view that the arrogant physician, as several contemporaries describe him, had committed suicide because he had lost his reputation, having given assurances about the certainty of Lorenzo's survival that turned out to be wrong. He adds, however, and perfectly accurately, that "there was nevertheless abroad the opinion that the servants of Lorenzo committed the evil deed."[75] While it is true that the more virulent versions of this widespread rumour were to come from later sources clearly hostile to Lorenzo,[76] there is strictly contemporary evidence for the fact that deep dissatisfaction with Lorenzo's final medical treatment enraged some of his familiars, however they might or might not have expressed their frustration and grief.

Lorenzo's secretary ser Piero da Bibbiena had informed the Milanese ambassador just before his death that on his master's removal to Careggi he had got worse "contrary to the opinion of the doctors" who up until now had judged his illness "not to be serious".[77] The envoy duly repeated this information in writing home, the context being his discussing the imminent arrival of an expert doctor sent post haste by Milan to save the situation. Lorenzo's doctors "had proceeded very coolly", in his words,[78] Lioni in particular never having "proposed anything but very general remedies, saying that the illness was not perilous and he was without fever". As the patient's condition became worse, however, Lioni "was sarcastically addressed by a bodyguard" who said that "he would deserve to be cut to pieces" should Lorenzo die.[79] Some incident of the sort must have occurred, as several pro-Medicean accounts themselves supply the information that it was Piero de' Medici or his associates who had the doctor taken away to the Martelli villa; to rest himself in one version, for his safety's sake in the other. The chronicler Cerretani, a great admirer of Lorenzo and the nephew of the Martelli in whose house Lioni died, was explicit in writing that the dead man's bodyguards had threatened the doctor and might have killed him, whereupon he was taken off to the Martelli villa.[80] Other Medici allies were concerned enough at the rumour-mongering to go to pains to refute it. Lioni had killed himself, the

partisan bureaucrat Francesco di ser Barone assured Piero Guicciardini in Pisa, although:

> The mob's saying all sorts of things, that he poisoned Lorenzo and that he was thrown into the well by others. But it is all false because neither he, so far as anyone can know or see, has poisoned Lorenzo, nor did others throw him in. I went to see and questioned those in the house [where it happened]; in effect he wanted to die, and summoned up the will to do so.[81]

There were in fact no signs of poison when a hasty autopsy was performed, the Milanese ambassador reported, Lorenzo's "insides [being] clean and all in order, except that it appeared the point of his heart was a little destroyed" He was "without a mark", in the Florentine del Benino's version, "save that his lungs were somewhat swollen".[82] Indeed one can hardly imagine what motive Lioni might have been thought to have had for wanting to murder Lorenzo. For some fifteen years he had been in touch with and helped by Medici, who had great faith in his skill.[83] However Bartolomeo Dei, referring to his "insane death", does mention darkly the physician's meddling in necromancy (his library contained works on astrology, to be sure!), and del Benino talks of his "evil and erroneous life".[84] One almost has the sense that these very pro-Laurentian sources are protesting too much when they belabour Lioni's reputation, as if anxious to divert attention from the speculation concerning the involvement of Lorenzo's associates in his death that, at the very least, must have seemed very plausible to contemporaries. Since his near-escape from murder in the Florentine cathedral in April 1478, Lorenzo had gone everywhere with a squad of armed *staffieri,* retainers, whose names were as exotic – Martin the Black, "Malformed", Margutte, Morgante – as their violent fidelity to their master was renowned.[85] Our well-informed Milanese diplomatic witness, while scotching the poison story, says that Lioni had been guilty of "gross negligence" which had made the *brigata*, Lorenzo's closest friends, "suspicious".[86] Precisely how Maestro Pietro had died, one now can never know. Even at the time the Sienese ambassador had wisely commented that "they say he threw himself in, why, I do not understand."[87]

If homicidal violence perpetrated by his body guard seemed a quite plausible interpretation of this event, it was also possible that Lorenzo had been poisoned, given the constant risk of assassination he himself had experienced since his teens, and the fate of other prominent contemporaries. And this version of events persisted, despite energetic attempts privately and publicly to deny it. Andalò Bentivoglio, from a collateral branch of Bologna's ruling family friendly to the Medici, confidently told Benedetto Dei in Ferrara in a letter of 12 April that he understood from letters received

that the Milanese doctor who rushed to attend Lorenzo "said immediately that this was not a natural illness but a case of poisoning." Upon his death, Pierino Martelli and a barber then opened the cadaver, in this account, and found poison in Lorenzo's heart. Lioni, roused from his bed and confronted with the evidence of his guilt, hurled himself from the balcony into the (one might think very conveniently situated) well. The same man mentioned strange portents observed in the Bolognese countryside at the time of Lorenzo's death.[88] These accounts, relayed by an educated Bolognese patrician, give a mere flavour of the heavy minestrone of gossip, speculation and lies that was being concocted and served out all over Italy.

From the very first, then, the shade of Lorenzo de' Medici hardly rested in peace. The manner of his death stimulated as much controversy and rumour in his own day as the question of his place in Florentine and European history has since provoked in both the scholarly literature and in the more popular accounts of his life. For his first English biographer, William Roscoe, he was quite simply "a man who may be selected from all the characters of ancient and modern history, as exhibiting the most remarkable instance of depth of penetration, versatility of talent, and comprehension of mind."[89] This astonishing judgment owes much, we may think, to the contemporary insistence of Poliziano and some other intellectual friends that Lorenzo's was a "felix ingenio,"[90] that despite the burdens of political life he was able to perform splendidly and simultaneously on very different stages, reconciling successfully within himself, in Machiavelli's later celebrated assessment, very contradictory traits of character.[91] Hardly surprisingly, these remarkable judgements have not gone unchallenged by later generations. While Lorenzo has remained in the popular imagination the very model of a great and munificent patron of the arts, the merchant prince who was also a consummate politician, he has as well been portrayed as a Florentine factional boss responsible for the destruction of his city's republican constitution , a failed banker with an almost bi-polar "dark" side to his character. His influence and skills as a diplomat on the wider Italian stage have been considerably over-rated, it has been argued,[92] and an influential scholarly tradition has it that he was something of a self-promoting fraud as an artistic patron, not at all the magnificent Renaissance Maecenas par excellence.[93] Such varying assessments of Lorenzo, still largely based on the praise and blame, the speculation and controversies, that surrounded both his life and death – and on a relatively predictable and as it were recycled body of evidence some of it unearthed two centuries ago by Roscoe – must surely now be scrutinised anew, above all in the light of the great critical edition of his letters, over 2000 of them, begun by Nicolai Rubinstein and now nearing completion.[94]

Notes

1. Archivio di Stato, Florence (henceforth ASF), Arte dei Medici e Speziali, 247, fol.27v. The footnotes in this essay confine themselves to direct references to sources cited and the text takes as read many points and themes discussed in the other essays in this volume.

2. ASF, Ufficiali della Grascia, 190, fol.222r (a reference I owe to Patricia Rubin).

3. A. Cappelli, "Lettere di Lorenzo de' Medici detto il Magnifico conservate nell'Archivio Palatino di Modena:," *Atti e Memorie delle RR.Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Provincie Modenesi e Parmensi,* I, 1862, pp. 231-320 (p. 310).

4. Letter of 10.ii.1492, as paraphrased in R. Tyler, *Catalogue of the Medici Archives…,* Christies Sale Catalogue, London, 1918, p. 65.

5. Ibid., 17.ii.1492, p.66. For his continuing output, see *Protocolli del Carteggio di Lorenzo il Magnifico per gli anni 1473-74, 1477-92,* ed. M. Del Piazzo, Florence, 1956, pp.486-90; P.G. Ricci and N. Rubinstein, *Censimento delle Lettere di Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici,* Florence, 1964, pp.187-89.

6. ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse sotto il governo francese (henceforth CRS), 78, 316, fol.185r: "…che'l popolo vanamente dice e così scrive come si fa che sempre il male cresce per boccha di chi parla."

7. Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence (henceforth BNF), Ginori Conti, 29,35, fol.11r, no date but received 11 April in Naples: "Dipoi el processo suo è stato piùtosto in bene che altrimenti, et non ha havuto altre dogle che di qualche ventosità di stomacho, così è alleggerita molto la febre et solo li resta una lassitudine et stanchezza per tucta la persona…Lorenzo è a Chareggi, et per fuggire la noia et il disagio che harebbe su questa venuta del Duca di Ferrara, se n'andrà forse insino al Poggio…"

8. Niccolò Guicciardini, quoting Gherardo Gianfigliazzi, in a letter to Piero Guicciardini in Archivio Guicciardini, Florence, Legazioni e Commissarie, I, 7.iv.1492: "…che se gli era rotto a Lorenzo non so che materia, e gittava per bocha sanghue e altra materia brutta, e pare n'abino e medici preso conforto e ditto che gli sarà utile".

9. Published in C. De Fabriczy, "Il convento di Porta San Gallo a Firenze, *L'Arte,* VI, 1903, pp. 381-84 (p. 382).

10. Here and from now on electoral data has been found under the appropriate date in "Florentine renaissance resources: online tratte of office holders 1282-1532 (http://www.stq.brown.edu/projects/tratte).

11. L. de' Medici, *Laude,* ed. B. Toscani, Florence, 1990, pp.73-75; B. Toscani, "I canti carnascialeschi e le laude di Lorenzo: Elementi di Cronologia", *La Musica a Firenze al Tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico,* ed. P. Gargiulo, Florence, 1993, pp.131-42 (pp.139, 141-42).

12. ASF, CRS,78, 318, fol.298r, 23.ii.1492: "… le qua' nuove mi danno assai malinchonia se chosì è…"

13. F. W. Kent, "Bertoldo 'sculptore' and Lorenzo de' Medici", *Burlington Magazine,* 134, 1992, pp. 248-49, and republished in the present collection.

14. The first passage is in ASF, CRS, 78, 316 , fol.326,2.iii.1492, letter to Benedetto Dei: "La città è tutta in festa, Dio gratia, è che della salute del maggior nostro…ne siamo a sicuro termine"; the second, also to Dei, is in ibid., fol. 327r, 9.iii.1492: " …lo amore e devotione che unanimiter il populo di Firenze porta alla digna chasa Cosmeana de' Medici".

15. Letter to Giovanni Lanfredini, 11.iii.1489, in Lorenzo de' Medici, *Scritti Scelti,* ed. E. Bigi, Turin, 1977, p.663.

16. ASF, CRS, 78, 319, fol.351r, Ambrogio Angeni to Antonio da Filicaia, 23.iii.1492: "…ffu una mangnificenza ma più assai sarebe suto se Lorenzo fusse suto di buona vogla ma trovaxi in termine che per molti si dice che v' è pocha isperanza".

17. Cappelli, "Lettere", p. 311. He adds however that Lorenzo had begun to ride again.

18. J. Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence,* Oxford, 1994, pp.401-406.

19. Published in N. Isenberg, "Censimento delle Lettere di Niccolò Michelozzi", *Giornale Italiano di Filologia,* ns 13, 1982, pp. 271-91 (p. 277).

20. The phrase "mi pare essere uscito dallo inferno" is in his letter to ser Piero da Bibbiena, 1.iii.1492 (MaP, CXXIV, 183); on 22.iii.1492 he told Piero de' Medici that the bad news "mi hanno cavato di me" (ibid., XLIX, 289).

21. Ibid., XLIX,178: "…non tanto per satisfactione di costoro che me ne domandono ogni hora, quanto per levare me di una solicitudine continua che mi amazza".

22. BNF, Ginori Conti, 29, 67, fol. 23r, 14.iv.1492: "Sono per questa tanta ruina della morte di Lorenzo fuor di me, nè so bene se mi sono vivo o morto…".

23. Cited by A. Brown, "Women, Children and Politics in the Letters of a Florentine Notary, ser Pace di Bambello", *Florence and Beyond: Culture, Society and Politics in Renaissance Italy,* ed. D. S. Peterson and D. E. Bornstein, Toronto, 2008, pp.229-55 (p.244). Michelozzo's agonised response from Naples to the news of Lorenzo's decline and death referred to above, and the official Florentine correspondence concerning his passing, is conveniently published in *Corrispondenza di Piero Nasi, Antonio della Valle e Niccolò Michelozzi,* VI (10 aprile 1491-2 giugno 1492) ed. B. Figliuolo and S. Marcotti, Naples, 2004, pp. 311-14, 357-58, 362-63, 375, 381-83,387, 392-93, 397.

24. Almost every diarist or letter writer cited in this essay, and many others besides, recount versions of the story (though details, for example the cost of the damage caused, vary), and most take these events as a bad portent for the city.

25. Luca Landucci, *Diario Fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516,* ed. I. Del Badia, Florence, 1969, p. 64.

26. Bartolomeo Masi, *Ricordanze,* ed. G.O. Corazzini, Florence, 1906, p.17.

27. Poliziano's letter to Iacopo Antiquario, 18.v.1492, is in *Prosatori del Quattrocento,* ed. E. Garin, Milan-Naples, 1952, pp.886-901. For Augustus, see Suetonius, *The Lives of the Caesars,* trans. J. C. Rolfe, 2 vols., Cambridge., Mass., 1960, I, p.275, and my "Lorenzo de' Medici's *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*", published in the present volume.

28. *Protocolli,* p. 490.

29. Archivio Guicciardini, Florence. Legazioni e Commissarie, 1, 7.iv.1492: "…in modo che la brighata è tutta ispaventata, massimo io. Iddio ci aiuti".

30. Ibid., and for this incident, and more generally, M. Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships:Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence,* New York-Oxford, 1996, pp.202-203, and index under "Panizzi".

31. ASF, Otto di Guardia (Repubblica), 91, fol. 35v: "…in conspectu sacratissimi corporis Domini nostri Yesu Christi, in contemptum omnipotentis Dei et christiane religionis et contra formam iuris et statutorum et ordinamentorum Comunis Florentie et contra bonos mores".

32. Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence. Manoscritti Ashburnham, 1841, 186, appended to a letter by Niccolò Rangoni of 5.iv.1492: "…fu chondannato uno de' Panuzzi per fare la festa del Charmino fra Chonpiobbi e Brucanese". For a similar topographical double entendre by Lorenzo himself, "between Empoli and Pontolmo", see P. Orvieto in *Storia della Letteratura Italiana,* ed. E. Malato, III, *Il Quattrocento,* Rome 1996, pp.375-76.

33. Niccolò Guicciardini mentions - Archivio Guicciardini, Florence, Legazioni e Commessarie, I, 7.iv.1492 - that under questioning by the authorities about his sexual partners a youth had named "fra li altri, messer Agnolo da Montepulciano, che chome e' nominò lui, intendo non ne volle più." See too Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships,* pp.198, 202.

34. Piero Dovizzi's testimony some years after Lorenzo's death, in 1512, cited by A. Brown, "Lorenzo de' Medici's new men and their mores: the changing lifestyle of Quattrocento Florence," *Renaissance Studies,* 16, 2002, pp.113-42 (p.139).

35. Bartolomeo Cerretani, *Storia Fiorentina,* ed. G. Berti, Florence, 1994, p.184. Brown, "Women, Children and Politics in the Letters of a Florentine Notary, ser Pace di Bambello," pp.229-55, esp.pp.243-45, 249-52, publishes valuable new contemporary evidence concerning Lorenzo's death that is, however, consistent with known pro-Medici accounts.

36. For the visits by friars, see Ferrarese ambassadorial letters home in ASMo, Ambasciadori, Firenze, 8, 22.ii.1492 and 5.iii.1492. The Milanese envoy reported on 3.iii.1492 that because the doctors were not doing Lorenzo much good, "gli è stato forza metersi hogi nele mane de alcune donne, le quale se hanno facto alcune onzione et bagni"; ASMi, Sforzesca, 937.

37. Del Benino's letter to Piero Guicciardini of 13.iv.1492 is published in R. Ridolfi, *L'Archivio della Famiglia Guicciardini,* Florence, 1931, p.22, and see his "La visita del Savonarola al Magnifico morente e la leggenda della negata assoluzione", ASI, ser.VII, 10, pp. 205-12.

38. As translated in The *Diary of John Burchard,* trans. A. H. Mathew, London, 1910, I, p.416.

39. Published in *Nuovi documenti per la storia del Rinascimento,* ed. T. de Marinis and A. Perosa, Florence, 1970, pp.76-77.

40. Bartolomeo's letter to Benedetto Dei of 14.iv.1492 is published by L. Frati, "La morte di Lorenzo de' Medici e il suicidio di Pier Lioni", ASI, ser. V, 4, 1889, pp.255-60 (p.260). For the manuscript, see *Mostra della Biblioteca di Lorenzo nella Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana,* ed. M. Salmi, Florence, 1949, p.39.

41. Archivio Guicciardini, Florence. Legazioni e Commissarie, 1: "Hoggi alle xxi si fa l'onoranza semplice e sanza pompa, chè così dixe Lorenzo e Piero che si facessi".

42. Text in J. Sparrow, "Latin Verse of the High Renaissance", *Italian Renaissance Studies,* ed. E. F. Jacob, London, 1960, pp. 354-409 (pp. 404-406), who judges it "surely?- an artistic failure". See too the entry in *All'ombra del lauro: Documenti librari della cultura in età laurenziana,* ed. A. Lenzuni, Milan, 1992, p.25.

43. ASF, CSR, 78, 317, fol.12r, Gismondo Naldi to Benedetto Dei, 14.iv.1492: "…et tutti gli ufizi di Firenze e non si vedeva che nero". Bartolomeo Dei agreed that if the ceremony were conducted "non con molta pompa", the number of citizens and families in attendance "ben fu degno": Frati, "La morte di Lorenzo", p.259.

44. Archivio Capitolare Fiorentino, Florence, Partiti A (1467-1504), fol. 144v; ASF, Arte della Lana, 62, fol.29v. For S. Lorenzo, see Archivio Capitolare, S. Lorenzo, 1933 (i), fols.31v, 55r, and 2071, fols. 30v-31v.

45. For S. Paolo, see ASF, Compagnie religiose soppresse, 1582, no fol. 15.iv.1492; for S. Agnese, see L. Sebregondi, "Lorenzo de' Medici confratello illustre," ASI ,150,1992, pp.319-41 (p.327).

46. Archivio di Stato, Prato, Ceppo Vecchio, 203, fol. 194r: Ceppo Nuovo, 453, fol. 56v. See F. W. Kent, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence,* Baltimore-London, 2004, pp. 60, 86-87, and also my "Prato and Lorenzo de' Medici," in F.W. Kent, *Princely Citizen, Lorenzo de' Medici and Renaissance Florence,* (Brepols, 2011).

47. Diary and letter writers almost always give the full details; and see ASF, Miscellanea Repubblicana, 4, inserto, 15, fol. 44r, 12.iv.1492. The Wool Guild, in whose affairs Lorenzo was very influential, had voted to this effect as early as the day after his death (ASF, Arte della Lana, 62, fol.29v). See my "Lorenzo de' Medici at the Duomo", in Kent, *Princely Citizen*.

48. C. Paoli, *Lettere di Andrea Buonsignori…intorno alla morte di Lorenzo il Magnifico…,* Siena, 1870, p.19, for the Sienese report; del Benino's letter of 13.iv.1492 to Piero Guicciardini is in Archivio Guicciardini, Florence, Legazioni e Commessarie, I: " ..Concorsòvi (to Piero de' Medici's house) tutta la ciptà chome ali uxato…che non credo rimanessi fachino non lo vixitassi, con grata audientia et rispetto in modo è stata universale satisfactione di tutti".

49. See his letters to Piero Guicciardini of 9.iv.1492 and 11.iv.1492 in Archivio Guicciardini, Florence. Legazioni e Commissarie, I.

50. ASF, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, 9, fols .63v-74v, summarised in *Carteggi delle Magistrature dell'età repubblicana: Otto di Pratica, I, Legazioni e Commissarie,* ed. P. Viti, Florence, 1987, pp. 300-305.

51. BNF, Ginori Conti, 29, 35, fol. 2: "…tra imbasciadori et scrivere lettere quasi a tucto el mondo, non ci siamo riposati troppo". The Archivio Mediceo avanti il Principato (henceforth MaP), in the ASF, filza XV, contains scores of letters of condolence to Piero, but there are still others scattered throughout this Medici archive. Some letters addressed to the government are in ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive, 77, fols.261r-68r.

52. His letter of 14.iv.1492 is translated in *Diary of John Burchard,* pp. 412-13. See now A. Poliziano, Letters, ed. and trans. S. Butler, Cambridge, Mass., 2006, I, pp.224-27.

53. BNF,II. II. 333, "Memorie" of Benedetto Dei, fol.12r.

54. Morletto Ponzon's letter is in ASMo, Ambasciatori, Firenze,10, 14.iv.1492: "In Roma altro non sentiamo novo senon dela morte del Magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici, la quale certamente rencresce ad infinita zente". Like numerous other writers, he describes the elaborate ceremonies.

55. *Lorenzo dopo Lorenzo: La fortuna storica di Lorenzo il Magnifico,* ed. P. Pirolo, Milan, 1992, pp.55-56

56. For his kinsman by marriage, Orsino Orsini, Lorenzo was, for example, "nostro et de tucta la Italia padre": MaP, XV,35, 13.iv.1492; Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini wrote that "era ornamento non solamente alla città fiorentina ma a tutta Toschana et a tutta Italia" (ibid., 18, 11.iv.1492).

57. To take just one example, Carlo del Benino described him to Piero Guicciardini as "commune padre di tutta la nostra città" (Ridolfi, *Archivio della Famiglia Guicciardini,* p.22).

58. Ibid., 89, 12.iv.1492: "…egli solo era capo e cagione della conservazione della pace di quella (Italy)".

59. Ibid., 83, 11.iv.1492: " …l'acerbissima morte del immortale vostro p[adre]…".

60. Cited in G. B. Picotti, *Scritti vari di storia pisana e toscana,* Pisa, 1968, p. 94.

61. *Lettere* of 18.iv.1492 in Matteo Franco, Lettere, ed. G. Frosini, Florence, 1990, pp.127-29.

62. ASF, CSR, 78, 317,fol.12r, Gismondo Naldi to Dei, 14.iv.1492:" …che llo tenevo per un Idi(o) vivo e vero".

63. MaP, LV, 48, 10.iv.1492: "Io mi truovo in tanto dispiacere che male posso scrivere e pensare a cosa alcuna. Priego Idio ci concedi gratia che soportiamo patientemente il danno che in publico et privato si riceve".

64. Ibid., XV, 101, 15.iv.1492. Filippo Lorini, writing from Paris, wished to be "seen" as Gonfalonier of Justice.

65. Ibid., 85, 12.iv.1492 : "… et così e capi del contado…"

66. Published by Z. Zafarana, "Per la storia religiosa di Firenze nel Quattrocento", *Studi Medievali,* ser. III, 9, 1968, pp. 1017-1113 (p. 1111). The writer's devotion to the preacher Fra Mariano da Gennezzano, who was very close to Lorenzo, may explain the entry.

67. ASF, Tratte, 132 bis, fol.222v. His *ricordanze* are in Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence, Acquisti e Doni, 213, fols. 90-97, and published in part by C. Bologna, *Inventario de' mobili di Francesco di Angelo Gaddi* (Nozze Bumiller-Stiller), Florence, 1883 (see pp.9-10 for his dispute with Lorenzo).

68. Tribaldo de' Rossi, "Ricordanze", *Delizie degli eruditi toscani,* ed, I. di San Luigi, XXII, Florence, 1786, pp. 273-75, 278.

69. Masi, *Ricordanze,* pp. 17-18.

70. Landucci, *Diario,* p.65.

71. Cerretani, *Storia Fiorentina,* pp. 183-87. On his being well informed, see the editor's remarks (p.xii).

72. Alamanno Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1282 al 1460,* ed. G. Aiazzi, Florence, 1840, pp.cxlvi-ix.

73. *Piero Parenti, Storia Fiorentina,* I, 1476-78:1492-96, ed. A. Matucci, Florence, 1994, pp.21-24.

74. P. de Commynes, *Mémoires,* ed. J. Calmette, Paris, 1925, 3 vols., III, p.41.

75. Parenti, *Storia Fiorentina,* pp. 22-23.

76. The evidence is surveyed in Frati, "La morte di Lorenzo", pp. 255-60;G. Sordini, "Piero de' Medici e Pierleone Lioni", *L'Illustratore Fiorentino,* ed. G. Carocci, ns, IV, 1907, pp. 53-60; L. Guerra-Coppiolo, "Maestro Pierleone da Spoleto", *Bollettino della R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Umbria,* XXI, 1915, pp. 387-431.

77. ASMi, Sforzesco, 937, a damaged letter from Careggi clearly written just after Lorenzo had gone there: "…contra la opinione de' medici et nostra, e quali havendo insino a qui giudicate il male di Lorenzo che non sia dubioso".

78. Ibid., 8.iv.1492, Giovanni Stefano Castiglione: "Pare che quisti medici che sono stati ala cura sua siano andati molto freddamente…".

79. Ibid., 9.iv.1492: Lioni's treatment had been " molto legiere, nè mai s'è curato de farli remedi sinon cuose generale, dicando ch'el male suo non era de periculo et che era senza fibre. Hora essendo heri reducto el caso in malissimo termine, gli fo motezato per uno staphiere al quale forse rincresceva ch'el patrone havesse ad morire…[saying] ch'el meritaria da esser tagliato a peze".

80. Francesco di ser Barone informed Piero Guicciardini that "Piero l'haveva mandato ad stare (at S. Cervagio) a riposo qualche dì " - Archivio Guicciardini, Florence, Legazioni e Commessarie, I, 10.iv.1492 – while del Benino told the same man that Piero de' Medici did this because concerned by the attitude of the retainers (Ridolfi, *Archivio della Famiglia Guicciardini,* p.22). For Cerretani, see *Storia Fiorentina,* p.184.

81. Archivio Guicciardini, Florence, Legazioni e Commissarie, I, 10.iv.1492: "Per il vulgo si dice cose assai, et che egli ha avenenato Lorenzo et che egli vi fu gittato da altri; ma tucto è falso, perché nè egli – che si sappi o si sia visto – ha avenenato Lorenzo, nè altri ve l'gittò. Io vi andai a vedere et examinare chi vi era in casa: in effecto e' volle morire, et se n'ha cavato la voglia".

82. ASMi, Sforzesco, 937, a damaged letter, the date of which is unclear, apparently written by the Milanese ambassador: "…tuti li interiori neti et ben disposti excepto ch'el parse che la puncta del cuore fusse un puocho guasta". The Milanese doctor's opinion that there were no signs of poison is reported in ibid., letter of 9.iv.1492. For del Benino's letter to Piero Guicciardini, see Archivio Guicciardini, Florence, Legazioni e Commessarie, I, 13.iv.1492: "Fecesi notomia del corpo di Lorenzo; trovòssi sanza macula, excepto e polmoni alquante gonfiati".

83. See for example Lorenzo's letter of 17.vii.1487 in L. de' Medici, *Lettere* X (1486-1487), ed. M. M. Bullard, Florence, 2003, p..430, and the articles cited in n.71 above. See also a letter of 4.vii.1477 by Lioni to Lorenzo published by A. F. Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino,* 1473-1503, 5 vols., Florence, 1973- 94, IV(i), p. 267, and M. Rotzoll, *Pierleone da Spoleto: Vita e opere di un medico del Rinascimento,* Florence, 2000.

84. For Dei, see Frati, "La morte di Lorenzo", p. 259; for del Benino, Ridolfi, *Archivio della Famiglia Guicciardini,* p. 22. For the doctor's astrological interests, see G. Radetti, "Un'aggiunta alla biblioteca di Pierleone Lioni da Spoleto", *Rinascimento,* ns, V, 1965, pp. 88-99.

85. A. Brown, "Lorenzo and Public Opinion in Florence", *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo Mondo,* ed. G. C. Garfagnini, Florence, 1994, pp. 61-85 (p. 83).

86. ASMi, Sforzesco, 937, 9.iv.1492: "…una grandissima negligentia, et ha dato qualche dubitatione ala brigata…"

87. Paoli, *Lettere di Andrea Buonsignori,* p. 16.

88. British Library, Additional Manuscripts, 24, 213, fol. 77r: "…subito disse che non era infirmità naturale ma che era avenenato". His letter of 16.iv.1492 to Dei (ibid., 78r) does quote verbatim a letter from Florence that does not mention the poisoning story andstates that while only a few know how Lioni died, " 'molti dicono molte cose'" .

89. W. Roscoe, *The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici,* 6th edn. , 2 vols., London, 1825, 2, p.237.

90. A. Poliziano, Nutricia, in *Silvae,* ed. C. Fantazzi, Cambridge, Mass.– London, 2004, pp.158-59. See too among similar assessments the preface to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's *De ente et uno*, in *Opera Omnia,* Basil, MDLXXII, reprinted with preface by E. Garin, 2 vols.,Turin, 1971, I, p.241

91. N. Machiavelli, *Istorie Fiorentine,* in *Opere,* ed. M. Bonfantini, Milan-Naples, 1963, p. 979.

92. G. Pillinini, *Il sistema degli stati italiani,* 1454-1491, Venice, 1970; R. Fubini, "The Italian League and the Policy of the Balance of Power at the Accession of Lorenzo de' Medici," *The Journal of Modern History,* 67 (Supplement: *The Origins of the State in Italy,* 1302—1600), 1995, pp.166-99.

93. See my *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence* for this last theme. The historiography for the other points alluded to is too vast to cite here, but references to it will be found throughout the other essays in Kent, *Princely Citizen.*

94. Volumes 15 appeared last year *(Lorenzo de' Medici. Lettere. Vol. 15: Marzo-agosto 1489,* a cura di Lorenz Boninger, Milan, 2010). Volume 16 will appear in 2011.

Dante Down Under?
Francis MacNamara's *A Convict's Tour to Hell*

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I found the original of my hell
in the world we inhabit.[1]

With that precipitous abandon that characterises him as both heroic *and* foolish, Dante's Ulysses pushes south to the antipodean regions and after several months he and his faithful crew glimpse a land mass that turns out to be the Mount of Purgatory. They perish before landing, sucked down by a raging whirlpool to the nether regions of Hell, located, according to Dante's moral geography, in the bowels of the earth. Yet Dante himself, and we readers with him, will eventually come again to this very place and will find it idyllic, to say the least. As Dorothy Sayers puts it: "The whole landscape is washed in a sweet and delicate austerity. At the Mountain's base, reeds and sand; the illimitable ocean in the dawnlight; the changing of the sky from orient sapphire through rose and gold to blue; the tang of the clean sea-breezes. On the lower slopes [...] grass, with great ridges and outcrops of rock and, nestling in between two spurs of the Mountain, the secluded, scented, song-haunted, angel-guarded Valley of the Rulers."[2] After climbing the seven terraces under the constant guidance of Virgil, Dante will enter nothing less than the Garden of Eden itself, "green and cool and fragrant with flowers"[3] and from there, in the company of Beatrice, he will ascend to the very pinnacle of Highest Heaven.

Twelve hundred years earlier, in another imaginary voyage, Lucian of Samosata had ventured into similar antipodean regions and had landed

1. Attributed to Dante by Benjamin Disraeli; see Paget Toynbee, *Dante in English Literature* (London: Methuen, 1909), vol. 1, p. 508. Disraeli claims to be quoting from one of Dante's letters but Toynbee points out that the sentence does not appear in any of the letters accepted as authentic.
2. Dante, *Purgatory,* translated by Dorothy L. Sayers, (Penguin, 1983), pp. 17-18.
3. *Ibid,* p. 19.

on one of the Isles of the Damned. As he and his company approach the islands they smell the horrid stench of pitch mixed with burning human flesh and hear the cracks of whips and a multitude howling. They put in at one of the islands:

> ...the one we landed on was surrounded by steep cliffs, all dry and stony without any sign of trees or water. However, we managed to climb over the rocks by a path overgrown with thorns and thistles, and picked our way across some incredibly ugly country until we came to the prison itself.[4]

In this prison, whose entrance is guarded by no less a misanthrope than Timon of Athens, harsh punishments are meted out to the damned with a terrible severity, the very worst of punishments reserved, says Lucian with tongue in cheek, for writers of untrue histories such as Ctesias and Herodotus.[5]

It is *this* image of a *terra australis* as a prison of merciless punishment located in a similarly harsh and pitiless environment —rather than Dante's lush and tranquil images of a positive place of purgation— that should continue to hover in the background of this paper; and indeed it is interesting to compare Lucian's description of the Damned Isle with some of the earliest historical reports of the Great South Land. Frances Pelsaert, for example, in his *Batavia* of 1629 notes:

> It is a bad rocky land, without trees... the coast showing very uniform, without any foreland, or inlets, as other lands have, but seems a dry, cursed soil without leaf or grass [...] it seemed not to have rained there for a long time, and there was no sign of running water, and moreover the high land was very bad, and the land was dry, without trees, leaves or grass.[6]

As history would have it, the experience of the earliest European migrants transported against their will to the *terra australis* certainly proved to be closer to Lucian's vision than to Dante's for, as we all know, the colony of NSW was set up as nothing less than the ultimate prison for the criminal underclass of the British Isles and accounts of the inhuman punishments meted out to recalcitrant convicts in this southern land make

4. Lucian, *True History & Lucus or the Ass,* translated by Paul Turner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), pp. 49-50.
5. *Ibid.* p. 50. Regarding the antipodean location of Lucian's Isles of the Damned see David Fausett, *Writing the New World: Imaginary Voyages and Utopias of the Great Southern Land* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 33.
6. Cited in Paul Foss, "Theatrum Nondum Cognitorum", *The Foreign Bodies Papers* (Sydney: Local Consumption, 1981), p. 32. On Pelsaert's voyage see also Fausett, p. 25-26.

the generic tortures described by Lucian seem mild in comparison.

The harsh and cruel realities of life on this southern fatal shore, as documented for example in the graphic pages of Robert Hughes,[7] would hardly seem a favourable environment for the flowering of poetry yet it appears that, in spite of the conditions, poets there were and one of these was Francis MacNamara.

Although apparently so renowned for extemporising in verse within his own convict milieu as to be known quite simply as Frank the Poet, Francis MacNamara's poetic fame was poorly preserved in the Australian literary tradition and few of the standard histories of Australian literature used not to even record his name. More recently however, due largely to the efforts of John Meredith and Rex Whalan, Frank's reputation has been revived through a slim biography and the publication of his extant works, most of them recovered from oral reminiscences.[8]

Frank's poetic achievement, such as it is, is thus preserved in some 17 or so compositions, the longest and most substantial of these being a poem of some 230 lines entitled A *Convict's Tour to Hell,* composed and written, as it itself attests, at Stroud in NSW on 23 October 1839.[9]

Now, given what we know generally about the cultural background of the convict population and the very sketchy details which we have about MacNamara's own origins, it must seem highly unlikely that Frank could have been in any way acquainted with Dante. Meredith and Whalan suggest rather convincingly that, as far as literary models are concerned, one really need look no further than Swift and Robert Burns.[10] And yet the possibility of some connection between MacNamara's *Tour to Hell* and that of Dante surely remains a tantalising one for Dante scholars for, if established, it would predate by 60 years what is generally regarded as the first presence of Dante in Australia, Sir Samuel Griffith's translation which began appearing in 1898.[11] We know that, unlike many other convicts, Frank did know how to read and write before being transported to NSW in 1832. Even more enticing is the fact that the first great period of intense

7. Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore: A History of the Transportation of Convicts to Australia, 1787-1868* (London: Harvill, 1987).
8. John Meredith and Rex Whalan, *Frank The Poet* (Melbourne: Red Rooster, 1979). See also: John Meredith, "Frank the Poet: A Postscript", *Overland,* 107 (1987), 62-66; Philip Butterss, "The Less Rebellious Frank the Poet", *Overland* 112 (1988), 58-62; Phillip Butterss, "James Lester Burke, Martin Cash and Frank The Poet", *Australian Literary Studies,* vol.15, no. 1 (1991), 220-225. *The New Literary History of Australia* (Penguin, 1988) has several entries on MacNamara, placing him squarely in the Irish balladeer tradition (pp. 199, 207).
9. Meredith and Whalan, *Frank The Poet,* pp. 45-51. All further references will be to this edition.
10. "Much of MacNamara's vocabulary and literary style seems to have been borrowed from Swift, whilst many of his metres and rhyming patterns were inspired by Burns." *Ibid,* p. 27.
11. See Roslyn Pesman Cooper, "Sir Samuel Griffith, Dante and the Italian Presence in Nineteenth-Century Australian Literary Culture", *Australian Literary Studies,* vol. 14, no. 2. (October, 1989).

English interest in, and the first complete translations of, the *Divine Comedy* occurred precisely during the period in which Frank was growing up in Ireland.[12] Unfortunately, a lack of information about MacNamara's early years — a period when, as one contemporary states, "a tattered Ovid or Virgil may be found even in the hands of common labourers"[13] — makes it impossible for us to know what access MacNamara may have had to the great Dante revival which was in train in England during the early years of the 19th century. All the same, the possibility would still seem to remain an open one for in his 230 line poem (minuscule, of course, if compared to Dante's 14,000 lines) the Irish convict poet journeys, like Dante, through Hell and Purgatory (though not in that order), meeting souls of the departed and, finally, momentarily, reaches Paradise just before waking from what is revealed to have been no more than a wishful daydream. In itself, of course, this need not necessarily point us in the direction of Dante but the uncanny familiarity of some of the imagery would also suggest that the possibility of a connection between Dante and Frank's poem should not be discounted without a close examination of the *Tour* and it is this that I propose to do in the following pages.

Let us note that the *Tour to Hell,* unlike so much of MacNamara's other extemporaneous verse, seems to have been originally conceived and composed as a *written* piece. MacNamara's authorship of the poem and its renown and popularity amongst the convicts is supported by, amongst other things, its recital by a "yarner" in a short story published in the 1890s by Price Warung.[14] In Warung's story the poem is recited ritually every night in the barracks by a storyteller as a sort of carnivalesque celebration by the convicts against their harsh and cruel jailers and significantly the character of Satan, when he appears in the poem, is explicitly glossed as "the Chief Ruler of the System".

The poem opens with an address by the Poet to "You prisoners of New South Wales/ Who frequent watchhouses and jails" to whom he promises to recount "a convict's tour to hell".[15] The convict in question, immediately

12. On Dante's fortunes in English see the classic compilation by Paget Toynbee, *Dante in English Literature,* 2 vols. *op. cit.* See also William J. De Sua, *Dante into English* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1964) and Gilbert F. Cunningham, *The Divine Comedy in English: A Critical Bibliography 1982-1900* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965). For a more recent and somewhat critical appraisal of these earlier studies now see V. Tinkler-Villani, *Visions of Dante in English Poetry: translations of the Commedia from Jonathan Richardson to William Blake* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989).
13. T.C. Croker, *Researches in the South of Ireland* (London, 1824), p. 326, cited in W.B. Stanford, *Ireland and the Classical Tradition* (Dublin: Figgis & Co., 1976), p. 25.
14. See "The Ross Gang 'Yarner'-ship" in *Tales of the Convict System: Selected Stories of Price Warung,* edited by B. G. Andrews (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1975).
15. Inevitably, since its transmission was largely oral, the poem came to exist in a variety of different versions. For reasons of simplicity, I will confine my discussion to the version supplied by Whalan and Meredith in *Frank The Poet.*

identifiable as an alter ego of the poet himself, after having for many years "been" tried/on the highway [of life?] before he died" finally, mercifully, "fell to death a prey" and thus immediately and without fear, it would seem, makes his way to the Stygian lake.

As the very embodiment of what was later to become the legend of the resourceful Australian bushman, the poet soon attempts "a tent to fix/ contiguous to the River Styx" though he is immediately startled by the arrival of Charon who, in a rather more friendly tone than Dante's infernal ferryman, asks after the poet's identity. With full equanimity the traveller replies "Since you seem so anxious to know it/On earth I was called Frank the Poet". With a touch of surprise which uncannily, even if only distantly, echoes Dante's own first words to Virgil "Or se' tu quel Virgilio e quella fonte/ che spandi di parlar sì largo fiume?"["Canst thou be that Virgil and that fount/From whom so wide a river of speech has flowed?"] (*Inf.* I, 78-80)

> Are you that person? Charon cried,
> I'll carry you to the other side

and, moreover, in deference to Frank's great poetic renown, Charon offers to waive the fee of sixpence which he normally charges the damned souls.

Charon's vessel thus sets sail and, favoured by fair wind and tide, soon deposits Frank on the far and fatal shore. In no time at all Frank arrives at Purgatory, also called, he says, "Limbo or the Middle State" and his loud rapping at the door is answered by no less than the most recently deceased pope at the time, Pope Pius VII. The Poet duly begs admission but he is denied entrance:

> Pius rejoined, vain are your hopes
> This place was made for Priests and Popes
> Tis a world of our own invention
> But friend I've not the least intention
> To admit such a foolish elf
> Who scarce knows how to bless himself.

Noting —again with surprising equanimity— the sounds of "weeping, wailing, gnashing", the ubiquitous presence of fire and "torments of the newest fashion" in this place, Frank abandons Pius to his self-inflicted torments. Saying

> Therefore I call you a silly elf
> who made a rod to whip yourself

he passes on to confront "the gloomy gate" of Hell.

His loud and insistent knocking at the gates of Hell is answered by the Devil in person, urbanely asking "pray what what's your will?." Nevertheless he also denies the Poet access to this place, this time for the rather simple reason that the poet is poor and, says Satan,

> none shall in my kingdom stand
> except the grandees of the land.

In any case, the Devil adds, if the poet is indeed the convict he appears to be, he has surely taken the wrong path for convicts never come this way

> but soar to Heaven in droves and legions
> A place so called in the upper regions.

No doubt reassured by the certainty of salvation, and rather like Dante's Bellacqua in the ante-Purgatorio, the Poet declares himself to be in no hurry and tarries to quiz the Devil about the inhabitants of this region. He begins by asking after the fate of Captain Murray, overseer of the Phoenix Hulk ("a stationary hellship", in the words of Robert Hughes[16]), to which MacNamara had himself been confined for some time. The Devil confirms Murray's presence in this place and even offers to lead Frank to him but the poet refuses the invitation and begins instead to enquire about some of the other tormented souls to be seen around him, all of whom turn out to be hated warders and lackeys of the System. After seeing Captain Logan who had run the infamous Moreton Bay settlement with an iron fist but who had been himself speared by aborigines (to the great glee of the convicts who, as Robert Hughes reports, claimed to have found his emaciated body "looking down to Hell for that's where he's going"[17]) the poet looks upon two figures, Cook "who first discovered New South Wales" and a no better identified "he that first invented jails" who "Are both tied to a fiery stake/ which stands in yonder burning lake". After listening to a "dreadful yelling" coming, he is told, from Doctor Wardell's dwelling, he sees a large assembly "of fiery seats and chairs/ [...] fitted up for Dukes and Mayors" which, it seems, are awaiting all the bureaucrats of the carceral system, the "nobles of Judicial orders/Barristers, Lawyers and Recorders." And here, says the Poet,

16. *The Fatal Shore,* p. 461.
17. *Ibid.,* p. 451.

I beheld legions of traitors
Hangmen, gaolers and flagellators
Commandants, Constables and Spies
Informers and Overseers likewise
In flames of brimstone they were toiling
And lakes of sulphur round them boiling.

Having thus, in a little over a hundred lines, already reached the region of traitors which in Dante takes 30 cantos of infernal traveling, we might gainfully pause at this point in order to compare and contrast Frank's Hell with Dante's. The ubiquitous fire inside this "gloomy gate" (can one hear a faint echo of Dante's "colore oscuro" of *Inf.* III, 10?) admittedly recalls more the hell of Christian folklore and of English medieval plays than the meticulous order and geography of Dante's *Inferno.* And, to those who have stood freezing, with Dante, teeth a-chattering on the frozen lake of Cocytus, the contrast between Dante's region of traitors and that of MacNamara could hardly seem more glaring and more absolute. Dante has the traitors, with Satan at their centre, frozen fast in the heartless barricade of their own *lago del cor,* all ordered and distinguished by location and position. By contrast, Frank has thrown them all together to blaze, boil and burn in fiery sulphur and brimstone. Yet one has to admire how, even within this rather generic fire-filled hell, MacNamara manages to differentiate them and create some extraordinarily stark and dramatic images of infernal punishment, images that might be thought, in their inventiveness, to have something Dantesque about them. Captain Cook and the no better identified "he who first invented gaols", for instance, are tied *together* to the fiery stake which stands in yonder burning lake. Not a textbook example of *contrapasso,* admittedly, and a coupling which seems in no way to be governed by the inexorable moral logic which nails sinners such as Ulysses and Diomedes or Ugolino and Ruggieri to each other for all eternity so as to expiate their sinful partnerships on earth. Nevertheless, seen from the point of view of a transportee to a British colony which had become synonymous with prison, this coupling of Cook and the first inventor of gaols appears as a supremely fitting infernal punishment. And even more appropriate and more surprising is the suffering of the pair of sinners that Frank meets immediately after the legion of informers and overseers:

And Captain Cluney by his side
With a fiery belt they were lashed together
As tight as soles to upper leather.
Their situation was most horrid
For they were tyrants down at the Norrid.

The simile which expresses the forced proximity of these sinners to each other is startlingly appropriate and the form of punishment certainly does have something of the Dantesque *contrapasso* about it. These tyrants together trod on prisoners with an iron heel, so now, through the action of the simile, they come to take on the aspect of a composite shoe, suffering a punishment symbolically appropriate to the tyranny they practised in life. Furthermore —and again uncannily— this simile cannot fail to remind readers of Dante of another pair of sinners frozen into eternal cohabitation in the lake of Cocytus. We will remember that, soon after having been set down on the surface of the lake by the giant, Anteus, Dante records the sight of a pair of sinners who turn out to be Napoleone and Alessandro degli Alberti, brothers who killed each other over their father's inheritance:

> Quando io m'ebbi dintorno alquanto visto,
> volsimi a' piedi, e vidi due sì stretti
> che il pel del capo avieno insieme misto.
> "Ditemi, voi che strignete i petti"
> Diss'io, "chi siete?" E quei piegaro i colli;
> e poi ch'ebber li visi a me eretti,
> li occhi lor, ch'eran pria pur dentro molli,
> gocciar su per le labbra, e 'l gelo strinse
> le lagrime tra essi e riserrolli.
> Con legno legno spranga mai non cinse
> forte così; ond'ei come due becchi
> cozzaro insieme, tanta ira li vinse.
>
> [My gaze roamed round awhile, and, when it came
> Back to my feet, found two shades so close pressed,
> The hair was mingled on the heads of them.
> I said: "You two cramponed breast to breast,
> Tell me who you are." They heaved their necks a-strain
> To see me; and as they stood with faces raised,
> Their eyes, which were but inly wet till then,
> Gushed at the lids; at once the fierce frost blocked
> The tears between and sealed them shut again.
> Never was wood to wood so rigid locked
> By clamps of iron; like butting goats they jarred
> Their heads together, by helpless fury rocked.
> D. L. Sayers' translation] (Inf. XXXII, 40-51)

MacNamara's image, it must be said, lacks the narrational extension

and the elaborate elegance of Dante's simile but the claustrophobic proximity of the pair of sinners is conveyed with a similar intensity and style. This is still far from any positive proof that Frank has been influenced by the Dantean text but the similarity continues to tantalize.

The poet next sees the figure of an ex-company commissioner in a prostrate position offering a petition to the Devil, and then Frank comes upon Sergeant Flood:

> Then I saw old Serjeant Flood
> In Vulcan's hottest forge he stood
> He gazed at me his eyes with ire
> appeared like burning coals of fire
> In fiery garments he was arrayed
> And like an Arabian horse he brayed
> He on a bloody cutlass leaned
> And to a lamp-post he was chained
> He loudly called out for assistance
> Or begged me to end his existence.

Readers of Dante might again think they recognize some familiar elements here. Uppermost in memory might be the figure of Charon in *Inf.* III who arrives with loud shouting to ferry the souls of the dead to the other shore. Dante's Charon has a white, wooly beard and "intorno a li occhi avea di fiamme rote" ["around his eyes flared wheels of fire"]. Persuaded by Virgil's sharp rebuke to look elsewhere for infernal cargo for his boat, he approaches the multitude of shivering sinners :

> Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia
> loro accennando, tutte le raccoglie;
> batte col remo qualunque s'adagia.
>
> [Demon Charon, eyes burning like coals,
> With his oar beats all the malingerers
> And rounds them up and to him calls.]
> (Inf. III, 109-111)

Of course, this is nothing like MacNamara's Charon, whom we have already met as an altogether more meek and friendly figure but one might imagine that the burning-coal eyes of Dante's Charon have been transposed to old, cruel Sergeant Flood who, it is true, has no white wooly beard but the bloody cutlass on which he leans is not too unlike the oar wielded by Dante's "demon Charon". Furthermore, although Sergeant

Flood's willful cruelty couldn't be more different to the ignominious vacillation of that infinite crowd of sinners that Dante and Virgil have met just before Charon's approach, it is indeed curious that Flood's call to Frank to end his existence recalls their cry for a second death. Both of them plea in vain, for Virgil tells Dante "Questi non hanno speranza di morte" [These have no hope of being granted death] (*Inf.* III, 46) and Frank likewise answers Flood:

> Cheer up said I be not afraid
> Remember No. Three Stockade
> In the course of time you may do well
> If you behave yourself in Hell.

For the moment we're still attempting to note points of similarity between Frank's *Tour* and the *Divine Comedy* but by now we would have to admit that the differences that appear to consistently emerge alongside the similarities forcefully undermine the possibility of establishing any real influence between them and, if anything, would seem to argue the contrary. All the same let us continue the tour with Frank for the next figure that we meet again has an uncanny air of familiarity about him.

> Then I beheld that well known Trapman
> The Police Runner called Izzy Chapman,
> Here he was standing on his head
> In a river of melted boiling lead.

The appropriateness of a notorious police tracker, a so-called runner, being eternally punished by being thrust head-down into boiling lead, eyes no longer being able to track and feet no longer able to run, again might suggest some of the neatness of the Dantean *contrapasso.* Furthermore, the graphic image might also bring to the mind of a Dante reader the punishment of the evil popes in the *bolgia* of the simonists (*Inf.* XIX) who are similarly thrust head-down into dark wells whilst flames flicker eternally along the soles of their upturned feet. And yet, as has by now become something of a pattern, glaring differences also immediately emerge, here perhaps, in the form of the conceptual difficulty of connecting the evil perpetrated by a police tracker with the ecclesiastical sin of simony. Nevertheless, the situation of Izzy Chapman appears even more unnervingly Dantesque than any of the images we have considered so far for, despite "standing on his head in a river of boiling lead", Chapman actually speaks to Frank (how?!) as the poem continues:

Alas he cried behold me stranger
I've captured many a bold bushranger
And for the same I'm suffering here
But lo, now yonder snakes draw near
On turning round I saw slow worms
And snakes of various kinds and forms
All entering at his mouth and nose
To devour his entrails as I suppose

If we are willing to invoke poetic licence and to discount the inconsistency between Chapman's head being in a river of molten lead yet his mouth still being somehow free enough to be able to speak and then to be entered by worms and snakes, we seem to be again faced with further reminiscences of the *Inferno,* the "slow worms" recalling perhaps the "fastidiosi vermi" that torment the ignominious vacillators of canto III and the snakes recalling the horrific imagery of the serpents which pierce and invade the bodies of the thieves in cantos XXIV and XXV.

Frank's next encounter is more straightforward but curiously seems to enunciate quite explicitly a homespun version of the *contrapasso.* Though in no way perturbed by the spectacle of the snakes (as Dante certainly is in canto XXV since he actually, at that point, addresses the reader directly with his horror), Frank nevertheless turns from Chapman with the intention of leaving this place but Lucifer quickly attempts to detain him:

Saying Frank by no means go man
Till you see your old friend Dr. Bowman
Yonder he tumbles, groans and gnashes
He gave you many a thousand lashes
And for the same he does bewail
For Osker with an iron flail
Thrashes him well you may depend
And will till the world comes to an end.

Meredith and Whalan trace the allusion "Osker with an iron flail" to an Irish song called "The Doneraille Litany"[18] but whilst this explanation is convincing it is nevertheless curious that the logic of the *contrapasso* which is explicitly invoked here is not found in the original.

At this point a coach and four drives up in haste and, rather comically, all Hell breaks into three cheers as

about six feet of mortal sin
without leave or licence trudged in

18. *Frank The Poet,* p. 50.

The arrival of this apparently long-awaited and much-welcome guest is celebrated with great merriment and pageantry:

> And all the inhabitants of Hell
> With one consent rang the great bell
> Which never was heard to sound or ring
> Since Judas sold our Heavenly King.
> Drums were beating, flags were hoisting
> There never before was such rejoicing
> Dancing singing joy and mirth
> In Heaven above or on the earth

Frank turns to Lucifer to ask the meaning of these celebrations and

> Of sense cried Lucifer I'm deprived
> Since Governor Darling has arrived
> With fire and brimstone I've ordained him
> And Vulcan has already chained him

But by now Lucifer is keen to be off to prepare a place for a certain Captain Rossi, a superintendent of police, and invites Frank to come along and meet another new arrival, an unnamed magistrate from the police office. At this point, in something of an anticlimax, especially after all the merriment at Governor Darling's arrival, Frank quite simply decides to retire from Hell and in two lines

> having travelled many days
> O'er fiery hills and boiling seas

effortlessly reaches "that happy place/ Where all the woes of mortals cease."

Rapping loudly, as he has done before, Frank is answered —predictably— by St. Peter who is, if anything, rather more brusque than any of the other guardians Frank has encountered in the lower depths. St. Peter asks him to show his certificate of freedom or, alternatively, to name any acquaintances who may already be in Heaven. Frank begins by naming Brave Donohue, the bushranger, and "many others whom floggers mangled" but Jesus, who has overheard him speak, immediately tells Peter to let Frank in for "although in convict's habit dressed/ here he shall be a welcome guest". Isaiah is now told to go dress Frank in a scarlet robe, St. Paul is ordered off to kill the fatted calf and a message is sent to "Abraham and Abel/ in haste now to prepare the table/ For we shall have a grand repast/ Since Frank the Poet has come at last." Then Moses and Elias, John the

Baptist, Mathias and a host of other saints all throng around him singing and rejoicing but abruptly

> as they praised his glorious name
> I woke and found 'twas but a dream.

✳ ✳ ✳

Having thus reached the end of Frank's *Tour* we should now be in a position to attempt an evaluation of any debt to Dante on the part of MacNamara but unfortunately, at this point, one would have to say that the evidence, such as it is, tends to the negative. The theme of a voyage to the otherworld was certainly perfected by Dante in the *Commedia* but it is not exclusive to it, being everywhere present in both literature and folklore. Furthermore, although some of Frank's images may seem familiar to a reader of Dante, this familiarity is more likely to be a function of the cultural background that the reader brings to the work than anything inherent in the work itself. In fact, after a closer examination, we would have to admit that, whatever similarities do exist, they are too generic to count as solid proof of any real textual acquaintance with Dante's poem and moreover, there are pronounced differences that continue to surface at every point of our comparison, between Dante's highly literate style and MacNamara's colloquial, casual rhymes, between Dante's elevated but submissive moral tone and MacNamara's defiant, iconoclastic bravado. And we might also note another crucial difference: Dante's journey, and his ultimate vision, are presented to the reader as *real* whereas the ending to Frank's *Tour* openly admits that it was nothing more than an exercise in wish-fulfilment, "twas only a dream". But, perhaps, what is most significant is the fact that, as unlike Dante in this respect as he is from other Australian poets of this early period, poets such as Barron Fields, William Charles Wentworth, Charles Tompson, and even the currency poet, Charles Harpur, Frank is quite clearly not a writer-poet attempting to locate himself within a literary tradition in order to communicate a universal moral vision to the world at large but rather a quick-witted rhymester attempting to do no more than to provide bittersweet entertainment for a circle of fellow-convicts trapped, like himself, in the relentless coils

of the carceral system.[19] Sadly, then, after a closer look at Frank's poem, the Dante hypothesis itself appears to be nothing more substantial than a pipe dream and we come to be returned to the original suggestion made by Whalan and Meredith that if MacNamara's highly spontaneous versifying can be located in any poetic tradition at all, it can only be that of Irish balladeering with a dash of Swiftian satire.

Nevertheless, if our failure to confirm any influence of Dante on MacNamara's *Tour* is disappointing from the point of view of Dante scholarship, it in no way demeans Frank's clever and amusing poem per se, for what the *Tour* thus loses in terms of high literary heritage it gains in terms of verve and originality. And in the end we might consider that, if our tour of the *Tour* has achieved little in terms of *Quellenforschung,* in consolation it has vouchsafed us a rare opportunity to revisit the work of this remarkable bush bard who could defiantly create poetry from his convict chains and who might thus still rightly claim the title of Australia's first, and perhaps only, bush Dante.[20]

19. One might note, for example, the contrast between MacNamara's portrayal of Cook tied to a stake in a boiling lake and Wentworth's "Illustrious Cook! Columbus of our shore,/ To whom was left this unknown world deplore;" quoted in Michael Auckland, *That Shining Band: A Study of Australian Colonial Verse Tradition* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1994), p. 21. Auckland argues convincingly that during this early period Australian poetry functions largely in the service of the British imperialist project. Clearly, MacNamara, as a recidivist convict who, in any case, would probably not have had any access to poetry being published at the time , stands completely outside and, as a rebellious Irishman, against, such a project.
20. I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Elio Gatti and to the Rev. Ted Kennedy for having first raised the possibility of a connection between MacNamara and Dante, and to art historian, Dr. Helen Topliss, who came up with the felicitous characterization of Frank as "a Dante of the bush".

Sir Samuel Griffith, Dante and the Italian Presence in Nineteenth-Century Australian Literary Culture

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Sir Samuel Griffith's place in Australian history rests on his public career, as Premier of Queensland, Chief Justice of Queensland, and after Federation as the first Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.[1] But he has another claim to fame. Griffith is the author of the first and only Australian translation of the *Divine Comedy*. In 1898 Griffith published his first Dante translation, Cantos V, XXXII and XXXIII of the *Inferno,* the stories of Francesca da Rimini and Ugolino della Gherardesca.[2] Ten years later, his completed translation of *Inferno* appeared,[3] and in 1911 Oxford University Press issued the *Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri, literally translated into English by the Right Honourable Sir Samuel Walker Griffith C.G.M.G., M.A., Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.* Griffith continued his Dante translation with the *Vita Nuova* which was printed for private circulation in 1914.

Griffith's translation of Dante has attracted some attention as a fascinating, and to some extent inexplicable, event in his biography.[4] But it can be approached in another way, as a document for Australian cultural history. In recent years, the framework for the exploration of Australian literary culture has widened to include what was read as well as what was written, to encompass what G. A. Wilkes has nicely termed the culture of the 'croquet lawn' as well as that of the 'stockyard', the bush tradition.[5] Part

1. For Griffith's life and work, Roger Joyce, *Samuel Walker Griffith* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984).
2. *Two stories from Dante Alighieri, literally translated in the original metre* (Brisbane: Powell, 1898)
3. *The Inferno of Dante Alighieri. Literally translated into English verse in the measure of the original* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1908).
4. Henry A. Tardent, 'Sir Samuel Griffith as a Poet', *The Muses Magazine,* December 1927; Clifford J. Pannam, 'Dante and the Chief Justice', *The Australian Law Journal,* 33 (1959), 290—294; Joyce, *Samuel Walker Griffith,* pp. 246, 286, 320, 399, 407.
5. G. A. Wilkes, *The Stockyard and the Croquet Lawn* (Melbourne: Edward Arnold, 1981).

of the 'croquet lawn' is the little investigated cultivation of the traditions of European high culture.[6]

The task of this study is to uncover, quantify and interpret the presence of one strand of that culture, Italian literature and Italy as literary inspiration. Griffith's *Divine Comedy* provides a focal point. But it should be emphasised at the outset that literature was not the dominant Italian cultural form in nineteenth-century Australia. Music was more conspicuous and influential, and art and antiquity were more common associations with Italy than was literature.[7] Moreover, interest in French literary culture was much greater.[8] Nevertheless, the recovery of the Italian literary presence does disclose something more about the cultural preoccupations of the educated colonial bourgeoisie, the extent to which they participated in an international culture, and the transmission of European culture to Australia.

The following discussion is divided into two parts. The first takes a sounding of the Italian presence in the mid-nineteenth century coinciding with Samuel Griffith's time as a student in Sydney and with his first visit to Italy. The second part looks at the situation at the turn of the century, the decades on the one hand of the Australian legend and on the other of Griffith's translation of one of the sacred texts of European high culture.

The colonial élite of civil, military and ecclesiastical authorities brought their cultural inheritance to the Antipodes.[9] They imported tutors, established schools to educate their children in the classical tradition or sent them home to English and Scottish schools and universities and on the continental Grand Tour to acquire experience and culture. Subscriptions to British newspapers and literary magazines kept them in touch with metropolitan developments and fashions. Nor were cultural and educational aspirations confined to the elité; Daniel Deniehy's emancipist par-

6. For an initial exploration, Elizabeth Webby, 'Literary and Theatrical Connections Between Australia and Europe 1788-1850', *Commonwealth,* 6 (1984), 5-10.
7. For an introductory overview, Roslyn Pesman Cooper, 'Italian-Australian Cultural Relations', *Il Veltro,* 33 (1988), 39-48. On Italian music in Australia, Therese Radic, 'Italian Opera in Nineteenth Century Melbourne', *Quaderni dell'Istituto italiano di Cultura,* Melbourne, 4 (1971), 57-66; Harold Love, The *Golden Age of Australian Opera: W S. Lyster and His Companies1861-1880* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1981).
8. On the French presence, Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1981), pp. 96-101; *The French-Australian Cultural Connection,* ed. A.M. Nisbet and M. Blackman (Sydney: School of French, University of NSW, 1984).
9. On mid-nineteenth century colonial cultural interests, George Nadel, *Australian Colonial Culture* (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1957); Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851-1861* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1963); Ann-Marie Jordens, 'Cultural Life in Melbourne 1850-1870', unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1967; Elizabeth Webby, 'Literature and the Reading Public in Australia 1800-l850', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1971; Ann-Marie Jordens, *The Stenhouse Circle: Literary Life in Mid-Nineteenth Century Sydney* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press,1979); R. White, *Inventing Australia.*

ents escorted him through the galleries and museums of Europe in 1843.

The intellectual life of the colonies expanded considerably from the 1840s with the beginning of large scale immigration and the arrival of members of the educated middle-class, lawyers like Nicol Stenhouse and James Michael in Sydney and Redmond Barry in Melbourne, journalists like James Smith, W. A. Duncan and Frank Fowler, minor literary figures like R. H. Horne, university professors like John Woolley, Charles Badham and W. E. Hearn. Writer and banker H. G. Turner later argued that these immigrants 'infused into the somewhat primitive surroundings, the charm of high culture and refined manners.'[10] In their informal literary groups, through their writing and their initiatives in the public arena, these men laboured mightily to plant and nurture 'the great tradition' in the colonies both as a worthy end in itself and as the means to social salvation. Culture, literature and art would unite the disparate, rootless groups of immigrants and native-born into a stable, harmonious society and rescue the colonies from sinking into a morass of materialism. Their labours produced public libraries and art galleries, universities and mechanics' institutes, philharmonic concerts and grand opera seasons, literary societies and magazines. Thus by the early decades of the second half of the nineteenth century, the cities of the Australian colonies were possessed of a cultural life and institutions comparable to those of the larger British provincial cities. It was indeed a consumer culture but one that suffered little from the tyranny of distance. It was also a culture that went beyond English literature, learning and history to include that of Europe.

Sir Charles Nicholson, the Chancellor of the newly-established University of Sydney, wrote in 1860 to the Australian-born painter, Adelaide Ironside, in Rome:

> I still sigh to see old Rome once more. Having tasted the inspiration of Italy, I cannot reconcile myself to the gum trees and kangaroos ...[11]

In the following year, Nicholson delivered a lengthy public lecture, entitled *Recollections of Italy,* a combination of personal experience and a potted history of the Italian peninsula. During the lecture he declared that it is 'in the literature of Italy and in her history that the chief source is to be found of the sympathy that binds every educated person to her soil.'[12] In the same year that Nicholson wrote to Ironside of his longing for Italy,

10. *The Aims and Objectives of a Literature Society* (Melbourne, 1903), p. 14.
11. Nicholson to Adelaide Ironside, 20 July 1860, Mitchell Library, Sydney (from here on Mit. Lib.), Ironside Papers, MSS 272, Item 1, 157.
12. 'Recollections of Italy', University of Sydney Archives, Nicholson Papers.

Samuel Griffith, the son of an immigrant Welsh Congregational clergyman, left Maitland just before his sixteenth birthday and began his studies in classics, mathematics and the natural sciences at Sydney University. His undergraduate career was studded with prizes and scholarships, and two years after his graduation the University gave him its richest reward, the Mort Scholarship, a grant of £350 for travel in England and Europe to study either the aesthetic or mechanical arts. Griffith chose to pursue the former, resolving 'to go where I would find the most beautiful in Nature, Sculpture, Painting and Architecture'.[13] England and Italy were Griffith's goals and two of his ten months abroad were spent touring Italy. In preparation for his pilgrimage, Griffith studied Italian during the voyage from Australia to England. He must have achieved some degree of competence because when he crossed the border from France into Italy and first tried out his Italian, he 'was much delighted finding that I could speak intelligibly'.[14]

The report which Griffith presented to the authorities at the University of Sydney on his cultural pilgrimage through the Italian peninsula suggests that he had arrived there with his head already full of images that derived from books. In Venice he wrote of visiting a 'scene so interwoven with the wondrous histories which have been the delight of our boyhood and youth'. Venice was more sombre and dirty than he had anticipated but in other respects 'he thought that pictures and books give a very fruitful representation'.[15] Thus through his education and intellectual contacts in the colony, 'Italy' was a familiar place for Griffith, or rather the 'Italy' of English literature and imagination, the land of Antiquity and monuments, of the Renaissance and of Art, of ruins and the Romantic. 'Italy' was mediated to Griffith through English sources; the colonial cultural relationship with Italy echoed that of the metropolis.

The decades that witnessed the beginnings of British colonisation in Australia coincided with a new wave of Italomania in England, associated with Romanticism.[16] But whereas the earlier sixteenth-century fascination had been with Italy's contemporary products – the new politics and the new learning of humanism, lyric poetry, codes of behaviour and demeanour – the Romantics looked to the cultural artifacts of the past, and to ruins and decadence as literary site and subject matter. The English

13. S. W. Griffith, Report on Mort Travelling Fellowship, 1866-1867, unpublished manuscript, Fisher Library, University of Sydney, p.1; Diary of a Tour of Europe, La Trobe Library, Melbourne (from here on Lat. Lib.), MSS 10875.
14. Mort Travelling Fellowship, p. 11.
15. Diary of a Tour of Europe, pp. 234, 247.
16. On the English relationship with Italy, C. P. Brand, *Italy and The English Romantic*s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957); Kenneth Churchill, *Italy and English Literature* 1764-1930 (London: Macmillan, l980).

relationship with Italy thus comprised not only an acquaintance with the literary heritage but also a view of Italy as inspiration and a whole corpus of literature with 'Italian' settings and characters.

Romantic Italy was exported to the colonies as part of the cultural baggage of the educated immigrants and in English books and periodicals. It was then reproduced in local literary efforts. After Sir Walter Scott, Byron was the most widely advertised author in the Australian colonies in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. And of Byron's works, it was *Childe Harold,* which was the most popular.[17] As other products of the Italianate genre arrived in the colonies, they were reviewed and serialised in the local press.[18]

In the first half of the nineteenth century Italy, and particularly the Italy of the Renaissance, was a conventional setting for English drama as indeed it had been from Shakespeare's day. The nineteenth-century fashion had no less a leader than Byron with his *Marino Falieri* and *The Two Foscari.* The Italianate plays of his lesser brethren appeared regularly on the colonial stage. Among the productions at Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal in the 1830s were *Angelo or the Tyrant of Padua* (F. T. Cooper), *The Maid of Genoa or the Bandit Merchant* (J. Farrell), *Clari or the Maid of Milan* (J. H. Payne), *Rugantonio or the Bravo of Venice* (M.G. Lewis), and *Rinaldo Rinaldi or the Secret Avengers* (T. E. Wilkes).[19] But the provincials in the colony not only staged English 'Renaissance dramas'; in time they wrote their own. In 1843, the *New South Wales Magazine* serialised *Fredoni,* a tragedy set in Venice by Robert Kibble.[20] The schoolmaster Edward Reeve's historical tragedy, *Raymond Lord of Milan, a Tragedy of the Thirteenth Century,* attracted considerable attention when it was published and performed in the next decade. Described as 'the most successful drama which has been produced in this colony', it was attacked in the Catholic press because it was 'pervaded throughout with such undisguised intolerance of the Catholic Church.'[21] This criticism notwithstanding, the play enjoyed a number of performances. Another colonial tragedy with an Italian historical setting was *Francesca Vasari* by James Finnamore, published in 1863.[22] As T. Inglis Moore has pointed out, nineteenth-century colonial

17. Webby, 'Literature and the Reading Public', vol. II, p. 5.
18. See for example the reviews in *The Atlas,* 1845-1848.
19. See the lists of productions in Eric Irvin, *Theatre Comes to Australia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1971).
20. *New South Wales Magazine,* March, April, May, June 1843.
21. *Freemans Journal,* 19 September 1863.
22 *Francesca Vasari: A Tragedy in Five Acts* (Melbourne: W. H,. William, 1865).

playwrights assumed that local life was unsuitable subject matter for drama.[23] Italy was a pre-eminent setting and particularly for melodrama and tales of passion, betrayal, assassination and revenge.

These were the themes of three short stories set in Italy which were published in the 1830s: *The Italian Gentleman, A Venetian Story,* and *Stradella, the Musician.*[24] Novelist and journalist, Marcus Clarke's *The Mantuan Apothecary* was based on the Romeo and Juliet legend.[25] The first use of contemporary Italy as subject matter in colonial writing, W. H. Christie's pseudonymously published novel *A Love Story by a Bushman,* was also one of the first full length works of fiction published in the colonies.[26] Christie was a military officer who arrived in Sydney with his regiment in 1835 and chose to remain and settle. His novel, a melodramatic romance set in Malta, Naples and Italy, constructed contrasts between calm, controlled Northern Europe and the passionate south, an Italy of 'purple skies', 'song, revelry and grace', 'moving life', and endless vistas, sights and moments for the painter's brush. Italy also provided themes for colonial poets whether through translations from Italian poets – Petrarch, Metastasio, Tasso – or through recollections and evocations.[27] Samuel Griffith was by no means the first colonist to be inspired by Dante. Sir William à Beckett, Chief Justice of Victoria in the mid-nineteenth century, wrote verse based on *Inferno,* Canto 5, the story of Francesca da Rimini.[28]

If 'literary Italy' came early to the colonies, so too did an interest in Italian language and literature. An advertisement in the Sydney Gazette of 3 February 1816, offered lessons in French, Italian and Spanish. Thirty years later, the city Grammar School in Bridge Street included the reading of the French and Italian classics in its curriculum.[29] As in England, so too in the colonies some smattering of Italian was a fashionable acquisition for young ladies. The girls of the Stephen household were given Italian as

23. *Social Patterns in Australian Literature* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1971), p. 104.
24. *New South Wales Magazine,* December 1833; *The Literary News,* 2, 30, September 1837.
25. *Australian Monthly Register,* March 1866.
26. *Sydney:* G. W. Evans, 1841. On Christie, *Australian Dictionary of Biography,* Vol. III (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1969), pp. 393-394.
27. See the check list, Elizabeth Webby, *Early Australian Poetry: An Annotated Bibliography of Original Poems Published in Australian Newspapers, Magazines and Almanacs Before 1850* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1982). Before coming to the colonies, Charles Joseph Latrobe released his book of short poems with much Italian subject matter, *The Solace of Song: Short Poems suggested by Scenes visited on a Continental Tour, Chiefly in Italy* (London: R. B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1837).
28. William à Beckett, *The Earl's Choice and Other Poems* (London: Smith Elder, 1863). The volume also contains verses evoking à Beckett's experience and perception of Naples.
29. *Weekly Register,* 13 January 1844, p. 381.

well as French and German lessons.[30] Grace Black took instructions in the Italian language while sojourning in Rome on her Continental Tour in 1851.[31] But there was more to colonial acquaintance with Italian language and literature than fashionable accomplishment. Extant sale catalogues of private libraries reveal that most contained books of Italian travel, history, art, dictionaries, grammars and copies of at least the *Divine Comedy* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata,* often in Italian. Collectors of Italian works included Hannibal MacArthur, James Webber, Nicol Stenhouse, Daniel Deniehy and W.A. Duncan in Sydney and James Smith in Melbourne.[32] All knew the language. Among the first books published in the colonies were Duncan's translations of Silvio Pellico's historical poem *Araldo and Clara* and Pietro Metastasio's *Observations on the Poetics of Aristotle.*[33] Among others known to be familiar with the Italian language were Charles Badham, second professor of classics at the University of Sydney, and the writers, R. H. Horne and Marcus Clarke.[34] The last on one occasion prophesied that in view of the softness of the Australian climate, the colonists in the course of time 'would become Italianate Englishmen.'[35]

It was the Melbourne-based journalist and literary and art critic James Smith who displayed the strongest Italian links.[36] Before arriving in Victoria in 1854, Smith had visited Italy. It may have been during that visit that his interest in art developed. Shortly before his arrival in Australia, he published his study, *Lights and Shadows of Artist Life and Character.*[37] As well as collecting Italian books for both his own and public libraries, Smith published many articles over a wide range of topics on Italian culture, and was later one of the founders of the Dante Alighieri Society in

30. Elizabeth Windschuttle, 'Educating the Daughters of the Ruling Class in Colonial New South Wales 1788-1850', in *Melbourne Studies in Education* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, l980), p. 111.
31. Grace Black, Journal of a Tour on the Continent, January-June 1852, Lat. Lib. MSS 8996, 59a, p. 91.
32. See the holdings of sale catalogues, Mit. Lib., and Webby, 'Literature and the Reading Public', I, Ch, 1; Jordens, *The Stenhouse Circle,* Appendix 3, pp. 152-153; Lurline Stuart, 'James Smith's Private Library', *Bulletin,* The Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, 6 1982, 23-40.
33. W. A. Duncan, *Araldo and Clara: an historical poem translated (in prose) from the Italian of Silvio Pellico* (Sydney: Australian Chronicle, 1840); *Observations on the Poetics of Aristotle by Pietro Metastasio rendered into English with biographical notice of the author* (Sydney: Kemp & Fairfax, 1842). On Duncan, M. M. Payten, 'William Augustine Duncan 1811-1855. A Biography of a Colonial Reformer', unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of New South Wales, 1965.
34. On Badham, Thomas Butler, 'Memoir of Professor Badham', *Speeches and Lectures by the late Professor Badham* (Sydney: W. Dymock, 1890), pp. ix-xxxvi; On Horne, Ann Blainey, *The Farthing Poet. A Biography of Richard Hengist Horne* (London: Longmans Green, 1968).
35. *Sydney Morning Herald,* 26 April 1918.
36. On Smith, Lurline Stuart, 'James Smith: His Influence on the Development of Literary Culture in Colonial Melbourne', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1983. Now see also, Lurline Stuart, James Smith. *The Making of a Colonial Culture* (Sydney: Allan and Unwin, 1989).
37. London, 1853, n.p.

Melbourne. Smith was described by the Italian Consul in Melbourne as a distinguished literary figure with a sound knowledge of Italian and the capacity both to value Italian culture and promote its appreciation.[38] The Italian Government in due course recognised Smith's service with the conferring of the decoration, Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Corona d'Italia.[39] In 1882 Smith made a second visit to Italy and wrote a series of articles for the *Argus* on his pilgrimage.[40] His descriptions of his experiences reveal not only a keen and informed interest in Italian art and history but also some engagement with contemporary life in the peninsula, liberal sympathy with the Risorgimento and hopes for the emergence of Italy as a modern nation on the British model.[41]

These mid-nineteenth century literati were also the men who influenced the selection of books for public libraries. Stenhouse's collection went to Sydney University; the 1885 catalogue of the library indicates a considerable holding of Italian books in addition to this bequest.[42] In 1863, James Smith was appointed as librarian to the Parliament of Victoria. The post was later abolished; according to banker, historian and literary figure, H. G. Turner, one reason for discontent with Smith's stewardship was that he filled the library with French, Italian and foreign books.[43] The catalogue which Smith drew up in 1864, a copy of which he sent to the King of Italy, indicates that the complaints had some basis; Italian books in the library included the fifty-volume edition of the *Scrittori classici italiani,* eighteenth-century literary critic and historian Girolamo Tiraboschi's multi-volume history of Italian literature and the complete works of Machiavelli and Guicciardini.[44] Smith was also a trustee of the Victorian Public Library; the catalogue of 1870 indicates that just over five hundred Italian books were held in that library, some having been donated by the Italian Government. A decade later the number had doubled. As well as the standard classics of poetry and prose the library held the first sixty-four volumes of the *Archivio storico italiano.*

38. 'Distinto, letterato, ben cognito dell'italiano e in grado di apprezzarla e di farla apprezzare', Consul Biagi to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Rome, 25 May 1865, Archivio del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, Protocolli della Corrispondenza con le legazioni e Consolati Vari, Consolati, Pacco 253, Melbourne, 1861-1869.
39. Stuart, 'James Smith: 'His Influence', p. 73.
40. Many of the articles were collected into a volume, *From Melbourne to Melrose* (Melbourne: Centennial, 1888).
41. Roslyn Pesman Cooper, 'Australian Visitors to Italy in the Nineteenth Century', in *Australia, the Australians and the Italian Migration,* ed. G. Cresciani (Milan: F. Angeli, 1983), pp. 133-134.
42. Ann-Marie Jordens, 'The Stenhouse Collection', *Australian Academic and Research Libraries,* (1973), 6-14.
43. H. G. Turner, 'Some Representatives of Letters and Art in Melbourne in the Fifties', Lat. Lib., MSS 1625.
44. Consul Biagi to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Rome, 26 April 1866; Catalogue of the Library of the Parliament of Victoria (Melbourne, 1864).

The cultural interests of the colonial literati and the intent of the serious-minded members of the professional middle-classes that the high tradition of European culture should be transmitted to the colonies meant that access was available to the Italian classics, to Italian history and art, both in the original language and in translation. Further knowledge of Italian traditions could be gained from the very occasional article in the periodical literature of the time; for example, the essay in the Atlas in 1846 on eighteenth-century Italian criminologist Cesare Beccaria, Deniehy's discussion of Tasso and his translators in the *Southern Cross* or Duncan's series of brief biographies in his *Weekly Register* in the 1840s. His subjects included Titian, Michelangelo, Canova, Dante, Metastasio, Tiraboschi and Galileo.[45] The objective of discussion so far has been to quantify the Italian presence in colonial literary culture. As we have seen, it was the past that engaged the cognoscenti. Of contemporary literature, the sources so far reveal only some acquaintance with Alessandro Manzoni's *The Betrothed* and Silvio Pellico's *My Prison Days*.[46] Half a century later, that most ardent of all Italophiles, James Duhig, Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, was to recommend the Manzoni classic to Samuel Griffith.[47]

lt was also images and relics of the past that inspired poets and playwrights – and serious-minded tourists like Samuel Griffith. Nevertheless, the stirring events of the Risorgimento did for a moment transform the present into literary subject matter.[48] Thus for example in 1848, that Pope-hating parson, John Dunmore Lang, wrote his *Address to the Senate and People of Rome* congratulating them on their revolution. Lang's protegée, the painter Adelaide lronside, wrote verses for *The People's Advocate* linking Italian and Australian republicanism. James Smith celebrated Garibaldi's triumphs in a three-act play *Garibaldi* which was performed in both Sydney and Melbourne. The play was given local relevance by linking the Italian hero's life with those of a group of gold diggers in the Victorian fields. lf Garibaldi's success inspired Smith, it was his defeat at Aspromonte that was the subject of some high-minded lines from Sir William à Beckett.

Colonial interest in the Risorgimento was not, however, reflected in Samuel Griffith's report on his travels in Italy. His references to events around him were few; some comments from Monreale in Sicily on the sale of flesh of Sardinian soldiers during the recent peasant insurrections, a

45. *The Atlas,* 2 May 1846, p. 205; The *Southern Cross,* 22 October 1859.
46. The list of books read in the diary of William Bunn included *The Betrothed.* E. M. Curr on his Victorian station read *Le Mie Prigioni;* Webby, 'Literary and Theatrical Connections', 7.
47. Duhig to Griffith, 4 November 1911, Mit. Lib. Griffith Papers, MSS 363/10x, no. 294.
48. On the Risorgimento and the Australian colonies, Roslyn Pesman Cooper, 'Garibaldi e l'Australia', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento,* LXXII (1985), 205-213.

conversation on politics with an ex-Garibaldian carriage driver in Umbria, an exchange with a gondolier in Venice who hated the Austrians, and a sighting of the battlefields of Magenta and Novara.[49] His Italy like that of the majority of Australian visitors to the peninsula was the land of *The Dying Gladiator, Beatrice Cenci* and of Dante.[50]

The local enthusiasm for the Italian Risorgimento was an offshoot of the English appropriation of Italy's 'resurrection', just as colonial interest in Italy and its literature echoed British taste. There were occasions, however, when images of the Italian past were given local relevance: the cities of Renaissance Italy had been the sites of great cultural achievement; they had also been mercantile and commercial cities like Sydney and Melbourne. Thus if the bourgeoisie of the colonial cities exercised cultural patronage on the model of the Medici and their contemporaries, the Antipodean cities might in time become Florence on the Yarra or Venice on the Pacific.[51] The radical newspaper, the *People's Advocate* made a slight shift in the argument: Florence had been a free independent city; if the colonial cities espoused republicanism and independence, then they could emulate the greatness of the Renaissance.[52]

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Romantic cult of Italy in England had waned. And in large part colonial knowledge of the Italian language and literature was not a particularly Italian cult but a function of a general interest in European literature. Those who were acquainted with Italian were also familiar with French and German. Private and public libraries held much larger collections of French books and literary journals published more translations from, reviews about and excerpts from French literature. James Smith was not only instrumental in the foundation of the Melbourne Dante Alighieri Society but was also the first president of the French Literary Club.[53] Thus much of the significance of the presence in Italy in nineteenth-century literary culture must be found in this wider context.

In reviewing W. A. Duncan's translation of Metastasio's *Observations on the Poetics of Aristotle,* the *New South Wales Magazine* expressed surprise and pleasure; that 'it had been printed at all is a compliment to our taste'.[54] In the mid-nineteenth century under the influence of cultural arbiters like Matthew Arnold, the term provincial had come to signify crude,

49. Mort Travelling Fellowship, pp. 26, 65, 92; Diary of a Tour of Europe, pp. 228—231.
50. Pesman Cooper, 'Australian Visitors to Italy'.
51. 'Art in Victoria', *Journal of Australasia* (1856), 223.
52. 8 April 1854.
53. Stuart, `James Smith: His Influence', p. 73.
54. G. Barton, *Literature in New South Wales* (Sydney: Government Printer, 1866), p. 189.

uncouth, uncultured, uncivilised.[55] Colonials were *plus outres* provincials. By planting and nourishing the great tradition at the ends of the earth, the colonial literati and gentry identified with culture, civilisation, that is with the metropolis.[56] Public and private libraries replete with the classics of European high culture, acquaintance with foreign languages, the production of translations, reviews and learned articles were the badges of culture.

After Samuel Griffith's return from his exploration of the aesthetic in Italy to colonial Brisbane, he was admitted to the Bar and then entered Queensland politics. During the next twenty-five years he appears to have evinced no particular interest in Italy, its language and culture. But when he took up his Dante translation, Griffith was not working in an intellectual vacuum. The literati of the mid-nineteenth century were for the most part men who had been born and educated in Britain; their intellectual ties remained very close to the motherland. By the end of the century, the majority of the colonists were Australian-born and a nativist culture was being fostered. But Italy's literary traditions continued to arouse interest. Thus the standard bearer of Australian nationalism, the *Bulletin,* reviewed the works of d'Annunzio as they appeared.[57] Nevertheless, it was the Italian past rather than the present that was still the main focus.

The literary magazine, the *Victorian Review,* which appeared in the 1880s included articles on Ariosto, Tasso, Goldoni, Manzoni, Carlo Gozzi and Alfonso la Marmora. The medieval Renaissance city-states were still a source for dramatic themes.[58] Dante also continued to be a component in colonial culture. In 1882, Professor Badham delivered two public lectures on Dante to raise funds for the support of the widow and children of

55. John Lucas, 'The Idea of the Provincial', in his *Romantic to Modern Literature: Essays and Ideas of Culture 1750-1900* (Totowa, N. J.: Barnes & Nobel, 1982), pp. 7-28. See also White, *Inventing Australia,* pp. 53-58.

56. See for example Daniel Deniehy's programme for the content of a public library in Sydney, *Southern Cross,* 8 October 1959.

57. For example, the review of *The Triumph of Death,* Red Page, The Bulletin, 14 May 1898; see Grace Ailwood-Keel, 'Australian Literature 1880-1910: a study of writing in Australia in the "nationalist period" with particular emphasis on overseas influence', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1978, p. 42. D`Annunzio's *The Victim* was reviewed in the *Australasian,* 10 June 1899.

58. *Victorian Review,* Vols. 2, 3, 5, 13 (1880, 1881, 1885); George Marshall Hall, *Bianca Capello: A Tragedy* (Melbourne; McCarron Bird, 1906); Arthur Macquarie (Mullens), *Fioralisa: A Romantic Drama in Three Acts and a Pageant* (London: Bickers, 1910); *The Days of the Magnificent: A Drama of Old Florence in Blank Verse and Prose* (London: Bickers, 1911), A. B. Piddington, *Young Italy, a translation from Rovetta's Romanticismo* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1916) Piddington was also a Dantephile; Christopher Brennan wrote to him, 'I have been making use of your Dante, and admire the poet more than ever', Axel Clark, *Christopher Brennan: A Critical Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1980), p. 38. He was eulogised for his Italian interests and sympathies in the *Italo-Australian,* 19 August 1922.

poet Henry Kendal.[59] The lectures included the translation of some four hundred lines into terza rima. Later in reviewing Griffith's translation of *Inferno* for the *Argus,* foundation professor of English at the University of Western Australia and essayist, Walter Murdoch, wrote of Badham's translation:

> As a patriotic Australian one must seize the opportunity of saying that no-one ever did it with more effectiveness than the late Professor Badham of Sydney who, however, translated only fragments, alas too few.[60]

In 1890, Catherine Martin published her novel, *An Australian Girl.* Her heroine, far from embodying the stereotypic outdoors colonial girl, displayed an ostentatious familiarity with European literature. Thus the colours of a dawn were described as the self-same *'dolce color d'oriental zaffiro'* that blessed Dante's sight when he escaped from the murky atmosphere of hell.[61] The ring that the hero gives to his *fidanzata* is inscribed with a motto from the *Vita Nuova,* 'Amore e 'l cor gentil sono una cosa'. His declaration of love is accompanied by an affirmation of Dante;

> Ah the great master. From first to last he speaks more nobly of love than any other of the sons of light. Shall we read him together next spring, Liebe. Yes we shall be old married people by that time ... Yes, we shall read Dante together.[62]

Martin spent some time in Italy and wrote a fictionalised account of her travels, *The Old Roof Tree — Letters of Ishbel to her half brother Mark Latimer.*[63] The letters from Italy are full of literary and artistic references.

Across the Tasman in New Zealand, according to the *Australasian* in 1892, a certain Mr F. P. O'Reilly, a local barrister, was making a literal translation from Dante in the metre of the original; the *Inferno* was finished and had been sent to London for publication, the *Purgatorio* was half completed.[64] And in the same decade that Griffith published his *Inferno,* Edward Vidler wrote his version of the story of Francesca da Rimini, *The*

59. *Speeches and Lectures by the late Professor Badham,*113-146.
60. *Argus,* 21 December 1907.
61. Catherine Martin, *An Australian Girl* (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1892), p. 241. 1 should like to thank Elizabeth Webby, English Department, University of Sydney for directing me to this novel.
62. Martin, *An Australian Girl,* pp. 262-3.
63. London: Longmans, 1906.
64. *Australian,* 25 February 1893, 281.

Rose of Ravenna, A Story of Paolo and Francesca in Five Acts.[65] The letters that Griffith received from the people to whom he sent copies of his Dante translations provides evidence of a wider acquaintance with the poet, in Italian as well as in English in some cases. One correspondent wrote in 1898, 'I have been for many years a worshipper of Dante'; another referred to himself as an 'ardent reader of Dante', and Griffith's translation was compared to those of Carey and Longfellow.[66] James Bryce from Government House in Sydney in 1912 informed Griffith that 'I have read enough to see how admirably faithful your rendering is in the same passages which I know by heart'.[67] Former Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, wrote in his letter, that 'I must have gone through the poem at least a dozen times already', and showed some acquaintance with Dante scholarship.[68] Public servant and poet James Brunton Stephens hoped to read Griffith's translation against the original – with the help of a dictionary.[69] Griffith was helped in his translation by the poet and critic Christopher Brennan who at that time was reading widely in Italian literature and who was later to be an enthusiastic advocate of the teaching of Italian at Sydney University.[70]

The letters to Griffith reveal a considerable range in the experience of Dante from Archbishop Duhig's fluency in the language and assurances to Griffith that of course he had read the *Commedia* in the original to the confession of the Chancellor of the University of Sydney, Sir Normand MacLaurin: 'I cannot pretend ever to have been a student of Dante and I can only speak of the *Inferno* of which I had a copy before. From that I have had great pleasure'.[71] Griffith's tour de force was relegated by MacLaurin to 'a charming hobby'. The overall impression gained from the local response to Griffith's translation is that while a minority like Brennan, Duhig and Walter Murdoch, who reviewed the Chief Justice's translation, were possessed of an informed familiarity with the work in the original, the knowledge of the majority was more superficial, part of a general acquaintance with European culture. And in the case of Brennan, his relations with France and Germany were far more important and significant for his thought and writing.

The Australian interest in Dante was another example of reflection and imitation of an English fashion. It was not until the nineteenth century that

65. Melbourne: George Robertson & Co., 1913.
66. Dixon Library Sydney, Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, pp. 661, 669, 657, Vol. 191, p. 375.
67. Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, p. 665.
68. Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, p, 363.
69. Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, pp. 589.
70. Griffith thanked Brennan for his 'valuable criticisms and suggestions' in a note after the title page to the translation of the *Inferno;* 'Professor Brennan Advocates Chair of Italian', Society, 1 October 1922; Axel Clark, *Christopher Brennan,* pp. 19,38, 240.
71. Duhig to Griffith, 4 November 1911; MacLaurin to Griffith, 26 February 1912, Mit. Lib., Griffith Papers, 363/10x, no. 273.

the English acquired a taste for Dante. First neglected and then disdained by earlier centuries, the *Divine Comedy* received its first English rendition in 1814. Although English interest in Italian literature in general waned in the second half of the nineteenth century, the cult of Dante intensified.[72] And Dante translations had strong associations with the nation's legal and political establishments. Of the thirty-three late-nineteenth century British translations of the *Commedia,* eleven were made by lawyers, by far the largest occupational group of Dante translators.[73] The review in *The Morning Post* of Griffith's translation of *The Divine Comedy* reminded its readers that 'It is in accordance with British traditions that an eminent judge who has also been in this case a Prime Minister should devote his leisure to the translation of a great poet'.[74] Three English prime ministers, Lord Grenville, Lord John Russell and William Gladstone translated cantos of the *Commedia.* Given Griffith's assiduous consultations while at work on his translation, he could not have been unaware of the company he was entering. An unidentified newspaper review of Griffith's *Inferno* noted that 'It was counted not least among the achievements of Mr Gladstone that he was equal to the task of translating Dante'.[75] Thus his Dante scholarship associated the Australian Chief Justice with the leadership of the British ruling class.

The questions remain of how and why Griffith undertook his translation of Dante, and of what the *Commedia* meant to him. His renewed interest in things Italian seems to have been activated in the early 1890s by Sir William MacGregor, a Scots colonial administrator, whom he met at an assembly of the Federal Council of Australasia in Hobart in 1886.[76] At the time MacGregor was the British High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. Friendship developed between the two men, and it was with the support of Griffith, then Premier of Queensland, that MacGregor was appointed as Governor of New Guinea in 1889. MacGregor had read classics and medicine at Aberdeen University. He later took up modern languages, beginning Italian in 1891. Part of his leave in 1902 was spent in Italy where

72. Some thirty-three translations of all parts of *The Divine Comedy* were published in English between 1850 and 1903. On Dante in England, Paget Toynbee, *Dante in English Literature from Chaucer to Cary* (c. 1300-1844), 2 vols. (London: McThien, 1909); William J. de Sua, *Dante into English: A Study of the Translation of the Divine Comedy in Britain and America* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 1964); Gilbert F. Cunningham, *The Divine Comedy in English; A Critical Bibliography,* 2 vols. (Edinburgh; Olives & Boyd, 1965-67). Dante was also much cultivated in America in this period; Angela La Piana, *Dante's American Pilgrimage l800—1944* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948).
73. Cunningham, *The Divine Comedy in English,* vol. II, Table 1, pp. 6-8.
74. Griffith Papers, MSS 363/10x/317.
75. Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, p. 565.
76 On MacGregor, R. B. Joyce, *Sir William MacGregor* (Melbourne; Oxford University Press, 1971); on MacGregor and Griffith, see also Joyce, *Samuel Walker Griffith,* pp. 125, 128-9, 138, 154-55, 158, 177, 242, 245, 249, 250, 301, 320, 322, 360.

his daughters studied Italian and read Dante with a local teacher.

In the 1890s Griffith undertook the task of codifying the criminal law of Queensland. MacGregor recommended the Italian penal code to his friend as a worthy source and sent him a copy along with a highly recommended Italian dictionary.[77] Griffith took MacGregor's advice and later wrote that he had 'derived very great assistance' from his study of the Italian code 'which is I believe, considered to be in many respects the most complete and perfect penal code in existence.[78]

It was in this period that Griffith began his study of Dante and again it appears that it may have been MacGregor who was his intellectual director; the translation of the *Two Stories from Dante Alighieri* published in 1898 was dedicated to MacGregor. In her letter congratulating Griffith on the translation, Lady Musgrave wrote: 'I heard lately from Sir Wm MacGregor who talks of your achievements with the pride of one who also perhaps suggested the first attempt to you'.[79]

As William de Sua has written in his survey of English translations of Dante, the Italian poet has attracted more than his share of talentless dilettantes whose renditions while no doubt inspired by the purest motives are best ignored.[80] Griffith's translation falls into this category. There is no reason to question the seriousness of his intent. Much of his leisure time between the first steps in 1893 and the completion of *Purgatorio* in 1910 was absorbed in the task of translation. According to one contemporary, Griffith's practice was to memorise three tercets of the original every night, and then, strolling in the garden or some such place, he would make the English version.[81] In his translation Griffith used the Scartazzini text of 1893 and the Casini of 1903. Although his translation was not accompanied by any critical apparatus or references to variant readings, Griffith appears to have been familiar with current scholarship.[82] He had some correspondence with the doyen of English Dante scholars, Paget Toynbee, who on receipt of a copy of the complete translation informed Griffith that his work 'maintains the high standard of the *Inferno*', which Griffith had earlier sent him.[83] There was general agreement that Griffith's translation was linguistically competent.[84] The dominant view of translation in

77. MacGregor to Griffith, 9 August 1894, 9 April 1896, Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 188, p. 845; Vol. 189, p. 139.
78. Draft Code of the Criminal Law of Queensland (Brisbane, 1897), p. vii.
79. Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 191, p. 391.
80. de Sua, *Dante into English,* Preface.
81. Pannam, 'Dante and the Chief Justice', p.293.
82. Cunningham, *The Divine Comedy in English,* vol. I, 52.
83 Griffith Papers, 363/10x, no. 201.
84. Cunningham, *The Divine Comedy in English,* vol. I, p.52.

late-nineteenth century Britain was that its task was to produce a literal rendition, and the majority of Dante's Victorian translators were literalists, pushed in that direction by the moralistic, scientific and utilitarian tendencies in current literary criticism.[85] Griffith's translation took this view to an extreme point; a translation was a photograph of the original.[86]

Discarding rhyme as an inessential element of poetry, Griffith translated the *Commedia* into hendecasyllabic blank verse which followed the original *terzina* by *terzina.* Because English is more compressed than Italian, the preservation of the verse necessitates padding, and the effect of continuous hendecasyllables in English is monotonous. The general view of Griffith's translation both at the time and later was that it lacked poetry: 'unfortunately the poetry of Dante has escaped almost entirely from Sir Samuel Griffith's industrious fingers.'[87] A compatriot expressed this view more bluntly: 'Sir Samuel has succeeded in rendering the poetry of Dante into the language of Parliamentary enactment.'[88]

Although some of his acquaintances viewed Griffith's engagement with Dante as a matter of recreation only, and both his method and the result give the impression that the undertaking was little more than an intellectual exercise, the claim of one of his fellow judges that Griffith had aspirations for lasting fame as a poet cannot be dismissed.[89] His efforts to secure the publication of his translation, and publication in England, suggest that Griffith did indeed desire public recognition as a man of letters. Herbert Warren, President of Magdalen College, advised against publication of the translation and the readers reports for John Murray were equally unfavourable.[90] Oxford University Press finally agreed to publish the translation — at the author's expense. Griffith did not recoup his outlay; his intellectual labour sold just over one hundred copies between 1912 and 1914.[91]

Oxford University Press had tried. Review copies were sent to twelve magazines and newspapers in the United Kingdom including *The Times, The Manchester Guardian* and the *Spectator,* two in the United States and ten in Australia.[92] The reviews varied but on the whole the translation was

85. de Sua, *Dante into English,* pp. 51-75.
86. Griffith, Preface to *The Divina Commedia,* p.v.
87. *The Bookfellow,* 1 March 1912.
88. Reported in A. B. Piddington, *Worshipful Masters* (Sydney: An.gus & Robertson, 1929), p. 239. For examples of infelicities in Griffith's translation, Cunningham, vol.1, pp.53-55.
89. Mr Justice McCawley, Pannam, 'Dante and the Chief Justice', p. 292.
90. Griffith Papers, 363/10x, nos. 9, 15, 24.
91. Griffith Papers, 363/10x, nos. 258, 264, 265.
92. Griffith Correspondence, vol.194.

received without enthusiasm.[93] In Europe, as the President of Magdalen had predicted, the fact that the translation came from Australia was its most interesting feature. Paget Toynbee wrote to Griffith: 'I believe yours will be the first serious contribution to Dante literature from Australia.'[94] Typical of the metropolitan response was the review in *Notes and Queries:*

> It is pleasant to find the Old World joining hands with the Antipodes in scholarship and we think that the distinguished judge has done an excellent work in presenting this version of Dante to Australia. Most modern authors get a false opinion of style and merit because they are ignorant of the great classics of literature…If this is true of England, it is of course more evidently so in regard to a country like Australia which is too young as yet to achieve literary tradition.[95]

In Italy there was satisfaction that a translation of Dante had been made at the end of the earth and that Griffith's work would diffuse awareness of Italy's greatest poem among the educated classes of far away Australia.[96] The translation was also a source of local pride: 'It is alike creditable to the author and flattering to Australia that the translation does not suffer from comparison with the best that precedes it.'[97]

His Dante translation met a need in Sir Samuel Griffith for prestigious and challenging intellectual exercise, literary reputation and association with the élite of the British political and legal establishment. Was there any further meaning? William Gladstone's encounter with Dante was a central strand in his religious and emotional development.[98] Looking back from his eighth decade the British Liberal Prime Minister wrote:

> In the school of Dante I have learnt that mental propulsion (however insignificant it may be) which has served me to make the journey of human life up to the term of nearly seventy three years.[99]

93. Newspaper clippings of a number of the reviews are contained in Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, and Griffith Papers, 363/10x.
94. Griffith Papers, 363/10x, no. 30.
95. Griffith Papers, 363/10x, no. 304.
96. *Fanfulla della Domenica,* Rome, 30 April 1899, Griffith Correspondence, Vol. 189, p. 735.
97. West Australian, n.d., Griffith Papers, 363/10x, no. 302.
98. On Gladstone and Dante, Owen Chadwick,' Young Gladstone and Italy', in *Gladstone, Politics and Religion,* ed. Peter Jagger (London: Macmillan, 1985), pp.68-87.
99. *Ibid.,* p. 85.

Unfortunately Griffith has left us no comparable piece of evidence. As the reviewer of the translation for the *West Australian* lamented:

> While many would gladly know why Sir Samuel Griffith has translated Dante, even more interesting would be his theory of the meaning of the great poem as a whole. He has however completely hidden himself behind the work.[100]

Self-revelation was not the style of the austere, reserved, outwardly cold Chief Justice.[101] But to equate silence with absence of private meaning would be a mistake. His recent biographer recounts that the last part of the *Inferno* which Griffith recorded revising, was nine months before his death; the date was 11 November 1919 and the Canto was 29:

> who could ever…
> Tell of the blood and of the wounds with fullness
> That I now saw, though many times narrating?
> All tongues of men would fall far short, of surety,
> By reason of our speech and understanding,
> Which have scant bosom for such comprehension
> Cleft in the face from chin unto the forelock.
> And all the rest of those whom here thou see'st,
> When living, were the sowers of dissension
> And schism; and therefore in this wise are cloven.[102]

Griffith's translation of the *Divine Comedy* is of little literary importance. Contemporaries were right when they judged its distinctiveness to lie only in its place of origin. Its significance for this paper is as a document for the presence of Italian literary traditions in nineteenth-century Australia, a society conventionally portrayed as exclusively British. In relation to culture, this view is both invalid and valid. Educated colonists were both acquainted with and interested in Italian literary traditions. But the interest in Italian literature and in literary Italy came to Australia as a part of the English cultural tradition. In translating Dante, Griffith was following and linking himself to the British legal and political establishment.

100. Griffith Papers, 363/10x, no. 302.
101. On the inner torments of Griffith, C. H. M. Clark. *A History of Australia,* V (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1981), p. 70.
102. Quoted in Joyce, *Samuel Walker Griffith,* pp. 362—363.

The editor of the *Bulletin,* 'Jules Francois' Archibald, wrote in the *Red Page* in 1898:

> We have the right and the duty — if we are developing a literature — to found it on the widest basis, the world wide basis. We are the heirs not only to English literature but to every other literature as well.[103]

The evidence in this paper suggests that the colonists had long claimed their wide heritage. Perhaps Archibald was looking to a direct relationship with European cultural traditions. It was only from the 1960s that Australia really began to dispense with the British mediator in its cultural contacts with Europe. Moreover, it was only in the same period that the search began to be undertaken to find the non-British Australian past. That exploration was inspired by another borrowed concept, that of multiculturalism, whose imperatives required the construction of a multicultural past as well as a multicultural present. The new danger was that neglect might be replaced by exaggeration.

103. Quoted in Ailwood-Keel, 'Australian Literature', p. 14.

Italian and Australian readers: Gino Nibbi's articles of the 1930s[1]

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Gino Nibbi first arrived in Melbourne in the late 1920s. Born in the Marche in 1896 his education followed the vocational stream leading to his qualifying for the diploma of book-keeper *(ragioniere)* at the Istituto Tecnico of Ascoli Piceno. After experience as a combatant in the First World War, he had been employed at the Società Mulini e Pastifici in his home town, Porto San Giorgio. While Nibbi may have lacked formal qualifications, his activity as freelance art critic and journalist before his arrival in Australia and the enquiring and reflective curiosity which is also a constant feature of his writing suggest a strong commitment to literary and artistic culture. The information which can be gathered from his letters about his circle of friends in his home town indicates a small environment in which cultural interest thrived and where self-education could prosper. Among this group were Acruto Vitali, poet and painter, Osvaldo Licini, abstract artist, Ubaldo Fagioli, art critic and Ermenegildo Catalini, a teacher of Italian literature:

> Il gruppo si interessa molto di cultura, si scambia volumi di narrativa e poesia, segue il dibattito letterario sulle riviste del periodo, da quelle a carattere nazionale a quelle di circolazione più ridotta. Accomuna i sodali un certo spirito di avventura intellettuale ma anche un confuso, almeno al livello ideologico, ribellismo antifascista che diventerà esplicito in seguito e che porterà Licini ad essere sindaco di Monte Vidon Corrado nel dopoguerra (nel 1946) eletto nella lista del PCI.[2]

1. I thank Alfredo Luzi for kindly supplying me with a copy of C. Carotenuto (ed.), *Gino Nibbi: marchigiano d'Australia* (Pesaro: Metauro, 2008).
2. Alfredo Luzi, 'Lettere dall'Australia: mito e autobiografia', in Carotenuto, *Gino Nibbi,* p.47.

One might see his departure from the confines of Porto San Giorgio in 1928 as inevitable.[3] Apart from a presumed desire to extend his experiences and cultural horizons there were of course unsettling factors in his past such as his experience as a combatant in the First World War, and the post-war crisis and the advent of Fascism.[4] We do not know why precisely Australia became his destination. At this time, Nibbi already had two young children, Alessandra (b.1923) and Tristano (b.1925), so some form of income was essential. Having already published some writings in Italian periodicals, but being neither specifically qualified as a journalist, nor having a university degree, he may have departed with the idea of finding more frequent work as a foreign correspondent for the Italian press, an easier point of entry into a highly competitive world, one that would allow him to indulge his own personal interests, but also give him a "fall-back" income should he undertake any other activity. Perhaps he had already secured some sort of expression of interest on the part of Italian editors for the articles which he eventually provided from the other hemisphere. The manner in which his writing addresses his readers obviously reveals a specific conception of their expectations and values which will be then reinforced, anticipated, or challenged. However, as we shall see, during his stay in Australia in the 1930s, in addition to publishing two volumes addressed to an Italian audience, Nibbi also wrote for another public. The brief essays in a neglected collection of pieces intended for Australian students of Italian, *Il nuovissimo libro di lettura Italiano-Inglese,* offer insights into how he adapted to and understood this different audience. However an illuminating description of the Italian *terza pagina* tells us a great deal about the style of Nibbi's other works and how he conceives the task of a journalist writing about broadly cultural subjects for Italian readers:

> Aprite un quotidiano: e sùbito v'accorgerete che la terza pagina è redatta per una certa categoria di lettori. Si tratta di un frammento d'antologia tutta fresca perchè tutta nuova. Contiene delle firme di riconosciuti scrittori: sicchè potete concludere che la terza pagina di un quotidiano costituisce una sezione di spiccata qualità letteraria . . . Nella terza pagina è nato appunto il cosiddetto saggio misto che sarebbe un caldo pezzo di fantasia del critico. Egli, esplorando un paese, si ricrea nel

3. In a letter of 1928 he writes from Melbourne, 'Quando ripenso a Porto San Giorgio, ripenso a quel luogo di morte e a quella pace che mi insidiava l'esistenza con l'inerzia fisica e mentale. Ora mi piace ricordarmene. Ma viverci, che segregazione era per me!' Quoted by Alfredo Luzi, 'Lettere dall'Australia', p.54. The essay was previously published in M. Arrighi (ed.) *Italians in Australia: The Literary Experience* (Wollongong: The University, 1991). For convenience I will be quoting from the later version.
4. For a brief biography see D. O'Grady, 'Gino Nibbi (1896-1969)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography,* vol. 15 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2000).

> descrivere la natura degli abitanti e cerca di coglierla nel suo più bizzarro realismo. Le suggestioni e le associazioni d'idee sono tante che egli si lascia prender la mano dalla vena degli affetti e finisce per dimenticarsi dell'argomento che aveva preso a trattare: quell'argomento era solo un pretesto, un premeditato punto di partenza. Alcuni di codesti saggi che abbondano nelle terze pagine dei giornali, sono affascinanti come poemetti in prosa.[5]

Subsequent to his arrival in Australia, Gino Nibbi started the Leonardo Art Shop in Little Collins St, Melbourne. It sold art books, reproductions in colour of old and modern masters, language text books and a selection of literature in various European languages.[6]

As Nibbi was to discover, modern art had a difficult existence in the conservative Australia of the period. The reproduction of a nude by Renoir on display in his window was removed at the insistence of police in 1929 after public complaints.[7] While running the bookshop Nibbi continued writing in Italian and occasionally in English. He wrote a brief article against nationalism in art, which was published in the *Argus* in 1931. A short–lived artistic and literary journal, *Stream,* edited by Cyril Pearl, was published from his bookshop for three months in 1931 and carried contributions from Nibbi himself and various Melbourne intellectuals.[8] His part in the campaign in favour of modern art has led to the more recent judgment that he was a 'key figure in the attempt to clear away the effects of nationalism in Australian art.'[9]

Australia's acceptance of modern art was rendered difficult by vocal lobbies and personages, among them the federal Attorney General, Robert Menzies, who found 'nothing but absurdity in much of so-called modern art with its evasion of real problems and its cross eyed drawing'[10] and who in 1937 attempted to foster the sort of art he liked by establishing a controversial and short-lived Australian Academy of Art.[11] Against

5. G. Nibbi, *Nuovissimo Libro di Lettura Italiano – Inglese* (Melbourne: Leonardo Art Shop, 1936), pp.51-52. In the text Nibbi indicated with an accent all the antepenultimate syllables in the 'parole *sdrucciole*'. I have omitted these accents in my quotations.
6. For more details see the end papers of G. Nibbi, *Nuovissimo Libro di Lettura Italiano-Inglese.*
7. Laurel Clark, 'Literary Salons, avant garde journals and radical causes,' *Melbourne University Library Journal,* 1 (1993), no, 2, available at http://www.unimelb.edu.au/culturalcollections/research/libraryjournal/vol1no2/clark.pdf .
8. Volume 1, nos. 1-3 of *Stream,* which was edited by Cyril Pearl, was published between July and September 1931. Further details on the journal are to be found in Laurel Clark, 'Literary Salons'.
9. R. Haese, *Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art* (Melbourne: Allen Lane, 1981), p.11. See also S. Palmer, *Centre of the Periphery: Three European Art Historians in Melbourne* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2008), pp.91-93.
10. 'A reply to artist Norman McGeorge', *Argus,* 3 May, 1937, quoted by Sarah Scott in 'Imaging a Nation: Australia's Representation at the Venice Biennale, 1958', *Journal of Australian Studies* 79 (2003), pp.53-63. Also available through the Australian Public Intellectual Network at http://www.api-network.com/main/index.php?
11. The Academy ceased to exist in 1946. See Sarah Scott, 'Imaging a nation', p.53.

this trend, artist George Bell formed the Contemporary Arts Society with which Nibbi was associated. Twenty years later, Nibbi was among those who successfully lobbied in Italy to have Australia represented at the 1958 Venice Biennale, which was of course a showplace for contemporary art. However Italian authorities insisted that works to be exhibited had to be chosen by the national government. The influence of Menzies, now Prime Minister, over the Commonwealth Arts Advisory Board charged with selecting works for display meant that Australia only presented a conservative sample comprised of figurative, non-experimental art, some of it dating back to the 1890s. The objections which this choice aroused among modern art circles and the ensuing controversy led in subsequent years to a prolonged absence of Australia from the Biennale.[12]

Subsequent to his arrival in Australia, in the early 1930s Nibbi sailed to the islands of the South Pacific from Wellington, New Zealand.[13] Already he had written to Vitali in 1930: 'Ho bisogno di vagabondare sei mesi per gli arcipelaghi del Pacifico, ma ancora non posso farlo per l'avarizia dei giornali italiani dei quali sono collaboratore'.[14] The result of this voyage and sojourn was his first published volume, *Nelle isole della felicità* (1934), a collection of travel writing.[15] It consists of ten chapters dedicated to Tahiti and four to the *Isole Sottovento* (the Leeward Islands).[16]

While no one, to my knowledge, has taken the trouble to research original publication data for Nibbi's writings, it is possible that some of the book's chapters were published individually in Italy prior to the publication of the volume in the newspapers identified by his son Tristano.[17] It is known that an essay about Paul Gauguin had appeared in 1932 in the periodical *L'orto,* which was dedicated to art and literature and this is probably the same as 'L'uomo che vedeva marrone' (168-177).[18] And indeed Nibbi's interest in Gauguin may have been one of the basic stimuli for the journey to the South Pacific.

12. Sarah Scott, 'Imaging a Nation', passim.
13. The date of the journey, according to a chronology by Tristano Nibbi, son of the author, cited in Carotenuto, *Gino Nibbi,* p. 173, was 1934, the same year as the publication of *Nelle isole della felicità* (discussed below). However, this seems unlikely because of the date of first publication of the article on Gauguin in Tahiti (see note 18), an article which contains information only obtainable in situ and also the connection Nibbi makes between the *avarizia* of the newspapers and his inability to undertake the voyage in 1930.
14. Quoted by A. Luzi, 'Lettere dall'Australia', p.50.
15. Gino Nibbi, *Nelle isole della felicità* (Tahiti e isole Sottovento) (Milan: Carabba, 1934).
16. The Leeward Islands group of the Society Islands, obviously not to be confused with the Leeward islands in the Caribbean.
17. Tristano Nibbi's brief biography in Carotenuto, *Gino Nibbi,* (pp.173-175) claims Nibbi was a correspondent for the Italian newspapers *Il Tempo, Il Giornale d'Italia* and *Il Resto del Carlino.*
18. G. Nibbi, 'Gauguin a Tahiti,' *L'Orto,* Edizioni Nord-Est, Venezia, anno II, n. 3, December 1932. Cited by Alessia Negriolli, *'L'Orto"1931-1939: saggio critico e indice informatico,'* unpublished thesis, University of Trento, a.a. 2000-2001, pp.110-111.

The narrator in Nibbi's first chapter, 'Ingresso ai mari del Sud', shares none of the communal values of the Anglo-Saxons he encounters. In fact this difference is a recurrent theme. Early in the voyage he avoids pressing invitations to participate in the Anglo-Saxon 'mania' for community singing, a pastime which nineteen years later he will describe in damning terms in his *Oracoli sommessi* (1953), a work in lexical format defining an idiosyncratic collection of words, authors, works and painters.[19] The narrator of *Nelle isole della felicità* associates his own opinions with those of another non-Anglo-Saxon, regarding British imperial expansion:

> C'era a bordo un cubano che un ragazzo neozelandese aveva la malinconia di intrattenere intorno a problemi di espansione imperiale; ma il ragazzo finiva sempre per guadagnarsi una scarica di vivaci obbiezioni. (p.17)

His observations of the islands dwell on the tropical lushness of their vegetation. Here and in the descriptions of the sea the particular attention given to colour and form inevitably lead one to see the art critic Nibbi, and an implicit reader with similar artistic interests. While the narrator recounts the stays passed in various places, overall the narration is tied, as has been noted in another context, to movement of the narrator from place to place and what he witnesses in the journey.[20] This makes for continuity and unity, but in the *Nuovissimo libro di lettura,* as will be seen, movement becomes almost a virtue unto itself, and the reader is inevitably reminded of the enthusiasms of Italian futurists for movement and vitality, echoed in the later propaganda of fascism.

In *Nelle isole della felicità* there is also a catering for expectations which might be said to derive from that depiction of Tahitian life to be found in Gauguin's *Noa Noa*[21]:

> ... from the outset [it] establishes itself as a quest, a journey back from a rotten civilization toward the savage state, which is also the place of a lost Maori culture. And in this quest, the Tahitian woman will naturally - as if predetermined by the prehistory of European contact with Tahiti - play a central role, as the literal point of entry into the Mari soul.[22]

19. '*Community Singing.* Coro popolare, per eccellenza anglo-sassone, e quindi protestante, di gente che si raduna e si sfoga nel canto, con intenti, per lo più, religiosi e di mistica gratitudine. Una delle più sfarzose ed economiche invenzioni scozzesi di sublimazione totalitaria celebrativa... cacofonia o dissonanza irritante.... .' *Oracoli sommessi,* (Florence: Agnelli, 1953), p.56.
20. 'Leggere questo volume è un continuo andare,' Luzi notes with regard to *Il volto degli emigranti.* See 'Uno scrittore tra emigrazione e nomadismo', in Carotenuto (ed.), *Gino Nibbi,* p.34.
21. He quotes this in 'L'uomo che vedeva marrone', p.170. *Noa Noa* is available in English translation on line at: http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/noa/noa01.htm
22. Peter Brooks, 'Gauguin's Tahitian Body,' is reprinted in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History,* ed.by Norma Broude and Mary Garrard (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 330-345. Extracts are available at http://employees.oneonta.edu/farberas/arth/arth_220/gauguin.html. See also D. Gorin, 'The Quest for Spiritual Purity and Sexual Freedom: Gauguin's Primitive Eve', *Valley Humanities Review,* Spring 2010, pp.1-11.

The impressions of a deeply imbued and inviting native sensuality of the inhabitants are accompanied by an indictment of the colonial legacy, in the form of Puritanism grafted onto island social life by nineteenth-century New Zealand missionaries:

> Quello che una volta doveva sorprendere, a nostra edificazione e mortificazione, doveva esser la naturale castità dei Maori. La si riconosce ancora in certi distretti in cui gli indigeni sono rimasti fieri e quasi immuni dai metodi dei bianchi. Ma nelle località più note si insediarono fin dai primi tempi i missionari con la loro disarmata e prepotente determinazione di predominio. Appena cominciarono a insegnare il pudore tra gli indigeni (vocabolo il cui significato era quasi totalmente sconosciuto mentre lo avevano sempre praticato per virtù naturale) il vizio sorse automaticamente.[23]

The narrator subscribes to the notion of a decline in Tahitian civilisation, though he sees a 'tenace sopravvivenza dell'orgoglio nativo.'[24]

> Le popolazioni di una volta sono oggi disperse. Il ceppo tahitiano, perduti i suoi caratteri di popolo avventuroso, e guerriero, è prossimo all'estinzione senza tuttavia decadere, come vedremo più avanti. (p.25)

He returns various times to the inevitable subject of erotic encounters and the availability of Tahitian women.[25] Here too the decline is noted but not just of the Tahitians: 'Quella sommaria resa di conti che ogni bianco esige da una Tahitiana [...] ha fatto dubitare qualcuno della supremazia della razza bianca nei confronti di questa autoctona ormai sterminata' (pp.103-4). The narrator is represented as having affectionate friendships with a couple of women. However these are represented in such vague terms that ultimately the question of whether they are sexual or not is evaded.[26] Beyond this, the leisurely, sometimes ironic, reflections, apart from unresolved ruminations on the races present in the South Pacific, or brief delineations of history or customs, return frequently to the ever-trivial social activities of the ephemeral tourists, ranging from Americans and New Zealanders to non-conformist clergy, make for a sense of inconclusiveness and frustration and confirm the image of a lost paradise.[27] The conclusion, if it may be called that, is not particularly startling or new, though the atmosphere conveyed and the personal style of the story make the narrator a pleasant, though at times ponderous, companion.

23. *Nelle isole della felicità,* p.49.
24. ibid., p.25.
25. 'Un misogino trova subito che l'aria non gli si confà' (p.65).
26. See the description of his association with Jeannette and Mahana (pp.82-89).
27. It is worth noting however that A. Valentini sees a Nibbi 'che non cerca nelle isole della felicità quello che gli altri hanno trovato.' See his 'Gino Nibbi: da "Nelle isole della felicità" a "Variazioni nipponiche"', in C. Carotenuto (ed.) *Gino Nibbi,* p.30.

The next major collection published by Nibbi was *Il volto degli emigranti (Scene di vita in Australia)* (1937), a series of twelve stories, each taking the name of a town or locality in Australia.[28] The absence of ideals in Australian society is an important theme in this volume as it will be thirty years later in *Cocktails d'Australia.*[29] As far as emigration is concerned, Nibbi depicts problems of separation, difference and alienation. Overt hostility and racism do not generally come into his characters' lives, but the sense of difference from Anglo-Saxons is everywhere.

Generally the narrator is a witness of events and does not identify himself with his emigrant subjects. An exception is to be found in "Melbourne," perhaps one of the most successful pieces, where the attempt to communicate in English as an "insopportabile prova di (sic) fuoco". The broad emptiness of the streets is used to emphasise the solitude of the Swiss-Italian character Roberti (p.11) in a city which is, as he observes, 'la città giardino più disgregata del mondo, o perlomeno nell'emisfero australe.' One can underline the narrator's ironic echoing of local journalists' predilection for referring to anything of note within Australia as the biggest or the best "in the southern hemisphere."

Difficulties in understanding, stemming only partly from language problems, hinder comprehension by and of the host culture. Roberti is thrust into a confusing new world at a dance in "Melbourne." He is mystified by the relationship between his new mistress Joyce, and a man they meet there, who turns out to be her estranged husband. Sexual encounters, in this case as elsewhere, are fraught with difficulties. In Melbourne, Roberti grabs at his new friend Joyce, after some flirtation, in the room he has rented from her. As they copulate she croaks (in approximate English) 'Ah, you kill me!' - words which lead to a rescue attempt by her young son. The friendship lasts a brief time but is terminated after differences of opinion between the pair and an assault on Roberti, as he argues with Joyce, by an unidentified assailant, presumably the son.

What seems to be a considerable adaptation for the sake of the reader is represented by the number of nationalities represented in this volume: they include Croatian, Catalan, Basque, Egyptian and Maltese. There are only four episodes in which the protagonist is Italian. In the story titled "Cairns" a Basque and a Maltese are invited by an Egyptian to have a drink at his house. They are alarmed to find themselves sitting in the waiting room of a brothel. Further misunderstandings and a brawl ensue when a group of dissatisfied brothel subscribers arrive to complain of the shortage of prostitutes and mistake the emigrants for its owners. The episode

28. A *Glossario* of Italian-Australian words is tacked on to the end of the work, but has no relevance to any of its stories.
29. Gino Nibbi, *Cocktails d'Australia* (Milan: Martello, 1965).

challenges credibility, but reflects the author's tendency to emphasise disorientation and incomprehension. This is also one of many episodes where the author presents a concatenation of circumstances almost as a hypothesis, without any clear indication of where they are going, as if he were asking himself "What would happen if … ?" but did not really have a clear objective in mind. It would an error however to imagine that these stories can be accounted for merely by a plot summary. As in the earlier volume *Nelle isole della felicità,* plot is to a large extent secondary to a series of minor digressions, numerous observations and reflections.

Certainly it was not a concern of Nibbi to represent or explore pre-war Australia as a multicultural society *ante litteram.* The author presents absolutely no characteristics which would serve to distinguish any one of the European nationalities from each other. One wonders why Italians, the group he might have been imagined to understand best, do not play a larger role. Presumably the author is allowing for an Italian readership during Fascism. Italians may have been a 'popolo di navigatori', but population movements internal and external were restricted. Italians were not to be seen as a 'popolo di emigranti'. So the nominal members of other nations serve above all to enhance, in theory, the contrast between European and Australian values, in preference to dealing with the more sensitive topic of Italian emigration.

Australia in *Il volto degli emigranti* is a pragmatic place without memory or ideals. After a brawl on a train the narrator notes:

> … quella gente non avrebbe più rammentato l'incidente nella loro vita, nemmeno se fossero stati in vena di raccontar prodezze. Comunque davano assai a riflettere sull'indole dell'uomo, mentre nella vita ci è dato imbattere in tanti idealisti i quali riescono con grande difficoltà a scordarsi perfino di un semplice paio di cazzotti incassati nella loro vita trascorsa. (p.119).

Pleasure here must be tempered by the thought of practicality. A call-girl indicates the location of her room in terms of its distance from the city so clients can continue their pattern of existence without disruption:

> L'altro giorno – una signorina gli allungò un biglietto da visita il quale recava l'indirizzo preciso di lei e in più la strana delucidazione, 10 minuti da Spring Street. (p.30)

Death on the other hand is a potential threat to this orderly timetable. Those who face it should step aside. In the story 'Melbourne' the protagonist Roberti dies in his boarding house room, to the dismay of his landlady:

> Ma benedetto, ma non mi poteva avvertire in tempo? Non sapeva che in questi paesi gli ammalati debbono subito rifugiarsi all'ospedale? Chi è a Melbourne che muore alla propria casa o in casa altrui? Nessuno. (p.35)

When the landlady was told of an accident involving Roberti's hearse and leaving his coffin in the middle of the road, '. . . cambiò discorso tanto per cambiare umore, e gli disse: - Che incantevole giornata! Si accomodi, prenda una tazza di tè.' (p. 40)

One could multiply these examples, but the significant point is, as Luzi observed, that for every criticism of an aspect of Australian customs there is another and opposite reality in Italy:

> E quanto gratificante per Nibbi è la possibilità di inserire ogni tassello di vita italiana in un quadro speculare di riferimento che permetta una interpretazione del reale, tanto mortificante è constatare la sua incapacità di adeguare i fatti che avvengono in queste lontane terre al modello comportamentale di base.[30]

The audience the narrator has in mind is then one that shares the narrator's values. The objects of his disapproval are the lack of ideals, bad manners, violence, neglect of family ties, the removal of the sick and dying from their homes, intolerance for private grief in public spaces. By considering their opposites one can conjure up a picture of the tranquil provincial life which Nibbi had left behind and locate his implied reader, within that world.

In this context it is interesting to consider another smaller work published before *Il volto degli emigranti,* and the manner in which its narrator assumes a quite different role as he is placed in the position of having to relate to a local audience. The bilingual *Nuovissimo Libro di Lettura Italiano-Inglese – Newest Italian-English Reader* written and published by Nibbi in 1936, has not received any critical attention. It was written for a language course conducted by Gino Nibbi and his wife Elvira Petrelli on ABC radio.[31] While a reader of the title might be misled into believing it to be an anthology of pieces by various authors, apart from a small list of *'modi di dire'* and a selection of proverbs, it consists of original writings by Nibbi. There are some other pages influenced evidently by didactic intent, such as the chapter titled 'Monologo' (pp.23-28) in which conditionals abound, though this too reflects a predilection for exploring hypothetical situations. While linguistically simple and short, the pieces differ from works in his other collections in their variety of genres. So, apart from short essays, this *Reader,* includes a poem and two dialogues, the monologue already mentioned and a fragment of crime fiction. There are in addition a piece modelled on a journalistic "fatto di cronaca" and a review of

30. Luzi, 'Gino Nibbi: uno scrittore tra emigrazione e nomadismo', Carotenuto (ed.), *Gino Nibbi* p.37.
31. Elvira's private Italian teaching activity continued throughout their various sojourns in Australia. She also taught at the Berlitz school in Melbourne, an experience which may well have counselled the parallel text format of the work, the English text being 'literal' as claimed in the 'Introduzione' (p.4) but also having various inaccuracies and oddities. The radio programme is referred to in D. O'Grady's entry on Nibbi in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography.*

a fictitious opera performance. The short essays include three which take their titles from Australian place names, 'Melbourne', 'Sydney', and 'Verso Lismore'. An essay dedicated to the flower of the boronia plant (pp.14-16) extols its perfume and speaks of a Melbourne custom of even strangers exchanging its flowers in the street during October. Another "Vacanze" (pp.16-30) compares holidays in Italy and Australia and describes a trip to Olinda. A short poem titled 'Ingham' anticipates an event to be found in *Il volto degli emigranti:*

> Un puledro galoppa lungo la piana
> a testa bassa e a redini abbandonate.
> Reca tre bambini rannicchiati sul dorso
> con le borse strette sui fianchi.[32]

Despite its more obvious didactic intent the 'Monologo' is nevertheless, interesting for its meditations on a prospective journey with friends. As anticipated above, movement is particularly accentuated: '... la lettera dice che tutti e due avrebbero intenzione di comperare appena arrivati a Marsiglia, un'automobile per procedere a corsa pazza verso l'interno in ogni direzione.' (p.23) Then they will perhaps head back to Italy, where the narrator's mother lives and will be honoured by a visit.

> Poi ho l'idea fissa di rivedere senz'indugio quella vecchia madre, quel mucchio di nostalgia e silenzio. Rivederla magari per pochi minuti, senza abbandonarmi a quegli affetti dimostrativi ai quali non credo: ma tanto per riconoscere quel che c' è di ancora caldo nella sua voce, di un tono forse affievolito ma che vi ricollega intensamente al passato, alle ineffabili regioni dell'infanzia. ... E poi lasciarla di nuovo poiché la vita continua e non si potrà mai interrompere. (p.27)

In the *Nuovissimo libro di lettura* brevity and concision were forced upon the author, not qualities that we find in his other writing. They are probably more effective within their less ambitious context, also because they lack the more ambitious style to be found in Nibbi's works for an Italian reading public, 'bizarre realism' and poetic prose have their space but it is more restricted.

The titles 'Melbourne' and 'Sydney', as we have seen, were used again in *Il volto degli emigranti,* but for fictional accounts. In the 'Melbourne' of the *Nuovissimo libro di lettura,* which has nothing in common with the later story, there is a somewhat surprising choice of subjects in the description of the city. He cannot afford to be too critical of the city to its inhabitants. Melbourne has the characteristics of a vast village. It would be impossible to be overwhelmed by bustle in this quiet and orderly place.

32. 'Ingham', p.44.

In fact, he proceeds to note that the traffic in the centre starts late in the morning and early in the afternoon as people hasten to their houses in the suburbs. The city is indeed being slowly conquered by the automobile, the exception being a few pairs of draught horses to be found delivering flour and beer. The climate may be irritating but this does not affect the working lives. In fact, 'tanto più Melbourne diventa cosmopolita, tanto più è una città che si ama.' (p.13) So he hints more subtly at his notion of an ideal city which is a little busier than the one he sees before him. The pose of the narrator is that of a man of the world who looks with indulgence upon his surroundings and represents, mainly to the locals, what he finds different. Not that he eschews critical comment, but it is muted. He recounts that in September butterflies rest on the severe architecture of Collins St:

> E se si vuole insinuare che in Collins St si sente l'odore di campagna, si afferma una cosa indiscutibile ciò sta altresì a significare che nel ciclo di una giornata in una città come questa ci si sta provvisoriamente, soltanto per sbrigare le proprie faccende… (pp.11-12)

So the inhabitants themselves have the ephemeral passing character of butterflies which leave no trace. The wry observation that art is directed by wise old men and hence thirty years behind the times is a joke shared with those who are aware of Nibbi's crusade for modern art.[33]

At the same time the narrator does not totally exclude another public. This is exemplified in the piece 'Vacanze', a description of people picnicking in the bush at Olinda, the 'voi' of the final comment being apparently addressed to a visitor to Australia, someone like Nibbi.

> Un po' dovunque, annidate nella boscaglia, famiglie silenziose che sorbiscono il tè: quasi tutti dall'aspetto gaio, e in ogni caso imperturbabile: tanto è vero che non v'accorgete quando marito e moglie hanno litigato di fresco. Garantito che si tratta di gente amabile in complesso. Magari salutandovi, ripeteranno a sazietà che la giornata è incantevole. E' un sorta di innocente mania, come si sa. Ma a questo vi sarete abituati. (p.22)

Sydney, however, although described in a shorter piece, is described in favourable terms, partly because its fame '… è dovuta al fatto di essere ormai divenuta sinonimo di Napoli, di San Francisco e di Rio de Janeiro.' The art critic in Nibbi appreciates its contrasting colours; the heir to the Futurist movement is attracted by its people's activity:

> Osserviamo la città. Il rosso mattone degli edifizi armonizza con le visuali azzurre della baia. Poichè è molto più ricca di

33. '… il senso artistico nell'insieme è controllato da vecchi uomini saggi e sicchè appare in ritardo di un trentennio su quello europeo.' (p.13)

> colore di Melbourne, è di fatto una città spensierata. Vi prevale una smaniosa vita all'aperto: vi viene l'illusione che la gente, invece di rinserrarsi nelle case, sia posseduta dalla febbre del moto, del continuo spostarsi. (p.29)

Sydney then is closer to achieving the status of the narrator's ideal city, for its movement but also for aesthetic reasons.

Just as the narrator of *Il volto degli emigranti* and *Nelle isole della felicità* depicts Europeans alienated by behaviour which does not correspond to the model to which they are accustomed, so too, these presentations in the *Nuovissimo libro di lettura* extend to the ideal model of a cosmopolitan city which is marked by movement, noise and more enthusiastic and committed manifestations of social life. The narrator makes few compromises for an Australian public and at times feels obliged to address himself to readers from another place and another culture and with values like his own. So the literary activity of Nibbi in the 1930s, even in a work addressed to an Australian public, echoes the style of his presentations of European art to that small nucleus of Australian artists eager for experimentation and modernity, but in this case there is greater pessimism regarding its readers' openness to change.

Il peso della lontananza nell'opera di Enoe Di Stefano

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Enoe Di Stefano è la più nota tra le scrittrici italiane che hanno pubblicato le proprie poesie in Australia.[1] I suoi cinque volumetti, tutti pubblicati a Sydney, coprono tre decenni, dal 1970 al 1997, e iniziano quando si era già quasi esaurito il grande flusso migratorio del secondo dopoguerra che portò in Australia, soprattutto negli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta, circa 250.000 emigranti italiani.[2]

Enoe Raffaelli Di Stefano, morta di recente (aprile 2011) all'età di novant'anni, ha vissuto in Australia per più di cinquant'anni, essendo arrivata nel lontano 1949. Nata a Rovereto in provincia di Trento, nel 1939 consegue il diploma magistrale, quindi si trasferisce con la famiglia a Bolzano dove trova lavoro presso un istituto bancario. Nell'immediato dopoguerra conosce un giovane avvocato di nome Alfio Di Stefano, nato negli Stati Uniti da genitori siciliani ma venuto in Italia quando era ancora bambino. I due si sposano e subito dopo decidono di emigrare in Australia, a Sydney, dove risiede lo zio di Enoe, il quale fa loro l'atto di richiamo. Come tanti altri emigranti di allora vanno in Australia con un solo intento, quello di fare la cosiddetta «fortuna» e, come tutti gli altri, dicono che ci rimarranno solo cinque dieci anni, magari anche meno, il tempo cioè di mettere da parte un bel gruzzolo di denaro per poi tornare in Italia per goderne i frutti. Non pensano minimamente che l'Australia sarà la loro dimora per

1. Tra le altre poetesse italo-australiane che hanno pubblicato le proprie poesie in volume oppure che sono note per le poesie che hanno pubblicato in antologia vanno ricordate Mary Ceravolo, *Roundabout of Memories. Memore giostra,* Catanzaro, Tip. Aloi, 2002; Lidia Valerio-Dell'Oso, *Un angolo della mia penna,* Collingwood, Victoria, 1996; Maria Valli, *Poesie australiane. Australian Poems,* University of Queensland Press, 1972; Flavia Coassin, in Piero Genovesi (a cura di), *Compagni di viaggio,* Carlton, Victoria, CIS Publishers, 1991; Lucilla D'Ambrosio, in *I clandestini. Poesie di scrittori italo-australiani,* Adelaide, South Australia, FILEF Publications, 1996. I primi quattro volumi sono bilingui, e mirano al pubblico anche anglofono.
2. Il censimento fatto in Australia nel 1947 segnala la presenza di 33.632 nati in Italia, mentre in quello del 1971 si arriva alla cifra massima di 289.476 unità. Oggi pochi italiani scelgono di stabilirsi in Australia e sono soprattutto professionisti. Per via del progressivo invecchiarsi della prima generazione oggigiorno il numero dei nati in Italia è sceso a 218.718 (censimento del 2001) mentre si calcola che gli italiani di seconda e terza generazione arrivino a circa un milione di persone (su venti milioni di abitanti in Australia).

il resto della vita.[3] A Sydney Enoe Di Stefano trova lavoro presso una ditta che produce oggetti sacri e passa fino a quindici ore al giorno a dipingere statuine religiose, Madonne e Santi, perché quante più ne finisce tanto più guadagna.[4] I primi anni di emigrazione sono molto difficili. Non dice «Buon Natale» o «Buon Anno» a nessuno, perché a dicembre in Australia c'è un caldo afoso e pesante, mosche e zanzare al posto della neve morbida e candida che sogna ogni notte e di cui non parla neanche con suo marito.[5]

Comincia a collaborare a giornali e a trasmissioni radiofoniche in lingua italiana. Si fa conoscere a Sydney per la sua rubrica «L'angolo di Gianna» che scrive ogni settimana per *La Fiamma,* settimanale italiano pubblicato a Sydney. Gli italo-australiani e soprattutto le donne le scrivono, cercando una parola di conforto per superare la solitudine e la nostalgia che sentono dell'Italia. È tramite le lettere che le arrivano numerose che capisce che ciò che prova lei stessa, lontana dall'Italia, in terra straniera dove la lingua e gli usi e costumi sono completamente diversi, è condiviso da tantissimi altri emigrati italiani suoi contemporanei.

Dopo qualche anno i Di Stefano riescono a comperare una casa. Vuotando i bauli e la casse per disporre finalmente le loro cose con un po' di ordine, Enoe Di Stefano trova tanta carta che aveva dimenticato: libri, documenti e fogli scritti, incluso qualche foglietto schiacciato sotto una stella alpina tra le pagine di un'antologia di scuola.[6] Si accorge ora che, essendo stata troppo presa dalla necessità di guadagnarsi il pane in Australia, ha soffocato una vocazione proprio al momento del suo nascere, tanti anni prima. Riscopre la poesia nonché la sua vena poetica e trova una nuova ragione di vita, una nuova via da ripercorrere, soprattutto una nuova sfida: il piacere e il tormento di creare una cosa sua, di esprimere un pensiero improvviso, di mettere su carta idee che si maturano nella mente, di cercare, purtroppo senza possibilità, di colmare il vuoto del lungo tempo che le è sfuggito.[7]

Nel 1970 pubblica la prima raccolta di poesie, *Terra Australis,*[8] un volumetto di quindici poesie, fra cui la poesia «Ombre» composta quando la Di Stefano era ancora in Italia. Anche se questa poesia ricalca la tradizione letteraria della notte con le sue ombre segrete che induce alla riflessione, alla rivelazione e all'abbandono, motivi questi che vanno da Petrarca a

3. Testo dattiloscritto di Enoe Di Stefano, s.d., ma c. 1996, gentilmente speditomi dalla scrittrice.
4. Comunicazione privata, giugno 2003.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Enoe Di Stefano, *Terra Australis,* Sydney, Tipografia P. Fabreschi, 1970.

Michelangelo a Giovanni Della Casa a Foscolo a Ungaretti,[9] tuttavia si trova già qui la predilezione della Di Stefano per un linguaggio scarno e limpido dove accorgimenti quali l'enjambement, la rima interna, l'assonanza e l'alliterazione creano una musicalità che farà da sfondo a tutta la sua produzione letteraria. Nel 1972 «Ombre» vince a Milano la medaglia d'argento nel concorso «Regione Lombarda '72», il primo tra i numerosi premi che nei due decenni successivi la scrittrice vincerà in concorsi letterari in Italia:

Ombre

Di notte le ombre
hanno corpo e verità
il silenzio è colmo
di sussurri strani.
Richiami d'indefinite
epoche trascorse?
O gioie mai godute
lacrime mai piante
che fremono
alle porte dell'anima?
Tutto nell'ambigua
penombra della notte
si cela e si rivela
in un gioco tortuoso
ossessionante
che la mente rincorre.
È più facile
ascoltare i segreti
che da sempre sono
in agguato dell'uomo,
di notte
quando il silenzio
annega il suono
e le ombre
hanno corpo e verità
alla mente che giace
in abbandono.

9 Si veda per es.: Petrarca, Sonetto CCLXXXII; Michelangelo, *Rime,* «O notte, o dolce tempo, benché nero»; Giovanni Della Casa, Rime, «O sonno, o de la queta, umida, ombrosa»; Foscolo, «Alla sera»; Ungaretti, *Sentimento del tempo.*

Le altre poesie di questa prima raccolta mettono in risalto le difficoltà che prova la scrittrice ad innamorarsi della nuova «Terra Australis», paese che rimane alieno, semplice termine latino, cartografico, che non può mai essere «Patria»: «Ho provato / a mettere nel cuore / un'altra Patria, / non c'era posto. // ... // Come il primo amore / il cuor consuma / la Patria nel ricordo / è sempre viva, / è solo una».[10] Il partire-patire è un binomio indivisibile,[11] privo di illusioni e speranze a chi sa la verità: «Vanno e vengono le navi / di emigranti / mercanti di illusioni. / Sembrano spose belle ridenti / così candide e lucenti nell'azzurro. / ... / Come le spose credono / trepidanti / ad un futuro porto / di felicità».[12] Il paesaggio italiano, o più precisamente quello trentino dell'infanzia della Di Stefano, immutato e immutabile, è avvolto in un'eterna primavera:

Ricordo il glicine
che rallegrava
il muro del convento
dove andavo a scuola.
Ogni uccello aveva
un canto in gola
ed ogni aiuola
il mantello
della nuova stagione.
Il filo d'erba
stava ritto in tenzone
con i fiori più belli
e ragni e serpentelli
uscivano dai crepi
senza fretta.[13]

Questi intimi ricordi del paesaggio roveretano con «le foreste / verdi d'abeti e pini / gialli di larici ondeggianti / odorose di resina e mirtillo»[14] contrastano drammaticamente con il paesaggio australiano, il quale è privo di sfumature («Cala il tramonto sulla foresta / è buio d'improvviso»), terra primitiva che sonnecchia, dove «da millenni / nascono e muoiono le cose inutilmente / in questa selva remota appisolata / ... / No felice non è nel suo torpore / pur se l'appare».[15]

10. «Patria», in *Terra Australis.*
11. «/ .../ sulla china incerta del partire, / insolubile pallido patire», «Insolubile», in *Terra Australis.*
12. «Navi», in *Terra Australis.*
13. «Primavera», in *Terra Australis.*
14. «Ai miei monti», in *Terra Australis.*
15. «Foresta Australiana», in *Terra Australis.*

Otto anni dopo Enoe Di Stefano pubblica la seconda raccolta di versi intitolata *Voci di lontananza.*[16] È nota ormai fra la comunità italiana di Sydney anche per il suo contributo - in qualità di presidente del Comitato Scolastico e Culturale del Co.As.It (Comitato di Assistenza Italiano) - alla diffusione dello studio della lingua italiana in Australia.[17] Di nuovo, in questo secondo volume, la Di Stefano cerca di recuperare il passato tramite i sensi - le immagini, gli odori e i rumori dell'infanzia - pur consapevole che essi fanno parte, leopardianamente, di un mondo lontano che «appariva buono / all'innocente».[18] Ma per sopravvivere in terra straniera, per non morire, è necessario scavare nel passato per riascoltare quelle voci dell'animo, anche se sono diventate leggenda, anche se rischiano di dileguarsi.

Voci di lontananza

Vi sento
voci di lontananza,
risi d'infanzia
benedetta,
strider di seghe
su legni freschi
trilli di cingallegre
nel mattino
gridi di bimbi
nel cortil di scuola
canto di madre
nel stender le lenzuola ...

Vi sento
urla dementi
nel cielo disperato,
rombi d'inferno
su sangue innocente.

Poi il silenzio.
Nello spazio ti perdi

16. Enoe Di Stefano, *Voci di lontananza,* Sydney, Southern Cross Press (P.E. Fabreschi), 1978. 2a ed., 1992.
17. Per un suo quadro della storia dei corsi d'italiano nello stato del New South Wales, si veda Enoe Di Stefano, «Lingua e cultura italiana a livello elementare in Australia. Gli eventi storici che ne decisero le sorti», in Gaetano Rando (a cura di), *Language and Cultural Identity,* Wollongong, NSW, Dante Alighieri Society, 1990, pp. 57-69.
18. «Risveglio», in *Voci di lontananza.*

suono splendido
e fremente
della mia terra.

Ora,
tra parole estranee
al mio primo dire,
vi ascolto
voci di lontananza,
per non morire.

Il paesaggio australiano, a cui la scrittrice si sta avvicinando a poco a poco, per ora serve soprattutto a evocare il paesaggio trentino. Quando, durante una sua visita a Canberra, capitale d'Australia, si lascia accarezzare dai colori vivaci che circondano Capital Hill, non può fare a meno di paragonare la scena ai boschi delle Alpi italiane, ma capisce bene che per superare la sua angoscia esistenziale deve risolvere il conflitto tra passato e presente, deve accettare un «insolubile dilemma» per liberarsi dal «tormento della nostalgia».[19]

[...]
Al di là degli azzurri
al di là dei sussurri
di questo quieto presente
vedo pini guizzanti sul pendio,
odo i segreti pianti
del mio luogo natio.
E cerco una risposta
per conciliare
presente e passato
in armoniosa fusione,
ché ieri ed oggi è mio,
non distinzione di luogo
frammento di tempo.
Io sono quel che soffro
e quel che godo, da sempre.
In questa convinzione
trovare finalmente pace ... [20]

La Di Stefano sente profondamente l'attaccamento alle sue origini («Se

19. «Non resta che subire», in *Voci di lontananza.*
20. «In Canberra», in *Voci di lontananza.*

una radice ha l'essere mio / è tra l'Adige ed i colli / sul pendio»)[21] nonché l'insegnamento di suo padre morto da poco. Il padre le ha insegnato l'amore e il perdono, ma anche l'ingiustizia e il dolore presenti nel mondo. Cercando la sua orma tra le tante nel cimitero di Sydney la scrittrice si accorge che «la tua orma non è svanita / è dentro me».[22] Allo stesso tempo il «generation gap» che, di contro, rischia di dividere culturalmente la poetessa dal suo giovane figlio, Gregory, nato in Australia,[23] «talla / del ceppo vecchio nata là», per dirla con Pascoli che dedica la sua nota poesia «Italy» agli emigrati sparsi per il mondo, può essere colmato almeno in parte quando Gregory, come la Molly pascoliana, viene portato in Italia dove scopre gli odori, i rumori e le tradizioni del paese delle sue origini.

Autunno romano

Roma, Stazione Termini.
Bruma di crepuscolo
e odore di castagne
arrostite in piazza
dentro innumerevoli bracieri.

I bracieri sono lucciole bluastre
nel brusio di formicaio umano.
«Come si chiamano?» domanda Gregory.
«Ah, tu non conosci le caldarroste?»

Tu vieni dall'estate d'Australia,
abbronzato, vestito leggero.
Conosci la spiaggia infinita
l'onda possente d'oceano
e il silenzio degli eucalipti.

Non sai i castagneti e gli ulivi,
non sai il rumore di foglie
di vigne ammucchiate
pei sentieri di campagna ...
Le scarpe di tua madre,
nell'infanzia lontana dei ricordi,
erano sporche di terra e di fogliame
e il dito usciva svelto,

21. «Rovereto», in *Voci di lontananza.*
22. «L'orma paterna», in *Voci di lontananza.*
23. «Generation gap», in *Voci di lontananza.*

dal guanto rotto,
a staccare la buccia rovente.

Due lame di fuoco, a ponente,
scendono tra le guglie orgogliose
che domani vedrai.
Ma le caldarroste? ...
Compriamole, ti piaceranno.
Scoprirai un mistero nuovo
e l'arco della diversità
sarà rimpicciolito.

Nel 1985 esce la terza raccolta di poesie della Di Stefano, la quale nuovamente, sin dal titolo *Mio e non mio,*[24] mette in risalto il dramma e il dilemma della scrittrice come donna emigrata.[25] Il volume è corredato da una breve introduzione in cui la scrittrice, residente in Australia ormai da più di trentacinque anni, concede che è venuta meno la nostalgia dei primi anni e che «i legami con la terra madre si sono molto attenuati». Ora, con l'avvicinarsi della vecchiaia, strazia il pensiero che il paese nativo non le appartiene più e vice-versa.[26] A lei, come ad altri espatriati stabilitisi da tempo in Australia, rimane il dubbio sulla propria identità. «Se non può dire di appartenere alla terra d'origine può uno sentirsi parte della terra di adozione?», si chiede.[27] Come nelle raccolte precedenti la scrittrice si avvale di immagini limpide e immediate, le quali creano una musicalità che esprime la sua «stanchezza di vivere»[28] e la discordanza del suo stato d'animo.

[...]
Non sapevo che sarei andata
lontana dalla terra mia,
tra gente straniera,
discordante di suoni e di maniera.

24. Enoe Di Stefano, *Mio e non mio,* Sydney, G.R. Offset Printing, 1985.
25. «Il vero dramma è tra due madri che mi contendono e l'una non può sostituire l'altra, né da sola appagare le esigenze della mia esistenza. Forse la verità è che non posso, o non ho il coraggio, di fare una scelta» (Note personali preparate da Enoe Di Stefano per la presentazione all'Università di Wollongong di *Mio e non mio,* 24 ottobre 1985). Per altre osservazioni fatte dalla Di Stefano sui suoi sentimenti nei confronti sia dell'Italia che dell'Australia e sulla sua poesia si veda l'intervista da lei rilasciata nel 1994, inclusa in Paola Niscioli, «Migrant Writing and Beyond: The voices of four Italian-Australian poets: Lino Concas, Mariano Coreno, Enoe Di Stefano and Luigi Strano», Master of Arts thesis, School of Languages (Italian), Flinders University of South Australia, 1996.
26. « [...] Sempre meno, ad ogni incontro, / io t'appartengo, e tu a me, / luogo natio / e strazio mi dà questo pensiero. Il lungo travaglio / di ciò che è mio e non mio / terminerà? [...] («Mio e non mio»).
27. Dalla Nota introduttiva a *Mio e non mio.*
28. «Discorso incompiuto», in *Mio e non mio.*

[...]
Ormai la polvere è scesa sui ricordi,
sui sogni incompiuti, sui giovani giorni
delle illusioni e dell'ardore
e non ho modo di colmare l'abisso
del tempo. Di tanto afferro un filo
e lo trattengo a stento.[29]

Meno riuscite sono le poesie di questa raccolta in cui la Di Stefano abbandona la vena intimistica e autobiografica rispecchiante i sentimenti della donna emigrata e intraprende invece un discorso poetico con tematiche di impegno civile come nelle poesie «Vietnam» e «Astronauta», composte qualche anno prima, rispettivamente nel 1969 e nel 1970. Più riusciti, d'altro canto, sono i «cammei», sette poesie dedicate ad altrettante donne immigrate su cui grava non solo la tristezza della vita in un paese straniero ma anche la noia, l'isolamento, l'incomprensione e l'ingiustizia.[30] Accanto ai cammei raffiguranti una commessa, una moglie tradita, un'altra dominata dal marito, un'anziana ricoverata all'ospedale, una prostituta, e una giovane insegnante, spicca il ritratto patetico di Carmela:

Passa col giallo
vincendo l'affanno
e sfidando il secondo
al crocevia.

Pesan le borse,
balla la pancia,
scende la riga di sudore.

Dopo la fabbrica
c'è il cucinare
e panni da stirare,
finché il sonno
la sbatte a letto
dove il marito attende
per fare l'amore.

29. «La favilla», in *Mio e non mio.* In questa terza raccolta della Di Stefano si trovano delle immagini che ricordano i versi di Montale, ma sono prive delle sperimentazioni verbali e l'intensità del linguaggio tipiche del poeta genovese. Cfr. «il male di vivere» (Montale) e «la stanchezza di vivere» (Di Stefano); lo «scordato strumento» (Montale) e la «musica incompiuta / che vuole l'accordo finale («Discorso incompiuto», Di Stefano); «Tu non ricordi; altro tempo frastorna / la tua memoria; un filo s'addipana. // Ne tengo ancora un capo» (Montale) e «La favilla» (Di Stefano).
30. A.T., recensione di *Mio e non mio, La Fiamma,* 25 nov. 1985, p. 30.

I giorni e gli anni
sono lavoro, stanchezza,
risparmi in banca.

È tutto qui per Carmela.

Nel quarto volume, *Se rimarrà qualcosa,* pubblicato nel 1988,[31] la Di Stefano, nell'offrirci la sua «storia» quadridecennale di viandante, si sente più che mai partecipe delle sofferenze e del disorientamento di chi, come lei, ha vissuto l'esperienza dell'emigrazione. Ormai i giorni e le stagioni passano inesorabilmente, «senza tregua o ragione»,[32] e il ruscello alpestre che specchia le foreste del suo Trentino si perde, ingoiato, nell'anonimato delle acque del tempo.[33] Se rimane qualcosa è solo l'odore di resina dei tronchi tagliati.[34] Intanto, anche se nulla è cambiato, anche se il problema dell'identità rimane sempre angoscioso, il paese d'adozione man mano è diventato più familiare. Ora per la prima volta l'autrice può rivolgersi direttamente all'Australia con una poesia omonima e con un incipit che dichiara apertamente il rapporto armonioso e affettivo che ha instaurato con il paese che anni addietro era solo toponimo latino, *Terra Australis:*

Ti voglio bene, Australia,
anche s'è un bene limitato
con riserve.
Tu non mi chiedi molto
in pace conviviamo
ché l'una l'altra serve.[35]
[...]

La poetessa italo-australiana si rassegna, accetta con triste rammarico l'immutabilità della sua vita, che è diventata banale, svuotata, nella sua quotidianità, di ogni speranza, condizione questa che si manifesta nello stile più prosastico dei suoi componimenti:

[...]
Inutile cercare nei ricordi
la Pasqua primaverile,

31. Enoe Di Stefano, *Se rimarrà qualcosa,* Sydney, Southern Cross Press, 1988.
32. « [...] E penso ai giorni perduti / alle scorse stagioni / alla vita che fugge / sulla china del tempo / senza tregua o ragione [...]» («Il ruscello», in *Se rimarrà qualcosa*).
33. « [...] E già il ruscello alpestre / d'acqua pura / si perde in un susslto / nell'anonimo spazio / del fiume che l'ingoia» (*Ibid.*).
34. «Infanzia», *Se rimarrà qualcosa.*
35. «Australia», in *Se rimarrà qualcosa.*

questa è Pasqua d'autunno,
ricca di frutti, non di promesse.

E allora?
Arrostiremo bistecche all'aperto
all'ombra dei canfori odorosi
e berremo un bicchiere,
ci diremo «Buona Pasqua»
e taglieremo al dolce una colomba,
di mandorle e canditi,
per mantenere quel poco
ch'è ancora possibile
della vecchia tradizione,
del sottile pianto dei ricordi ...[36]

Altro tema nuovo trattato in questa raccolta è la delusione che prova la scrittrice - portavoce ancora una volta di tanti altri espatriati come lei, presenti in Australia da molto tempo - di fronte agli italiani rimasti in Italia, i quali difficilmente capiscono il dramma dell'emigrato. Nascono così alcune poesie che lei stessa chiama «di protesta»[37] per il fatto che oggi chi torna in Italia si sente straniero in casa propria.

Tu non conosci il mango e la papaia,
non l'hai visti crescere sui rami,
non hai raccolto l'ananas
dai solchi di terra rossa come sangue.
Non hai fatto la strada del carbone
o della canna da zucchero.
Non hai varcato oceani senza fine
e cieli cristallini d'azzurro trasognato
Tu non sai ...
[...]
Io sono vissuto altrove dove neanche
la parola t'aiuta a finire la giornata,
dove il sospetto è l'amico ed il nemico.

36. «Pasqua australiana», in *Se rimarrà qualcosa.*
37. «Rifletto amaramente su quanto poco siamo capiti o considerati, noi emigrati, dai nostri fratelli rimasti in Italia, i fortunati che non sono mai andati via dalla madre terra a stabilirsi altrove. [...] Tutti questi pensieri mi hanno spinta a scrivere alcune poesie più o meno di protesta, un po' polemiche forse, che rivolgo di più a loro, a chi è rimasto in Italia, che non a chi è emigrato» (Note di Enoe Di Stefano preparate per la presentazione, all'Istituto di Cultura di Sydney, della raccolta *Se rimarrà qualcosa,* 8 aprile 1989).

Tu fortunata creatura dell'infanzia mia,
sei rimasto tra le pietre
che conosci ad una ad una,
nei sentieri battuti dai tuoi avi,
tra le mura antiche della pieve
nell'innocente, beato tuo annidare.

Non posso dirti la mia storia
di viandante irrequieto.
Parliamo pure di te, anche s'è cosa
che conosco da sempre,
anche se turbini di voci straniere
m'offuscano la mente
mentre tu dici dolcemente il mio idioma primo.
[...][38]

Nell'ultima raccolta, *L'itinerario,* pubblicata nel 1997,[39] la Di Stefano non cerca più risposta alla domanda perché il fato abbia voluto dividere la sua vita tra due mondi. Capisce che «è tardi ... / per tornare sui passi / che avrei dovuto percorrere».[40] Ora, non più giovane, guarda il passato in modo staccato, non può giudicare l'itinerario o trovare ragione che spieghi le «lacrime e successi / compagni del percorso».[41] Nel recuperare quei ricordi lontani diventati fuggevoli e difficilmente penetrabili non ha né «lamenti / né disarmonia».

[...]
Vaga la mente
per le strade arcane
di visioni e ricordi
del passato.
Un po' sbiadito
appare ogni ritratto
che torna a bussare
alla memoria.
[...]

L'emblematico binomio partire-patire della prima raccolta si trasforma alla fine del percorso poetico dell'autrice in lotto-lotta, binomio retrospet

38. «Tu non sai», in *Se rimarrà qualcosa.* Sullo stesso tema si veda inoltre «Discorso finito» (*Ibid.*).
39. Enoe Di Stefano, *L'itinerario,* Sydney, Southern Cross Press, 1997.
40. «È tardi», in *L'itinerario.*
41. «L'itinerario», in *L'itinerario.*

tivo che riduce la vita trascorsa a gioco d'azzardo e darwiniana lotta per l'esistenza. La vita come lotta / lotto obbliga ad accettare l'esito del gioco senza che si sappia se col biglietto di viaggio si è vinto il premio o se «valeva la partita».

Un giorno ormai lontano
giocai la lotteria.
Feci la mia puntata
e l'esito accettai.
Lasciai le anguste cime
di neve imparruccate,
l'Adige mio ridente,
per una spiaggia ignota
d'ignoto continente.

Avevo vinto il premio?
non l'ho saputo mai.
[...]
Chiuso nel mistero
è il lotto della vita.[42]

Il viaggio poetico di Enoe Di Stefano, anche se rimane quasi sempre autobiografico, diario che narra liricamente la sua vita in Australia, anche se le cinque raccolte operano uno scavo nell'intimo del suo io mettendo in risalto il «peso della lontananza»[43] e l'angoscia esistenziale di una sola persona che cerca di risolvere il dualismo della propria identità, anche se la sua opera è quasi esclusivamente la storia di un'anima, nondimeno la strada migratoria da lei percorsa è la stessa che è stata intrapresa da milioni di italiani che hanno lasciato il proprio paese. Il fatto sta che gli emigrati, e in modo particolare le emigrate, perché le donne che emigravano erano numericamente in netta minoranza rispetto agli espatriati maschi, e solo raramente avevano la possibilità di esprimere la propria voce, si riconoscono subito nel dramma esistenziale insito in ogni tappa di questo «itinerario» della Di Stefano: nel primo incontro difficilissimo con la terra straniera che, soprattutto se si tratta dell'Australia britannica e monoculturale degli anni cinquanta, rimaneva impenetrabile linguisticamente e culturalmente; nei ricordi che accompagnavano tutti e che restavano fissi nel tempo, legati all'età giovanile che veniva rievocata nostalgicamente;

42. «Il lotto della vita», in *L'itinerario.*
43. «Il peso della lontananza» è il titolo di un capitolo del romanzo largamente autobiografico di Enoe Di Stefano intitolato *L'avventura australiana,* pubblicato nel 1996 (Padova, Edizioni Messaggero). Ha per protagonisti una coppia di giovani sposi, emigrati in Australia alla fine degli anni quaranta, e offre un quadro piuttosto amaro della realtà migratoria.

nei rapporti con la famiglia e con i figli nati all'estero per i quali l'Italia era il paese di cui tutti parlavano ma che loro non conoscevano; e soprattutto nell'esperienza del viaggio di ritorno, quando il sogno di rivedere i luoghi natii e i parenti e gli amici di una volta si trasforma, ancora oggigiorno, in un'amara scoperta che al rientro in Italia si è accolti con indifferenza, quasi come dei falliti. Sono questi i temi affrontati da Enoe Di Stefano, il cui sforzo è tutto proiettato verso una libertà espressiva che è garanzia di una comunicazione letteraria autentica e profonda.[44]

44. Alfredo Luzi, «La letteratura italo-australiana in lingua italiana», *Letteratura italiana contemporanea,* X, n. 26, gennaio-aprile 1989, p. 181.

Anomaly in the Academy: Italian Studies in Australia

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INTRODUCTION

In Australia today, one-quarter of the adult population was born overseas, multiculturalism has been official policy for a quarter of a century and more than 200 languages are in everyday use.[1] Yet, despite this apparently solid basis for the respect and study of language and culture, the news from the language teaching-and-learning front in the universities has become increasingly gloomy. For the last 20 years the regular reports on and from academic language departments have sounded notes of marked pessimism about what has been happening to their programmes and what is likely to happen in the future. The pessimism derives, on one hand, from an overall decline in student enrolments in the dwindling array of languages available to study and, on the other, from the reluctance of state and national governments to make the knowledge of other cultures a serious policy priority. When examined singly, languages show considerable variation in their enrolment trends, both overall and in individual institutions, so that the scale of the predicament can vary greatly depending on period and place; it is therefore difficult to insist on a direct relationship between the decline in government support, moral and material, and the local condition in which any language finds itself. None the less, the particular irony in the juxtaposition of the lack of concern for the future of language study and the insistence on the need for better reciprocal understanding between peoples whose fates are ever more closely linked appears to most language teachers to be lost on policy-makers.

The gloomy note can be heard even from an area that might expect to be a particular beneficiary of national attention: the teaching of Asian languages. Appreciation of the importance for Australia's economy and national security of its Asian neighbours has not translated into greater

1. In 2006 approximately 4.3 million people (21.5% of the population) spoke a language other than English at home, nearly 1.7 million more than in 1996. About 1.6 % of the population spoke Italian at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

student interest in a knowledge of Asian societies and languages. The hope expressed by the Ingleson Report in 1989 for the then estimated figure of 3 per cent of university students taking at least one subject devoted either to Asia or an Asian language to rise to 20 per cent by 2000 has been conspicuously disappointed: by 2001 the uptake had not even reached 5% (ASC, 1989; ASAA, 2002: xv). Moreover, many of the major Asian and Indian languages are not widely available in Australia's 41 universities. In 2007 Arabic was taught in just five universities, Korean in seven, Thai and Vietnamese in two – down from five and four respectively in 2001 – and Hindi-Urdu also in two (McLaren, 2008: 2-3). By then, many languages that had been taught in just one or two universities ten years earlier had disappeared altogether, including Cantonese, Sundanese, Burmese and Cambodian (White and Baldauf, 2006: 8-9).[2] A similar picture can be drawn for European languages, which did not receive the hoped-for surge in interest from the Great Leap Forward of the EU in the early 1990s with its increasing economic importance to Australia. Only Spanish has seen any expansion; French and German have no more than maintained their levels of provision of a decade ago; and many smaller languages have been severely reduced (White and Baldauf, 2006: 8).[3] The gap between the proclaimed national interest in better cross-cultural understanding and the provision of the linguistic and cultural instruments to make that understanding possible seems to be getting wider. As things now stand, the Australia of the immediate future will know its neighbours and commercial partners much less well than they, with their command of English, will know Australia.

If university language programmes are to be treated as 'national assets' in the ways that the authors of the 2002 report on Asian Studies said they should be (ASAA, 2002), we need to understand the ways in which the communities of language staff are organized much better than we currently do. As communities, they have their own social organization, intellectual directions and frames of reference, and they cannot therefore be taken simply as providing neutral instruments for grasping other cultures. Yet while any number of general Philippics for and against the contem-

2. In 2005, 29 languages were taught in Australia's universities (White and Baldauf 2006: 8), a decline from the 66 taught at some time during the previous two decades (Australian Academy of the Humanities, 2000: 44). Several universities had introduced new language programmes, mainly Asian, in the 1990s but withdrew them within a few years.

3. Hajek (2001) notes declines of varying severity in Russian, Italian, Greek, Serbian/Croatian, Polish, Macedonian, Dutch and Turkish in the 1990s. However student demand tends to be cyclical so that some – French, Italian and Spanish – revived after 2000. And surveying the teaching of Ancient Greek and Latin in 18 Australasian universities, Horsley et al. (1995) too indicate a decline in enrolments between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, and a subsequent revival of student interest.

porary university have been published in recent years, very few detailed studies of change at discipline level have appeared. Anthropologists in particular (e.g. Geertz, 1982; Davis, 1999) have called on their colleagues to explore the different forms of social life down the departmental corridors and their relations to 'the way we think now'; but the few colleagues who have heeded their calls have mostly chosen to examine the natural sciences and to focus on the organization of their research.[4] Thus we have illuminating studies of the cultures of high energy physics research in Japan and the US (Traweek, 1989), molecular biologists at their laboratory workbenches (Latour and Woolgar, 1979; Knorr-Cettina, 1999) and staff relations in an Australian medical research institute (Charlesworth et al., 1989). But for the Humanities and Social Sciences we mostly have to rely on depictions by novelists - Amis, Snow, Bradbury, Lodge, Russo and others.

As far as we know, the only systematic description of the world of modern language teaching is by Colin Evans (1988, 1990), then an insider from the French section at the University of Cardiff, drawing on interviews with staff and students at several British universities more than 20 years ago.[5] His approach is to treat the central features of language teaching pedagogy as adaptive responses to the difficulties faced by staff in marking out a coherent, clearly demarcated intellectual terrain with a legitimate place in university curricula. His initial reconnoitre would, he hoped, stimulate some serious ethnography but so far that does not seem to have been done. What follows, therefore, is a response to his lead, using a broadly similar approach to analyse the specific case of the evolution of the community of Italianists in Australian universities. How far its main features also characterize other language programmes in Australia or overseas can only be seen when the necessary comparative data are gathered.

LANGUAGE STUDY AS AN ANOMALY IN THE ACADEMY

The plight of language programmes today is most commonly treated as an illustration of the more general predicament of the Humanities, regarded with indifference by governments and sometimes by university managements. However, this submersion should be resisted. Languages have in fact long been an anomaly among the Humanities where they

4. Becher and Trowler (2001), inspired by Geertz, offer a stimulating set of disciplinary comparisons at a general level. They note (2001: xi) the great imbalance between the many studies of natural sciences and the few descriptions of the Humanities and Social Sciences.
5. Although languages are included in the disciplinary sample used by Becher and Trowler (2001), they are not singled out for particular comment anywhere in the analysis. Kaplan (1994) offers a subtle self-portrait of her induction into a career as a French language-and-literature specialist.

are usually housed. They lack the research-based knowledge content, intellectual genealogies and methodological disputes around which the practitioners of adjacent disciplines organize themselves and ensure their recognition by outsiders. They have a weak definition of their identity, aggravated by the great heterogeneity of the intellectual backgrounds of staff: the (near)-native speaker qualification for teaching is very different from the ritually accredited initiation and disciplinary socialization of their colleagues in, say, history or philosophy. Among the Humanities, language programmes are unusually expensive: small-group teaching and relatively high class contact hours are considered essential to learning; obtaining and adapting audiovisual material for classes can be costly in time (even if no longer in hardware, software and technical expertise); and more computer laboratories tend to be made available for class as well as private practice. Finally, the learning of languages goes on in many other places than universities – schools, commercial language institutes, firms, branches of government, living in the target-language country itself – so that its right to an unchallengeable place in higher education curricula is always open to question.

An obvious sign of its anomalous position is the difficulty of deciding how to define the intellectual domain that language teaching occupies: discipline, multidiscipline, disciplinary field and 'enabling' discipline (one in which the content of study has little intrinsic value but is designed to facilitate other forms of scholarship or communication) have all been proposed without receiving general agreement.[6] Among the offerings on the contemporary humanities menu, perhaps only Cultural Studies has aroused the same degree of resistance to easy classification: it shares with languages the heterogeneity among practitioners and the close relation to extra-academic concerns. Because perceived anomalies generate a sense of unease and danger, they need to be dealt with. Reports by anthropologists indicate that in most cultures one of four strategies for managing the disquiet they arouse is likely to be adopted: repression by elimination; normalization by assignment to an adjacent category of which it can be described as a limiting case; designation as possessing exceptional, sometimes sacred, powers; and identification as a new singularity.[7]

These strategies have all been recurrently on view in university contexts in relation to modern languages. We can recognize the following exemplifications, couched in various registers and styles in different quar-

6. The uncertainty revealed by Colin Evans, the most acute analyst of the position of modern languages in universities, illustrates the general difficulty. He first agrees that 'By most of the dominant criteria, Modern Languages is not a discipline at all' (1988: 172); a few pages later he calls it a 'multidiscipline' (1988: 180); but later (1990) describes it as a 'discipline' without further qualification.

7. The classic anthropological work on anomalies is Douglas (1966).

ters: the assertion that language-learning, particularly at beginner level, is too mechanical and devoid of intellectual content to deserve a place in universities; the claim that language study is indissolubly linked to the unquestioned value of great literary works; the suggestion that language skills are the fundamental precondition for the success of national business and international understanding; and the institutional recognition of the singular status of language-study by lumping together all of its providers in an autonomous 'language centre' often subject to different financial and staffing rules to other academic divisions.

The extent of the actual disquiet that any particular anomaly provokes depends on several factors, both external and internal to the language programmes themselves. Externally, since anomalies are only perceived as such in terms of the wider classifications which organize their professional settings, any change in those classifications is likely to expose languages to challenge. Internally any particular language community's ability to promote a clear identity, cement alliances with other areas and offer a plausible defence of its role in a university will also vary. Thus, while the status of modern language study in universities has been inherently anomalous, the extent to which that anomaly is felt to be so provocative as to demand some kind of radical intervention has varied by time and place. The case of Italian Studies in Australian universities offers just one example.

THE NETWORKS THAT CONSTITUTE ITALIAN STUDIES

The academic community of Italian Studies in Australia has always been a small one, consisting in 2003 of about 60 staff members spread thinly across 15 universities, teaching at most 3000 students enrolled across roughly 200 language and culture courses each year.[8] In a community of such limited size the impact of dominant individuals is, of course, likely to be significant, especially in the phases of establishment and expansion; and it would be certainly possible to write an instructive history based on its leading figures and the impact of their distinctive predilections and passions. However, from a different perspective, the evolution of Italian Studies can also be examined in terms of shifts in the nature and content of the major sets of relationships in which its members are embedded. At any point in time, it is the state of these relationships which determines whether anomalies are seen as demanding action.

8. In 1988 Italian accounted for 15 per cent of` all tertiary language students, in 1990 12 per cent (NLLIA, 1994: 30). The proportion has probably declined further since then. The figures given by White and Baldauf (2006: 14) show Italian with just over 9 per cent of the EFTSL for all languages, but the authors note that a few universities did not provide EFTSL data for some key languages.

In what terms is the organization of the Italian Studies community best described? For most purposes 'network' seems preferable to 'tribe' (pace Becher and Trowler, 2001) and 'clan' (pace Bell and Moss, 2002), both of which suggest too strong and enduring a consciousness of common identity, hierarchical organization and attachment to a clearly defined territory. The term 'network', now in increasing use among social scientists to characterize intellectual and professional groupings (e.g. Collins, 1998), has several benefits: it can incorporate both humans and the non-human elements in pedagogic technology (text, computers); it does not prejudge the nature and strength of the links between and within the various locations of its members; it allows comparison between the nature of the network at different times and between different networks; and it provides a suitably flexible way of describing the social relations that sustain particular arrays of intellectual categories and their contents. For an area like languages in which the very diverse intellectual backgrounds of the teaching staff make the coherence of relationships within the field more problematic than elsewhere in the Humanities, the flexibility implied by the term 'network' seems especially suitable for analysing its relationships.

A useful starting-point is to list the goods that academic Italianists produce and the networks of relations required to deliver them. Those goods are very diverse and include: language skills; contributions to scholarship in a range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, including language pedagogy; collaboration to renew secondary school curricula; professional development courses for teachers; leadership roles in non-academic organizations to promote the particular language and culture; and interpreting and translating for government and university activities.

When we disaggregate the different networks through which those goods are created and transmitted, we can identify them under four broad headings: the links which integrate Italian Studies in a single institution; the links with Italianists elsewhere in Australia or overseas; the links that Italianists have with colleagues from adjacent disciplines; and the links with extra-academic organizations to which an Italian identity is central. Each of these four categories can of course be subdivided into a further array of separate, not necessarily overlapping networks built around specific interests.

Some features of these networks seem likely to be common to all languages. First, by comparison with the networks that link, say, physicists or economists, the internal networks of modern language specialists are both more loosely-coupled and less clearly bounded. A common concern to define their interests as 'language' is hardly a guarantee of cohesion. In any case, a badge of identity that asserts an interest in language is only worn with some diffidence since it does not differentiate university lan-

guage teachers from school language teachers. It also puts the primary professional emphasis on teaching, to the necessary detriment of their status vis-à-vis more clearly research-defined colleagues in neighbouring areas. Second, unlike in most other areas of university work, teaching and research for many language staff can be quite divorced from each other, with attendant problems for the coherence of individual intellectual identities and the integration of the networks that sustain them. Historians, say, can routinely incorporate their research topics and results directly into their courses: language teachers, unless they are among those who do research on the language-teaching or language-learning process itself, can rarely do so – a discrepancy exacerbated by the much greater proportion of their working week that language staff, by contrast with their colleagues in non-language areas, devote to teaching.[9] Third, acquisition of language skills is often undertaken for an extrinsic reason, whether it is the chance of working and studying in the target-language country, enjoyment of literature, the understanding of another society, the conduct of diplomacy or the negotiations of business. For some time now, it has not been a good for which intrinsic value is usually claimed, either for the mere possession of knowledge or for the value of the intellectual techniques used to acquire it.[10] Faint signs suggest this might be about to change. The 'Languages in Crisis' document published by the Group of Eight universities in 2007 to attract government attention was ready to quote a former school principal as arguing that 'the genuine intellectual challenge [of language learning] develops habits of mind that serve all other disciplines and brings personal rewards in abundance'.

For those reasons, the strength of the networks which bind Italian Studies together as a cohesive unit and link it to external constituencies is essential in reducing attention to its anomalous status in the Humanities. The more securely language teaching is attached to some presently incontestable value, the more immune it is to scepticism and challenge.

SKY-HOOKS TO THE SACRED: 1929-1963

The incorporation of` modern languages into the curricula of Australia's universities was more or less coeval with the establishment of the universities themselves.[11] French and German were taught at the universities

9. We should note, however, that the ranks of those engaged in scholarship in teaching (sometimes in addition to interests more typical of academics in the humanities) are growing, especially as many investigate applications of ICTs and develop and evaluate appropriate methodologies.
10. The benefit to analytical and reasoning powers once claimed for the process of mastering classical languages seems rarely to have been invoked in support of their modern equivalents.
11. We owe many of the following details to Barko (1996a, 1996b) and Barko and Martin (1997).

of Sydney and Melbourne from 1866 and 1884 respectively and remained the only modern languages with degree-course status in Australia until after the First World War. The first chair in French was set up at Sydney in 1920 and at Melbourne in 1939: the first chair of German was established in 1951. In the early days, modern language courses were usually housed in departments of` English literature or classics, were not necessarily offered every year, attracted few students and were treated with some suspicion by university authorities, not least because of the colourful characters recruited to teach them.[12] Debates over whether modern languages should primarily be for scholarly purposes, for improving communication with significant minorities in Australia or for encouraging commerce – today assumed to be only a recent concern – were already audible. The calls to introduce Chinese, Japanese and Hebrew for those practical reasons were not, however, heeded until 1918, when a Chair in Oriental Studies was established at Sydney, and until after 1945 in the cases of most other Asian and European languages.[13]

The first Italian course to be taught at an Australian university was offered in 1929 at the University of Western Australia (UWA), preceding Melbourne and Sydney universities by just a few years.[14] In each case Italian was a subordinate element in a broader Arts department headed by a non-linguist. At UWA the course was entrusted to Francesco Vanzetti (born in Padua in 1878) who was to teach the programme almost single-handed until he retired aged 84 in 1962.[15] At that point Italian was still only available in those three universities where it enrolled fewer than 300 students (NLLIA, 1994: 53). The main catchment area of school-leavers was small: only 1431 were taking Italian at school in 1961, about a third of whom were in their final year; and it was these already relatively competent

12. One French teacher at the University of Tasmania, where French had been introduced in 1892, had problems, as Barko delicately puts it, 'in adjusting to local norms' (Barko and Martin, 1997: 18). Having failed his entire class, he received remonstrations from the University Council and decided then to pass everyone. A gambling addict, he was later dismissed for soliciting bribes from his students who got together to buy him a ticket to South Africa. At the University of Sydney one French teacher ran a local wine and spirits business which did rather better than his university classes: his salary was cut by two-thirds between 1855 and 1860 because of the low enrolments he attracted.
13. Japanese courses were introduced at Sydney in 1917 and at Melbourne in 1922, but not as part of a BA programme. Departments of Far Eastern, Asian and Middle East Studies were created between 1945 and 1965. The first Spanish and Portuguese language and literature courses appeared in the 1960s.
14. A proposal to introduce Italian at the University of Melbourne had been made by a committee in the 1870s but turned down (Barko and Martin, 1997; 8). The establishment when it finally came was only course-size: its introduction as a full major had to wait until 1959.
15. Such longevity was by no means unusual in Australian language departments of the period: the French departments of the ANU, Melbourne and Sydney of the 20th century were all dominated by a single figure for more than 30 years each and Adelaide and the University of Western Australia both saw reigns of 20 years (see Barko and Martin, 1997: passim, for the details).

students who filled the post-beginner courses which were the only ones offered. The tightly integrated network binding together Italian literary specialists with responsibility also for teaching the language and students who already possessed sufficient linguistic competence to be required to study the literary canon produced an unusually coherent academic community. Its closeness was reinforced by the annual staff-student staging of Italian plays, which had an essential role in language acquisition.

The coherence of this community had several powerful strands to keep it resistant to challenge. Italian was established under the institutional protection of the already legitimate French and German so their common location in a single department (Romance or modern languages) mirrored the common roots and histories of the language: the university curriculum and academic organization simply reflected the world of languages itself. Moreover Italian enjoyed a special place in the wider civilizing domain by virtue of the influence of the culture to which knowledge of the language provided access: as the Dante scholar John Scott was to put it later, 'Culturally we are all Italy's children' (NLLIA, 1994: 7). The programme itself, designed for students with some prior competence, was built exclusively around classic texts and the work of their translation; it might have been taught anywhere in the world. The canon's incontestability and its importance for any student of Italian culture, both in Italy and elsewhere, gave the new programme in Australia a fixed, universal status: the texts were sky-hooks to the sacred. Its curriculum, based on mastery of the written language, provided training especially for aspiring school and university teachers of Italian. Students from Italian backgrounds – in 1961 the Italian-born population of Australia numbered nearly a quarter of a million – were absent. So the focus on the past and the nature of the Italianist community protected Italy as an object of study against contamination by alternative accounts.

These separate elements – the sacred texts, the assumption of responsibility for teaching language courses mainly by literary scholars, the orienting frame of reference to an Italy that could not be known through contemporary experience – ensured order and hierarchy. Their combined force pinned into place the form, content and institutional position of Italian language programmes, ensuring what Barko, referring to the modern languages of the time, calls 'the unchallenged predominance . . . of the Language-and-Literature model' (1996a: 7). In this case, what the model rested on was the cultivation of a global ecumene of *italianistica,* socializing the students into the networks of staff interests and language-teaching curriculum and methods.[16] Italian therefore established a solid bridgehead

16. Describing the state of German studies in the US in the same period, Gilman refers to the 'illusion of "international Germanistik" (2000: 22).

in universities, built around a tight, vertically integrated network of relationships among staff, students and curriculum. These elements would drift or be driven apart in the succeeding period of consolidation and growth.

MOORED TO MULTICULTURALISM: 1963-1988

For a quarter of a century after 1963 Italian expanded continuously across the higher education sector. From availability in three universities in 1964 Italian had come to be offered in no fewer than 36 universities and Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) by 1988. Demand flourished, especially in the CAEs where Italian was responsible for about a third of all modern language enrolments. The total of 258 students taking Italian in 1964, all of whom had studied Italian at school and were enrolled in an Arts degree, had risen to 3500 by 1988, most of whom were beginners. Organizationally Italianists were able to throw off their junior status in the Humanities. They created departments of their own based on full majors in degree programmes, and appointed professors to run them: Chairs of Italian were established at Sydney (1963), Melbourne (1964), Flinders (1970), UWA (1975) and finally La Trobe (1982) and were occupied by specialists in Italian literature from Dante to Svevo. The three original centres of Italian – UWA, Melbourne and Sydney – supplied most of the new staff: just over half the members working in Italian programmes in the mid-1990s had higher degrees, mostly doctorates, from one of them.[17] The growth in beginner-level language programmes also led to the recruitment of many junior staff, dedicated to the teaching of the language and – until the 1980s – barred from internal promotion to lecturer level or above. Engagement in research was not, therefore, an occupational requirement but a personal preference.

Several factors outside the higher education system underlay this expansion. Most significantly the increasing importance of Italians (and other ethnic groups) in the building and future of Australian society was recognized in the espousal of the policy of multiculturalism in the 1970s and in the allocation of resources to support its representative bodies and activities. The categories of 'community languages' and 'language maintenance' began to appear in multicultural policy-making. Equally Italy itself became an object of public fascination in that decade. How had it achieved its economic miracle? What lessons were there in the extraordinary flourishing of its cottage industries? Would Italy go Communist after the PCI's dramatic electoral successes in 1975-6? Would terrorism provoke a coup d'état or a revolution? What could we learn from Italian

17. Calculations are based on the entries in Academic Information Services (1997).

feminist movements? What would Umberto Eco do next to the study of literature? Italy was hailed as an economic, political and cultural laboratory in which experiments with significance far beyond its frontiers were in train. In Australia's academic programmes, therefore, 'Italian Studies' was born, with new courses on Italian history, society and politics alongside the traditional literary canon. Such courses were popular: they included the kinds of issues that could be recognized by the children of Italian immigrants, catered for the research interests of new staff, and were easily fitted to the interests of students who did not have sufficient Italian for literary study or who did not intend to proceed beyond elementary level.

The consequences of those organizational, political and intellectual developments converted the dominance by vertically integrated relationships of the early phase into dominance by horizontally integrated networks. The primary justification for the study of Italian shifted from the universal to the national. In place of its grounding in the sacred literary texts of transcultural identity, Italian drew its strength from the contribution it could make to national social cohesion. Four shifts are particularly important in this reconstitution of the area.

1. The decline of literature as the exclusive frame of reference

The hitherto dominant language-and-literature model was undermined from two directions. First, within Italian Studies itself an increasing number of staff had research and teaching interests of a broadly political and sociological kind – film studies, sociology and politics, gender studies, migration studies – and were as likely to find their intellectual interlocutors among colleagues in their own disciplines as among fellow-Italianists. Often using English-language texts as a more economical and accessible route to the knowledge they intended to impart, they would be unlikely to have the same direct interest in language as their literature-focused predecessors. Second, the link with literature was undermined from the opposite direction by the rise of Cultural Studies, accompanied by Gender Studies and Performance Studies, which not only challenged the notions of literature and uncontested canons but also, in its more extreme versions, the very possibility of adequate comprehension of narrowly-defined cultures by outsiders. Cultural Studies also tended to replace the interest in deep bilateral understandings based on the reciprocal mastery of language with a transcultural concern with 'theory' – a theory invariably presented and discussed in English. That not only weakened the traditional rationale for language but tended to challenge its importance in cross-cultural understanding. Third, the rise of linguistics offered a new, independent, knowledge base for language teachers and thus served to

weaken their legitimation by literature: one informed insider in an Australian department of Italian refers to the resulting 'mutual mistrust and rivalry between italianisti linguisti and italianisti letterati' (Kinder, 1996: 517). These three pressures did not of course eliminate the study of literature from Italian departments but they did undermine the sky-hooks-to-the-sacred role of the literary canon in warding off challenges to the area's anomalous status.[18] The realist stance of the earlier phase gave way to the relativism of multiple perspectives.

2. Diversification among language teaching programmes

If language teachers were losing their hitherto vital connections with literature specialists, they were also becoming more diverse among themselves, in terms of their backgrounds, the teaching methods adopted and their research interests. The introduction of beginner-level courses, common to all European languages (the first ones in French were introduced in 1974) prompted the recruitment of native or near-native speakers whose task was only to teach and whose intellectual backgrounds were very diverse. As far as teaching methods were concerned, the dual hegemony of translation and the Direct Method had broken down, allowing space, first, for the behaviourist-inspired grammatical drills in language laboratories, then for the notional-functional approach associated with the Council of Europe and finally for communicative approaches, supplemented by a variety of forms of computer-assisted learning, which remained orthodox for a couple of decades. This sequence did not mean the simple replacement of one method by its successor but rather the accumulation of an eclectic mix of teaching techniques deployed in varying combinations in different places. No single frame of reference came to cover the work of language teachers or to orient them towards common issues. Programmes became increasingly diverse; staff managed their pedagogic issues locally and the incentives for teaching-related exchanges of information and experience were correspondingly weak.

Once the formal barriers to promotion from junior positions had been dismantled in the 1980s, both career self-interest and departmental prestige helped to encourage research activity among language-teaching staff – an encouragement which turned into a demand in the 1990s as the rituals of university audit began to give greater financial importance to research grants and publications. Staff built research projects from their different intellectual backgrounds in literature, linguistics, pedagogy and

18. However Evans (1990: 282) imagines the possibility of the study of literature disappearing from language programmes since its key texts can be studied in translation in English departments.

translating/interpreting. One result, as Lo Bianco et al. (1997) point out, was that it became extremely difficult to track just what overall contribution was being made to knowledge by language and linguistics staff, simply because their research publications were dispersed over an unusually wide array of academic specialities.[19] That dispersal inhibited the establishment of a clearly recognizable research culture among language teaching staff, rendering their status especially vulnerable in a university system which was becoming increasingly concerned with quantitative research outcomes and areas of specialisation. A widespread response by language staff was to make a reclassificatory move of their own, arguing that the preparation of new teaching materials and new teaching strategies itself constituted a form of research. From this standpoint, their work could be regarded as exemplifying rather than transgressing traditional academic categories, even though the normally separate outcomes of the two activities of teaching and research were embodied in a single material product. Accusations that language work represented an increasingly costly anomaly could thus be dismissed.

3. The nurture of local networks

The recognition of Italian among Australia's 'community languages' and as an instrument of 'language maintenance' for the children of Italian immigrants quickly led to dense networks of ties between Italian departments and their local Italian communities, including the consulates and migrant associations. Academics furnished a whole range of ancillary services in collaboration with the professional organizations of school teachers (often their former students), with the representatives of Italian welfare associations and with the government bodies which resourced multiculturalism. The presence of Italian programmes in university curricula was of both ornamental and practical advantage to the wider Italian-oriented community and the community reciprocated with generous financial and other support.[20] These local networks were further strengthened by the relative geographical immobility of many language staff. By the late 1980s a significant number were teaching either at the same institution where they had been students (29%) or at another university

19. Language staff publishing in non-English journals encountered the further difficulty that since those journals often did not use the review-of-submissions process stipulated by the Australian Department of Education (DEST), their publications were excluded from the university counts and earned no research income.
20. For example, in 1982 the Vaccari Foundation in Melbourne sponsored a Chair of Italian at La Trobe, and in 1992 members of the Italian community in Brisbane were instrumental in establishing a Chair of European Studies (Italian) at Griffith University. Other public and private support from Italian organizations was regularly forthcoming.

in the same city (c. 30%).[21] In such a small field in rapid expansion, high levels of staff stability could be expected when demand tended to outrun supply; the stability was certainly increased by the abolition of the formal barriers to internal promotion at the top and bottom of the staff hierarchy, allowing for upward careers without the necessity of movement between institutions. The language areas, with a greater percentage of their staff in junior teaching positions than other humanities disciplines, perhaps felt the impact more fully. For staff who had not hitherto been required or encouraged to do research and had few scholarly publications, the achievement of local recognition as good teachers and valued providers of service to non-academic communities was a natural ambition. Local links grew stronger on both teaching and research fronts. Students of Italian descent, aiming to preserve or enhance the linguistic skills that they often used at home, became an increasing presence in Italian programmes.[22] At the same time, Italians and their communities became the subjects of research by Italianists as the traditional demographic interest was broadened to encompass new themes. Patterns of linguistic use and change were charted, religious and cultural traditions identified, Italo-Australian literature analysed, individual life-histories recorded, and social relations within the community – especially between groups from different parts of Italy – described. While no researcher articulated it in this way, it is perhaps not too distorting to see the key theme shared by many projects as the identification of 'difference': between Italian life in Australia and Italy, between the lives of Italians from different parts of Italy, and between the language behaviour of successive generations of people from Italian backgrounds. Identification of the common elements in the Italian immigrant experience or in Italian and other ethnic group experiences was not pursued as a primary research goal. No doubt this differentiating perspective was encouraged by the politics of multiculturalism which invited each group to establish its unique claim to recognition. But the focus on gathering local data oriented research towards appreciation of distinctions rather than towards identification of similarities.

21. Just under one-third (29%) had acquired their highest academic qualifications (PhD or MA) from the university where they had always taught: a further one-third had gained their qualifications in a neighbouring institution, and the remaining one-third had their highest qualifications from overseas, mainly the UK, the US and Italy. Whether Italian is distinctive among languages in the relative immobility of its staff is not known. Our impression from the details provided by Barko and Martin (1997) for the larger area of French Studies is that its staff moved rather more frequently than their Italianist colleagues.
22. About one-quarter (27%) of students enrolled in Italian at the University of Sydney in 1990 were from Italian backgrounds: the figure rises to 42 per cent for final-year students (Leal et al., 1991: 116-7). In the state of Victoria 40 per cent of graduates with a major in a LOTE (Language Other Than English) did not use English at home (Leal et al., 1991: 116-7).

4. The missing centre

What did not happen in this period of expansion was the creation of a national association or centre for Italian Studies. Professional associations play well-known symbolic and practical roles. The rituals of their meetings energize the network of scholars they bring together, provide a forum for scholarly and policy discussion and create a collective identity for members and a voice to take public stands. In the field of Italian Studies, a coordinating centre would have provided an important counterweight to the developing localism. Yet that only happened in the research domain, where Italianist scholarship was given a powerful boost by the activities of the Frederick May Foundation, established in 1976 at the University of Sydney, whose imaginative conferences and lecture programmes brought Australian and Italian scholars together on a regular basis.[23] The creation of international research links involving Italianists across ever-wider areas of scholarship was greatly encouraged, but neither in the Foundation nor elsewhere was space created for reflection on language studies themselves or for the construction of a unified voice on behalf of the field. No Australia-wide academic infrastructure in Italian Studies was therefore established to mirror, and take advantage of, the national policy interest in Italianness itself. This absence is particularly striking when Italian is compared to developments in other language fields, especially among Asian languages. The Asian Studies Association of Australia was created in 1975, and its constituent areas established their own fora for discussion and exchange: the Japanese Studies Association (1978), the Chinese Studies Association (1989) and the Korean Studies Association (1994). Size alone is not a determining variable here, since Chinese, for example, had comparable numbers of staff to Italian, and Korean was much smaller.[24] Likewise, among other European languages, a long-standing Association of the Heads of French Departments had served to link staff and this was supplemented in 1993 by the establishment of an Australian Society for French Studies.[25] One of the reasons why Italian Studies remained uncoordinated might be identified here: unlike French, Italian could not make use of existing formal connections among the field's leaders on which to build a more extensive network. In any case, the diversification of intellectual horizons among Italian staff had a clearly centrifugal effect; and

23. The Foundation's name honours the University's first professor of Italian; its work was also supported by Italian government and business funds. In 1978 it launched a journal, *Altro Polo,* appearing biennially. A further Australian academic journal in Italian Studies, *Spunti e Ricerche,* published annually, was launched in Melbourne in 1985.
24. In 1992, there were 70 full-time and 12 part-time Chinese staff in the 29 universities where the language was offered (Aveling, 1998). The Korean Studies Association had 55 members in the mid-1990s but included many non-academics.
25. The German Studies Association of Australia held its inaugural conference in 2003.

the very success of the relationships built between academic departments and surrounding Italian communities helped to keep attention and energies directed to the local level. French, without a comparable community hinterland, was not anchored locally to the same degree.

UNHOOKED AND UNMOORED: 1988-2002

The promulgation of a National Language Policy in 1987, followed by the creation of a National Languages and Literacy Institute in 1990, might have been regarded as placing languages – including Italian which was designated as one of the nine priority languages – on a guaranteed footing for the foreseeable future. But any such confidence was to be dissipated rather quickly. In the case of Italian, at least, optimism gave way to pessimism as pressures, external and internal to the university, made their impact.

Against the background of the general shake-up and shake-out given to higher education by both Labor and Conservative governments after 1989, Italian ceased to enjoy the public status it had had over the past 30 years. Asia had largely replaced Europe as a focus of Australian overseas interest; Italian immigration had become a matter of historical research rather than contemporary policy; and although Italian remained the most widely spoken language other than English, it was being overtaken by Arabic, Cantonese and even Greek in the major Australian cities.[26] Moreover the vision of Italy as a social, political and industrial laboratory had vanished: terrorism and mafia violence, the atrophy of the political system and the revelations of mass corruption turned the country into an anti-model (whatever the fascination of these dark sides for academic political scientists and sociologists). The only novelty – the unexpected rise of the Northern Leagues – was apparently devoted more to the demolition than the promotion of Italy as a nation-state. Italy lost its lustre.

In the Italian Studies community contraction was visible on many sides. From availability at 27 universities and CAEs in 1990, Italian programmes came to be offered in only 15 universities by the end of the decade and were overtaken by programmes in Japanese (Leal et al., 1991; NLLIA, 1994: 59-64).[27] The hitherto sovereign status that Italian Studies had enjoyed was

26. National census data show that the numbers of residents speaking Italian at home fell by at least 16 per cent between 1991 and 2001. For details of language shifts among immigrants, see Kipp and Clyne (1998).

27. University-level provision of Italian was discontinued in Tasmania, North Queensland and the Northern Territory. On the positive side, it had been introduced at two universities: Notre Dame (but withdrawn within a few years) and the Sunshine Coast. It is likely that the reduction is rather more severe since the university/CAE amalgamations of the early 1990s saw Italian maintained at some universities but lost on some of their constituent campuses.

now diminished or forfeited altogether. First, the formerly independent departments were mostly incorporated into broader academic units, often headed by non-linguists. In some places, too, the language teaching staff were hived off into an autonomous language centre where they came to have no closer links with their former colleagues in Arts than they did with, say, Business staff and students. Second, the decline in staff numbers was particularly severe at senior levels. Between 1990 and 1999 the overall staff complement in Italian departments declined from 62 to 52: after 1995 the numbers of Professors and Associate Professors dropped especially precipitately from 13 to 6.[28] The reductions in staff also meant that the surviving junior members were spread very thinly: five of the 15 Italian programmes were run by two staff, nine by between three and five, and only one by more than five. These contractions, and especially the decapitation of the leadership, naturally made the achievement of a visible national presence for Italian Studies still more difficult. The Frederick May Foundation reduced its activities substantially, holding its last international conference in 1991 and publishing only a single volume of its journal after 1989. Only two national meetings of Italianists were held, both in Melbourne in 1994 and 1997, both devoted to the presentation of scholarly papers (the traditional sign of an area's strength) rather than discussion of the renewal of the discipline (which would be an implicit confession of weakness). As Jupp (1998: 117) has observed for the neighbouring area of migration studies, the lack of an association, an annual conference, a major journal and the assumption of a coordinating role by one of the major centres meant that the opportunities for academics to secure research contracts and impress their views on policy were sharply reduced.

Among the most junior members of the Italianist community – the students – things were also changing. Tracking the total numbers in language programmes remains very difficult - indeed 15 years ago the authors of the national survey of Italian had already complained that the trend in language enrolments since 1980 was a 'mystery waiting to be solved' (NLLIA, 1994: 65).[29] The limited data available suggest both a common trend and a substantial differentiation. On one hand, the numbers taking Italian at secondary school – candidates to enter the post-beginner stream at university – began to fall from 1988 onwards. This Australia-wide trend,

28. For the source of these figures, see note 17, supplemented by more recent data collected by David Moss. They do not include Emeritus Professorial Fellows, Adjuncts, Research Associates, sessional staff and *lettori* (often very valuable fixed-term staff funded by the Italian government) nor the roughly one dozen staff who teach courses in Italian history, politics and culture but have no direct involvement in language teaching.
29. The last systematic study deals with the late 1970s (Hawley, 1981). Subsequent tallies have relied on figures supplied by Italian departments themselves, often calculated in different, non-comparable, ways and all incompatible with the mode of calculation used by Hawley.

reversing the continuous growth of the past 30 years, increased the overall proportion of students in beginner-level language courses, requiring higher levels of class contact from language teachers and making teaching a larger part of their professional work. That left them in a particularly difficult position to respond to the new financial and career emphasis on research performance. It also fuelled louder queries about the value of running elementary but costly language classes in universities in severe financial difficulties. On the other hand, behind the overall decline of about 30 per cent in the total number of students enrolling in Italian a picture of highly variegated performance by institutions is detectable. Between 1990 and 1999 in the 15 universities for which data are available, eight universities showed an increase (between 9% and 187%) in student numbers while seven showed a decrease (between 17% and 82%).[30] Such variation obviously made it difficult for staff to develop a single perspective on the state of their area and the strategies to be used. And, where they were understood at all, the causes of the rises and the falls seemed too local and diverse to provide guidance on how to renew the general field of Italian Studies.

The year 1999 did, however, bring an entirely unexpected stimulus to renewal: the sponsorship of 12 fixed-term lectureships in Italian by the Cassamarca Foundation (Treviso) – equivalent to a 20 per cent increase in overall staff numbers – and the creation of an Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS).[31] Apart from the obvious direct benefits, the sponsorship gave Italian Studies a new weapon in defence of its role. For securing private funding was becoming a necessity for Australian universities, its achievement a source of status for the securers. Moreover, the Foundation's rationale for its world-wide support of Italian programmes was explicitly cultural – the tapping of the contemporary relevance of the Italian humanist tradition. Given the growing economic importance of culture, a revamped defence against charges of anomaly became available to Italian Studies now that both the 'language-and-literature' and 'community-language' networks had lost much of their unifying force and their replacement by 'Italian-for-global-business' seemed implausible and ineffective. In the 21st century Italian Studies therefore moved in the direction trav-

30. The figures for 1990 are taken from Leal et al. (1991,Vol.1: passim); the 1999 data are calculated from the figures included in the submissions by those institutions where Italian was still taught in their applications for Cassamarca lectureships. Similar variations can be seen among Asian languages: the contrasting patterns of rise and decline for Japanese and Mandarin Chinese in the 10 Australian universities where they are mainly taught, for example, are particularly striking (ASAA, 2002: 37, 39).

31. For details of this sponsorship and the commitment of the Foundation to the promotion of Italian Studies worldwide, see earlier chapters in this book. By 2010 ACIS had held five national conferences and funded both staff research projects and scholarships for post-graduate study in Italy.

elled not only by other language programmes in Australia but also by universities themselves in their adoption of network organization and institutional collaboration as a vehicle for their differentiated identities.[32]

COMPETE! RATIONALIZE! COLLABORATE! LANGUAGES SINCE 2000

Processes already in train in the Higher Education sector since the 1990s have become more marked in the last decade. Universities, in Australia as elsewhere, are seen essentially as very large businesses, in competition for students, especially high-fee-paying international students. While 'internationalization' figures prominently in the universities' strategic plans, it tends to be interpreted in terms of participating in strategic research collaborations with prestigious overseas institutions, competing for rankings and students in the international marketplace, and providing high-quality academic English courses for international students, rather than developing the linguistic, cultural and intercultural skills of domestic students and staff. Nor does globalization seem to have increased the priority of language learning in students' own 'strategic plans': enrolments in languages have not increased as was hoped for in an environment of heightened awareness of the need for students to prepare themselves for the globalized marketplace. If we compare EFTSL in Italian between 1988 and 2008, for example, we see a decline of 8% (Winter, 2009: 49). The recent selling of Italian and other languages to International Business and International Relations students has therefore had at most limited success. No more than 10% of Australian undergraduates now undertake any language study (Nettelbeck et al., 2008: 11). The same report also notes that today there appears to be no particular political will to support language learning: there is simply an 'absence of any "languages culture" at a national political level' (3). In these circumstances, the title of the Group of Eight's 2007 report, *Languages in Crisis: A Rescue Plan for Australia,* hardly seems an exaggeration.

How have programmes like Italian, with particularly small enrolments in more advanced courses, responded to the merciless pressures to rationalize their offerings and reduce costs? The old strategy of securing special staff-student ratios for languages to meet the necessary combination of high contact hours and small groups, which persisted in many universities at least into the mid-1990s, is no longer an option. So one response is to

32. Between 1999 and 2003 five networks (the Group of Eight, the Australian Technology Network the New Generation Universities, the Innovative Research Universities and the Regional Universities) were established: all but two public universities signed up for them.

seek to attract students by providing more flexibility in programmes, delivery, and enrolment arrangements. Most universities now offer a Diploma of Languages, equivalent to a language major, in which students can be enrolled concurrently with a degree at the same or another university, allowing them to obtain a tertiary qualification in language even if their main, and increasingly course-prescriptive, degree does not allow space for it. Delivery is also being made increasingly flexible to capture a potential market of people unable to attend face-to-face for the numbers of hours typically expected of language students in the past. Developments in ICTs are widely exploited to provide blended learning environments, where online components complement the (usually reduced) face-to-face hours, or fully online environments.

The other key strategy used by universities in this difficult situation of increased competition without increasing demand for languages among students, is that of 'collaborative agreements' to maintain offerings by developing cross-institutional enrolment arrangements. Language departments at different universities cooperate in order to facilitate students' access to each other's courses, either because the offerings at individual institutions have been cut by rationalization, or because the desired expansion is not deemed viable by management. Collaborative arrangements are not new but have come to attract particular attention in recent years as a means of widening access without increasing costs (Hajek et al., 2008; Lo Bianco and Gvozdenko, 2006; White and Baldauf, 2006; Winter, 2009). By 2007 eleven universities were involved in some kind of collaborative agreement so as to increase the number of languages available beyond those taught in house, usually for one or two languages, but up to four. Italian departments are currently involved in several such arrangements which have formally extended access to Italian considerably. For example, in the arrangement between University of South Australia and Deakin (in Victoria), UniSA provides Italian at Deakin (partly online and partly face-to-face) in exchange for Deakin providing Arabic at UniSA, so that both universities gain a language. A more elaborate mode of collaboration – dubbed a 'Languages Alliance' – was created between the three major universities in Brisbane in 2009, establishing a division of labour in languages offerings and facilitating the movement of staff between campuses. This has significantly boosted enrolments in Italian. But in most such arrangements collaboration is shallow: it does not involve cooperation among academic staff to develop and deliver joint courses or to share teaching materials. Moreover, because language staff themselves are not necessarily involved in the decision-making about the collaborative arrangements, the agreements have weak foundations and are often made more precarious still by the difficulties in negotiating enrolment

and credit transfer arrangements, timetabling and recognition of grades (Hajek et al., 2008). Institutional bickering about such issues can easily undermine the good will of individual staff on which the success of inter-institutional collaboration usually depends.

It is too early to say whether the renewed emphasis on collaboration will have the hoped-for effects, in Italian as in other languages, although it is promising that at least some Italian courses are now available at 23 universities, eight more than in 2003. One advantage of the existence of these collaborative arrangements, especially if supported by government funding for their establishment, should be a reversal of the process of withdrawal into local networks of the previous era. Ideally, university language departments which are in alliances – within a single city or across the country – should by virtue of these arrangements be in a better position to work together to influence government policy, as well as to raise the profile and prestige of languages in schools and communities. Such networks, which could nowadays be global as well as national, are of course facilitated by the Age of the Internet which would seem to offer unrivalled opportunities – not yet much exploited – for developing and disseminating innovative language and cultural teaching materials. The old adage about our needing to hang together if we are not to hang separately is probably acquiring ever greater force.

CONCLUSION

In the preface to his discussion of German Studies in the US in 2000, Gilman referred to their slide into marginality: 'a field that has become marginal to many of the concerns of the academy at the end of the millennium' (2000: ix). He went on to claim that, marginality notwithstanding, they constitute a case-study for the problems of teaching and research. His principal ground for this claim appeared to be that the threat to language-based studies is simply a version writ-small of the more general assault on the Humanities so that the recent history of, say, German or French Studies can be treated as typical of a much larger class of disciplines. We have suggested earlier that in several key respects language studies have not in fact been typical of the Humanities as a whole. Indeed, the strategy of subsuming them under the Humanities is exactly one of the available strategies for dealing with the kind of anomaly they pose. However, with Gilman but for different reasons, we think that there is a case for taking the study of what has been happening to modern languages as carrying more general significance.

If we treat university language programmes as inherent anomalies rather than as being in contemporary transit from centrality to marginal-

ity, we can direct our attention to the reasons why at certain times the anomalies arouse particular disquiet and the strategies by which sceptics are held at bay. In the case of Italian Studies in Australia, we can track the changing pattern of alliances, inside and beyond the university, which have given the programme sufficient coherence and identity to resist challenges. We have also noted how the changing balance between the differently-oriented networks to which teaching staff belong has strengthened the identity of the area at some times and weakened it at others. Its capacity to present itself as a 'national asset', for example, was seriously hampered in the 1990s by the largely localist orientation established in the preceding period of expansion but may now, conversely, be revived by participation in collaborative arrangements established to cope with the pressures of contraction.

Anomalies, however, can only appear as such against the background of the particular systems of classification in which they are embedded – in our case, the classifications used in the 20th-century university which provide order and legitimation for the contents of curricula and the work of staff. Given the evaluative and financial pressures forcing change in all areas of contemporary universities, the traditional classificatory grid which divides discipline from non-discipline, marking out the separate roles of teaching and research and encouraging or resisting commercial involvement, is likely to see radical change. Other combinations of research, teaching and extra-academic relationships are likely to establish themselves, new categorizations will become routine, and new anomalies will appear. Under changed circumstances the extent to which the study of modern languages seems aberrant will alter in the light of new criteria and new comparisons; hitherto secure disciplines will come under the challenges that languages have long faced. In that way the history of how the language programmes have handled their uneasy status will come to be part of – possibly representative of – a much broader history of curricular organization and intellectual change.

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Shifting representations of Italian in Australia[1]

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Introduction

During over sixty years of mass migration from Italy, the position and public image of Italian within both the Italo-Australian community and broader Australian society have changed considerably. In this chapter I present a critical overview of the complex language dynamics involving Italian in Australia, which has alternatively borne the image of language of culture, immigrant language or second language. Taking into account the role that Italian has played and is still playing in a range of domains, I argue that during the past fifteen years in particular, the position of Italian has diversified, shifting from the home to new sites. Furthermore, while up to the early 1990s all indicators seemed to point to the inevitable decline of the Italian language among the younger Italo-Australian generations, since the mid-1990s a cultural and linguistic revival seems to have emerged that may modify the language patterns of previous decades to some extent. In conclusion, I suggest that the various representations of Italian are now reconciled and that the multifaceted role of Italian can be of benefit to, and reinforce its position in, Australian society.

Language use in the years of mass migration

Mass migration from Italy to Australia took place from the early 1950s till the end of the 1960s. The peak was reached in the decade 1951-1961, when an average of almost 18,000 new migrants arrived every year (Castles 1992). If we take into account Italy's sociolinguistic situation in those decades, we can assume that the hundreds of thousands of migrants who arrived here, mainly from small rural centres and the most depressed regions at the time (Sicily, Calabria, Veneto, Campania), spoke Dialect as their first language and Italian as their second.

However, the dialectophone nature of Italian migrants as monolinguals has at times been overstated and their knowledge of Italian underestimated. In fact, the number of dialect monolinguals who arrived in Australia can be estimated to have been low, for at least two reasons:

firstly, migrants are generally upwardly mobile people, and hence highly sensitive to the prestige of Italian (Bettoni & Gibbons 1988: 16); and secondly, migration generally promotes a process of italianisation, since it brings people from different regions into contact with each other (De Mauro 1970).

The italianisation process was helped by successive waves of migrants, by commercial activities and enterprises set up by Italians, and by the lack of English proficiency that was prevalent in the Italo-Australian community at the time. In the 1950s and 1960s Italian children grew up in closely-knit communities where both Dialect and Italian were widely spoken, and had therefore the possibility of developing both languages while learning English. These are the trilingual people who are now in their sixties and seventies.

Unfortunately the process of italianisation has not been studied systematically as the early interest of scholars was caught instead by the more conspicuous process of anglicisation, which resulted from Italian-English contact. Thus, the first studies focused on the changes that occurred in the Italian language of first-generation migrants under pressure from the new English-language environment, and on lexical transference in particular. Some examples of this are well known items such as *il carro* or *la fenza* from the English car and fence (cf Rando 1968).

With regard to the educational domain, during these years of mass migration, following the examples of French and German, Italian was first introduced into most Australian universities and secondary schools as a 'language of culture', with curricula which had a strong literary and grammatical emphasis. Italian was taught primarily as a key to access Italy's rich literary, artistic and musical heritage, and foreign language study was meant to be for the élite. The content of courses was of very little relevance to the increasing numbers of young Italian migrants who were choosing Italian as a subject for examination (Totaro 2005: 206). Thus the years of mass migration were characterised by a wide gap between, on one side, the language(s) brought by Italian migrants, and, on the other, the image that Italian had in the school and university context. As a language of culture it was distant from the reality and needs of the migrants' children.

Nonetheless, the presence of Italian migrants gradually contributed to a number of sociolinguistic processes. First of all, Italians established their own Saturday schools in order to promote the study of Italian language and culture among their children. In his in-depth account of language policy in Australia, Ozolins acknowledges the role played by migrants in the promotion of their own languages. With regard to Italian, he quotes McCormick's statement that "the teaching of Italian to Italian children was not an idea invented by language teachers, but an idea that had been

raised by the Italian community itself" (Ozolins 1993: 93). Ozolins also singles out the Italian community as the one that, as early as the 1960s, "was itself defining an issue and raising it before the broader Australian community" (1993: 94).

During the 1970s Australia moved from the assimilationist policy of the 1950s to the multicultural policy, through which linguistic and cultural diversity was acknowledged, respected and promoted. It must be remembered that this evolution did not occur solely as a process directed from the above. In the main it resulted from the struggles conducted by ethnic communities – on the grounds of social justice, cultural rights and equality of opportunity – to have their languages introduced into the public education system, primarily to support language maintenance among the younger generations. Throughout the 1970s and the 1980s Italo-Australians were at the forefront of these struggles (Ozolins 1993). The term 'community languages' began to be used for migrants' languages, in acknowledgment of the fact that they are spoken in – and therefore belong to – this country, alongside Aboriginal languages and English. In the late 1970s and early 1980s many Australian states finally decided to introduce the teaching of community languages into the curricula of their primary schools. So from then on, Italian was present in the educational domain with the double image of community language and language of culture.

Italian as a Community Language

The 1980s was a very important decade for all community languages, and for Italian in particular, as "the push for the recognition of Community Languages greatly advanced its position in schools and tertiary institutions." (Clyne 1994: 125). Two major trends can be outlined: (i) an extraordinary expansion of Italian in schools and universities, accompanied by a very lively debate about the right 'label' to be given to the language; and (ii) at community level, an acceleration in the process of language shift among the Italian second generation, which was analysed in the numerous sociolinguistic studies that appeared in that decade.

Growth of Italian in the educational domain

During the 1980s Italian became, in terms of number of students, the most studied language other than English in Australia, with an estimated overall number of students between 230,000 and 260,000 in 1988 (Di Biase 1989: 189). However, this expansion occurred mainly at primary level (which accounted for 70% of the student body), through the 'Insertion classes'[2] run by community organisations, while it was more modest at secondary and University level (having 28% and 2% of the students, respectively). Furthermore, during the 1980s the role of Italian at primary

level gradually changed, compared with that of other community languages, since the vast majority of pupils were not of Italian background. In fact, as part of the efforts to convince education authorities of the value of language learning within the curriculum, Italian was increasingly promoted as the most suitable second language to be learnt by all Australian school children, regardless of their backgrounds.

The expansion of Italian at school was accompanied by lively discussions as to the appropriate label to be attached to the language. On one hand, Italian was promoted by some community leaders as *the* community language *par excellence,* in so far as it was the most spoken language other than English in Australia according to census data. On the other hand, there were those who objected even to the very notion of community languages, maintaining that a language should be chosen as a curriculum subject on intellectual and cultural grounds only (Quinn 1981). Still others, more cautiously, suggested that, although the recognition of Italian as *una lingua della comunità* and no longer a foreign language had been a step forward, it was unwise to encourage its study *only* for this reason (Carsaniga 1984). Finally, the promoters of Italian as a suitable second language for all students stressed that Italian was favoured by its 'learnability' for English speakers, the culture associated with it, its economic and international value and, ironically, the size of its community (Lo Bianco 1989).

Thus, at the end of the 1980s, Italian presented three different – and at times conflicting – images: language of culture; community language; and second language for all Australians. Attempts were made to reconcile these different images in the overall interest of the language, at a time when the federal government started to divert its attention and funds towards some of the languages of neighbouring Asian countries. According to Lo Bianco (1989), it was in the interests of Italian to capitalise on its five main assets, that is, on being: an Australian language, an easily-learned language, a cultural language, a well-connected language (that is, one that gives access to sibling languages, such as Spanish or French), and a commercial language.

Decline of Italian in home use

The 1980s also saw sociolinguistic studies about the Italo-Australian community flourish, both at the macro and the micro levels. The research focused on language shift, the process of anglicisation among first and second generations, language erosion among the second generation and language attitudes towards Italian and dialects. Clyne (1982) used Australian census data relative to the question on regular language use to explore the major socio-demographic factors that correlate to a higher or

lower use of the language. Even allowing for some inflation in the data, in 1976 Italian was the most spoken language other than English, with 444,672 speakers and a relatively low rate of shift (6.26% among the first generation, 18.6% among the second generation of intraethnic marriages). Ten years later, in 1986, the number of speakers was 415,765, and the rate of shift had increased slightly among the first generation (10.5%) but much more among the second (29.3%, Clyne 1991).

At the micro-sociolinguistic level, Bettoni (1981) was the first to study the process of anglicisation systematically, through well-defined samples, with a clear analytical framework, and at linguistic levels other than the lexical. Further studies (Bettoni 1985, Rubino 1987) explored correlations of types and amount of transfers with demographic, sociological and linguistic factors (for example, year of arrival in Australia, age at the time of migration or discourse type). Studies of the language of the second generation focused on the subjects' limited active proficiency in Italian and Dialect in an interview situation. This was displayed, for example, by their high and non-systematic variability between Italian and Dialect forms and their use of extensive code-switching from Italian or Dialect to English, to compensate for lexical gaps and overcome linguistic incompetence (Bettoni 1985, 1986; Rubino 1987). Language attitudes held by Italo-Australians were also analysed, using the social psychology paradigm (Bettoni & Gibbons 1988; Hogg et al. 1989). It was found that, particularly among first-generation migrants, negative attitudes towards the main language varieties spoken in the community – Dialect and English/Dialect or English/Italian mixtures – were quite widespread.

The studies regarding language shift and language loss among Italo-Australians continued well into the 1990s. A comparison between the 1991 and 1996 census data showed that the number of Italian speakers decreased by 10.3%, from 418,804 to 375,752 (Clyne & Kipp 1997). The rates of shift also continued to increase: from 11.2% to 14.7% among the first generation and from 49.8% to 57.9% among the second generation taken as a whole. So, although Italian was still the community language with the highest number of home speakers, its numbers appeared to have been declining steadily throughout the decade 1986-1996. It must be noted, however, that by considering only the home, these figures underestimated the use of Italian by the second generation, many of whom no longer lived with their parents. The general trends shown in the census data were confirmed, and at the same time refined, in a small-scale study carried out in Sydney by Bettoni and Rubino (1996) among Sicilians and Venetians. Unlike the census, this study clearly distinguished between Italian, Dialect and English, and investigated language use in various domains: at home, at work, in shops, with friends and with oneself.

Language loss was also investigated in an ethnographic perspective, for example by Rubino (1993, 1996, 2000) and Cavallaro (1998, 2010). The last stages of language erosion among the second generation were found to be characterised by highly variable language mixing, simplification, hypercorrections and frequent hesitation markers. In these stages it is common to find that communication in the family occurs in a bilingual mode, with the parents speaking Italian and/or Dialect and the children using English extensively. In this situation Dialect and Italian no longer have any communicative function for the children, but are used only with an expressive function (Rubino 2000).

This proliferation of studies in different paradigms led to a deeper understanding of the process of language shift in ethnic communities generally, as well as specifically among Italians. The quantitative method adopted by Clyne (1982, 1991) singled out some major socio-demographic factors which could explain the different rates of language shift displayed by ethnic groups. For Italo-Australians, demographic concentration, generation, gender, age and marriage patterns appear to be particularly significant in determining shift. That is, the shift to English is faster in those states with a lower concentration of Italian migrants, as well as among the second generation, men, younger speakers of the first generation and older ones of the second, and those in exogamous marriages. These findings were confirmed in Bettoni & Rubino (1996), who also found that Dialect was lost more quickly than Italian.

The process of shift has also been explained in the light of some sociocultural factors. In the case of Italo-Australians, the relatively small cultural distance from the dominant Anglo-Australian group has been singled out as a particularly influential factor. For, although Italians do not reach the high degree of affinity with the dominant group that characterises, for example, the Dutch or the Germans, they still share with the dominant group a Western type of culture that favours not only their integration into Australian society but also, indirectly, language shift. Thus cultural distance can explain, for instance, the higher rate of language maintenance among Greeks compared to Italians, in spite of the many socio-demographic similarities between the two groups (Bettoni & Rubino 1996: 149-50). Another factor leading to shift was identified by Smolicz (1981), who considered the effects of an ethnic group's specific sociocultural characteristics, or 'core values.' For Italians, the family rather than the language seems to be a core value, while for other groups, such as Greeks and Chinese people, language appears to play a much more crucial role (Chiro and Smolicz 1994). Finally, linguistic factors also contribute to explaining language shift. Among Italo-Australians, the most influential of these appeared to be the negative attitudes held by migrants towards

the language varieties that they themselves speak or that are most spoken in the community, particularly dialects and language mixtures (Bettoni & Gibbons 1988, Hogg et al. 1989).

Overall, then, the major studies conducted up to the early 1990s indicated that Italian and Dialect in Australia were in a precarious situation. In the transition from the first to the second generation, both were being lost fairly rapidly – with Dialect disappearing faster than Italian – in spite of the presence of community characteristics conducive to language maintenance. The shift was particularly high in some domains, especially in the home, the one domain generally considered crucial to intergenerational maintenance of a language (Pawels 2005). Furthermore, negative language attitudes, widespread in the essentially dialectophone community, seemed to accelerate the process.

From the mid-1990s onwards

In the last fifteen years some of the trends identified for the previous decades have continued, while some new ones have emerged. At the national level, Italian has maintained its position as the most widely-spoken language at home other than English. The last two censuses, however, have recorded significant decreases in the number of Italian speakers: from 353,606 in 2001 to 316,900 in 2006 (ABS 2006, 2008). Compared with the 1991 and 1996 censuses, this represents a decrease of 15.6% and 15.7% respectively. It is expected that by the next census Italian will no longer be the most widely-spoken language other than English in Australia. Research has continued on the process of language loss among the second generation, for example in the language attrition paradigm (Caruso 2004, 2010), and in the language and identity paradigm (Cilberti 2007).

As far as education is concerned, the expansion of the previous decade has generally come to a halt, at least in the major states. Italian remains the most studied language in the schools of two states, Victoria and Western Australia, but at the national level it has been overtaken by Japanese (Clyne et al. 2004). The majority of students of Italian are still at primary level, where numbers in general have declined; at secondary level, there is a strong attrition rate from Year 7 to Year 12, and numbers remain fairly low.[3] For example, in NSW government primary schools, the number of pupils studying Italian has decreased from 24,665 in 2003 to 17,736 in 2009. Likewise, students completing Year 10 in Italian have declined slightly, from 670 in 2003 to 586 in 2009 (NSW Department of Education and Training, p.c.[4]). With regard to enrolments in Year 12, after a considerable fall at the end of the 1990s, with a lowest 564 in 1999, numbers have increased to around 700 or, sporadically, over 800 students (for example, in 2006 and 2009; Board of Studies New South Wales,

www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au). One of the reasons for this increase has been the introduction of a senior course directed at beginners students, which has proved to be fairly popular. In Victorian government schools, although Italian is the most studied language with over 80,245 enrolments in 2008, between 2003 and 2008 numbers have also declined, most notably in primary schools (from 78,381 to 60,703 pupils). At secondary level, the decline has been more contained, from an overall number of 21,400 in 2003 to 18,836 in 2008. As mentioned above, of particular concern is the dramatic decrease in student enrolments from Year 7 to Year 12: for example, in 2008 it declined from 8,179 to 208. On the other hand, an encouraging trend is a slight increase in enrolments in Year 12, from 208 in 2007 to 233 in 2008 (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, www.education.vic.gov.au). Finally, at tertiary level, between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s there was a drastic reduction in the number of institutions offering accredited programs in Italian (from 31 in 1988 to 20 in 1995). Since then, in spite of some further closures, the number has remained fairly stable thanks to the creation of new programs in other universities (Hajek 2000; Moss & Kennedy in this volume).

While the trends discussed above present an overall discouraging picture, in the past few years some exciting new developments in the area of education have appeared, that are particularly promising for the future of Italian in Australia. Firstly, at tertiary level, a significant turning point in Italian Studies was in 1999 the arrival in Australia of the generous support of the Cassamarca Foundation, which sponsored 12 lectureships in various universities. This important contribution, together with the valuable initiatives organised by the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS), has given a much needed impetus to the academic programs in Italian Studies (Moss 2004; Moss & Kennedy in this volume).

Secondly, increasing scope has been given to bilingual education. In 2002, an Italian bilingual school opened in Sydney – the first of its kind in Australia (Italian Bilingual School, www.ibs.nsw.edu.au) – followed more recently by a similar program in Canberra (Yarralumla Italian English Primary School www.yarralumlaps.act.edu.au/home). Student results consistently show high levels of achievements not only in Italian but also in the subjects studied in Italian and/or English, thus confirming the positive effects of bilingualism. Furthermore, bilingual schools contribute to revitalising the Italian language by providing a space where the language is used, for example, in the encounters between first - and second-generation Italian parents (Rubino 2007).

Thirdly, partly in recognition of the strong position it has gained in primary schools, Italian has recently been chosen, together with Chinese, as one of the two languages that will pioneer the development of a national

curriculum (ACARA 2011). Should this proposal be implemented, this will benefit the position of Italian in that the language will become an integral part of the Australian curriculum. Furthermore, provided that such a proposal is appropriately resourced, pupils' language outcomes will also improve, thus encouraging language studies more generally in schools.

Beyond education, other new and positive trends have emerged in the Italo-Australian community and in the broader Australian society, showing that throughout the 1990s the collocation of Italian has diversified. In particular, Italian may have taken on a new role in the lives of many Italo-Australians – if not in their homes. Some of these new trends are: the development of a new identity among second-generation Italians; increasing contact between Australia and Italy; and the rise in prestige and popularity of Italian culture and language in Australian society as a whole.

A new identity for the second generation

The development of a new identity among second-generation migrants – not just Italians – has been widely reported. In the early 1990s it was already noted that, as a reflection of the multicultural climate, for young people it was very common to use hyphenated identities or their parents' nationalities, and to refer to oneself as Italo-Australian, Greek-Australian or Dutch-Australian (Bennett 1997; O'Connor 1994; Tamis 1991; Vasta 1992). Bennett went so far as to say: "Indeed, many Australian-born adults who come from a non-English speaking background seem to feel that their linguistic and cultural background is preferable to a monolingual, monocultural Anglo-Celtic background" (1997: 51). The dynamic construction of *italianità* was explored in an ethnographic study by Baldassar (1992) among a group of Italo-Australian youth in Perth, focusing on their use of space, types of networks and clothes.

Several readily observable phenomena point to the formation and affirmation of an Italo-Australian identity and culture among second and third generations. For example, during the 1990s numerous Italo-Australian youth associations were founded, particularly in Sydney and Melbourne. Some were created on a regional basis through the assistance of Italian regional governments. In 2007, the establishment of a national youth association, "Giovani Italiani Australia" (GIA, www.gia.org.au), was an important step forward in providing a common framework and more clearly stated objectives. It is significant that GIA is acknowledged by the Italian Government through its institutions abroad (the national *Consiglio Generale degli Italiani all'Estero* and the state-based *Comitati Italiani all'Estero*) as the official interlocutor on matters pertaining Italo-Australian youth. Another sign of a distinct Italo-Australian youth culture is the popularity of Italo-Australian icons, such as comedians Joe Avati or

John Barresi, as well as of Italo-Australian writers (for example, Melina Marchetta), singers (for example, Natalie Imbruglia) and actors (for example, Vince Colosimo). It is interesting to note how second-generation parents often express great surprise at such strong affirmation of ethnic identity by their third-generation adolescent children, since they remember vividly how ashamed they were, at the same age, of being Italian (Migliorino 2000).

While the existence of an Italo-Australian identity and culture seems widely attested and accepted, what can be said about the role of the Italian language in this new identity? It has been claimed that, for the second and third generations, having an Italian or Italo-Australian identity does not necessarily imply need of the Italian language, since young people's constructed identity can have more salient elements than language (for example, Baldassar 1992, 2000). More research is certainly needed, to specifically explore the links between language and identity that new generations are forging for themselves.

Some of the limited data currently available on this issue, however, suggest that many young Italo-Australians do consider that knowledge of the Italian language contributes to their Italian identity. For example, Chiro and Smolicz (1993, 1994) report that among university students of Italian background there is a very high rate of Italian use, particularly among those displaying positive evaluations of Italo-Australian cultural values, compared with those conforming to the dominant group or critical of Italo-Australian culture. Similarly, O'Connor (1994) states that, for many of his informants, the fact that they always spoke Italian at home was the main reason for considering themselves Italian. Also Pitronaci (1998) found that among second- and-third generation Italo-Australians, even those who did not speak Italian, but identified themselves as Italian or Italo-Australian, considered the language to be an important part of Italian identity and felt that it was an element that they were missing. Some bilingual informants suggested that they felt more Italian than those who did not speak the language, and pointed to some differences between themselves and monolingual Italo-Australians. In a case-study of a trilingual second-generation woman, Rubino (2006) also noted that language was a defining element of her Italian identity. Overall, therefore, while more evidence is needed, it seems that a link between an Italo-Australian identity and language competence and use does exist. In the process of negotiating self-identification, (better) language competence and (higher) language use may well mark a stronger in-group membership.

Increasing contact between Australia and Italy

Developments in the past few years have allowed a vast number of

Italo-Australians to increase their contacts with Italy in an unprecedented manner. Contacts with Italy do not involve just trips, but also the many ways whereby Italians in Australia keep abreast of events in Italy and maintain regular contact with relatives, friends and colleagues there. By comparison with the 1980s and even the early 1990s, information about Italy is now much more accessible and abundant, thanks to television and radio broadcasts from Italy and especially the Internet. Communication with people in Italy is also much easier, thanks to cheaper telephone rates, email, messaging through mobile phones, skype and social networks, and Italians in Australia – particularly those recently arrived – make ample use of all of these (Baldassar 2007, Rubino 2009). Given that easy availability of resources plays a crucial role in language maintenance and in language learning (Fishman, cited in Clyne 1991: 105-6), it would be interesting to investigate the impact of these new forms of communication on language maintenance, particularly among young Italo-Australians.

Of paramount importance in renewing or establishing contacts with Italian language and culture is, of course, a trip to Italy. Cheaper air fares, the fact that many first-generation Italians have now retired, the relatively prosperous economic conditions enjoyed by the Italians today, study tours and exchange programs through schools and universities, and often also incentives from the Italian regional governments, allow many Italo-Australians, especially of the second and third generation, to visit Italy more easily and frequently than was the case for their parents or grandparents in the past.

For the first generation, a trip to Italy can be an important opportunity to re-establish contact with relatives and friends, and to discover their own country. Furthermore, upon their return to Australia, the 'Italian experience' has a lasting impact that spreads among family and friends. For the second and third generations, a trip to Italy is often the event that triggers interest in Italian language and culture (Kinder 1994, Pitronaci 1998). The impact of the Italian experience on the language and, particularly, the identity of Italo-Australian youth has been well documented in O'Connor, who considers it "extremely positive for the future of the Italian community in Australia" (1994: 281). Baldassar (1994, 2001) and Migliorino (2000) have also underlined the importance of these visits to Italy in shaping young people's Italian identity in Australia. Overall, younger Italo-Australians' contacts with Italy have not only intensified but diversified, in that many of them today forge links that only partly build upon family heritage, while going well beyond it.

Contacts with Italy also include visits by Italian relatives, who come to Australia more often and easily than in the past, thanks to the popularity that Australia enjoys as a tourist destination in Italy today. More recently,

increasingly high numbers of young Italians come to Australia to work, either through the working holiday visa scheme or through the migration process, pushed by Italy's current dire economic conditions.[5] Therefore the opportunities for all Italo-Australians to encounter Italians and engage in cultural and linguistic exchanges have increased considerably.

Higher prestige of Italian culture and language in Australian society

There is no doubt that, during the 1990s, Italian features penetrated many areas of Australian life. Following its economic boom of the 1980s and rise to prominence as a major player in Europe, Italy has become a more prestigious country, projecting the image of a modern and sophisticated nation. Holidaying in Italy, and Italian products and style, have proved attractive to middle-class Australians, who pursue an increasingly sophisticated lifestyle and have become more attentive to home décor and fashion. In the capital cities, the growing Italian influence has been obvious, in the increasing number of Italian restaurants and *pizzerie* (often run by newly arrived Italians); in the numerous cafés with tables outside (which in some cases have taken the place of pubs); in the paved courtyards replacing the traditional lawns; in the balconies and terraces adorning the mushrooming apartments; and in the shop signs that use Italian as a marker of sophistication. This growing interest is also reflected in the Australian media, which increasingly report on aspects of Italian life; and in some of the loanwords from Italian commonly used in Australia that are evocative of the attractiveness of Italian lifestyle (for example, the expression 'al fresco').

It is obvious that these trends do not necessarily generate an increased demand to learn Italian. However, they can act as catalysts for greater use of the language. For instance, the increased prestige of Italian language and culture can become an incentive for language learning in so far as it encourages direct contacts with Italy. Also, while an influence on lifestyle does not automatically translate into an enrolment in a language course, positive attitudes towards a culture and its people are fundamental in promoting the learning of a particular language. Evidence of this link lies in the growing popularity of specialised study tours to Italy Australians interested in cooking or ceramics, for example.

Conclusion

All the trends discussed above point to the fact that the position of Italian has changed: there has been a diversification in the space it occupies in Australian society, through its spreading in some domains and shrinking in others. Within the Italo-Australian community, the communicative function of the language is shifting from the traditional domains of home

and friendship to domains mainly outside the home, such as education, or new domains, such as the Internet. While for the second generation growing up in the 1960s and 1970s at least a passive knowledge of Italian and/or Dialect was still a necessity in order to communicate with older relatives, for many in the third generation growing up today this need no longer exists. Therefore, maintaining or learning Italian and/or Dialect has become more a matter of personal choice than a family requirement.

Nonetheless, competence in the Italian language does make a difference. In the Italo-Australian context, knowing the language enables young people to participate fully in public events held in the community or in the complete range of activities of youth associations. Among young Italo-Australians Italian takes on an expressive function, in that it can be used phatically to identify themselves as Italian or Italo-Australian, vis-à-vis youths belonging to other ethnic groups, or from Italy itself. More broadly, it allows both Italo-Australians and other learners of Italian to pursue whatever interest Italian society may offer them, and generally to forge or maintain their own links with Italy. For future generations, then, Italian should be viewed as a necessary tool, especially for maintaining the increased Italian-Australian contacts (including, but not limited to, family links) and for keeping abreast of what a modern European country such as Italy can offer young people growing up in Australia. Another relevant element, as was mentioned above, is the impact of new forms of communication resulting from technological advances, which may contribute to maintaining or extending the communicative function of Italian among young people.

As Italian scholars and educators, given that many studies canvassed above have found that contact with Italy is a crucial factor in stimulating interest in Italian language and culture, we need to promote initiatives to ensure that the highest number of people, and youth in particular, whether of Italian or non-Italian origin, has frequent indirect and direct contacts with Italian reality. Furthermore, these initiatives should be expanded to cover a wide range of fields including, for instance, cultural, artistic, sporting, scientific, industrial and professional exchanges. The Cassamarca Scholarship offered through the Australian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS) is a valuable example of such initiatives.

Overall, the challenge of reconciling the various images of Italian – as language of culture, community language and second language – has been met, to a considerable extent. Indeed, the culture exported from Italy is no longer restricted to art and literature, but covers a wide range of fields – including design, cinematography, technology and sport – that may have broader public appeal. At the same time, large sections of the Italo-Australian community, and of Australian society in general, have

caught up with recent developments in Italian society and, as discussed above, are creating new links with it. The effect of this new multifaceted image of Italian, combined with the increased contacts between the two countries and the processes of cultural and linguistic revival among Italo-Australians, could well be to reinforce the position of Italian in Australia, particularly if such developments are supported in a timely manner and by the right initiatives.

Notes

1. This chapter is an updated version of Rubino (2002).
2. 'Insertion classes' are courses offered during school hours but externally funded through a combination of subsidies from the Australian and the Italian Governments.
3. This situation, however, is not unique to Italian. The percentage of students taking a language for the final high school examination is a mere 14.5% at the national level (ACARA 2011: 4).
4. I am grateful to Enrichetta Parolin for providing this data.
5. According to data of the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), in the biennium 2009-2010, 5,481 Italians between 18 and 30 obtained a working holiday visa, with an increase of about 1,000 applicants per year since 2007. I would like to thank Lisa Golden for her help with this data.

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Teaching Italian in New Zealand: The Internet project

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THE LEARNING CONTEXT

Tertiary-level courses in Italian Studies are offered by the universities of Auckland and Wellington, the two cities where most of New Zealand's Italian-born residents (just over 3000 today) live. Small groups of Italians arrived in the country between the 1890s and the 1950s: men from Stromboli and Massa Lubrense made a living in the fishing industry; the Valtellinesi, initially gold miners in the South Island, moved north and established themselves in the Taranaki dairy industry; and emigrants from Treviso and Udine became the dominant group in the terrazzo industry in Auckland. The lack of a significant public presence of Italians in New Zealand means, for example, that Italian has not entered the school curriculum and New Zealanders who want to get to know something more about Italian culture and society do not have many local examples to observe. As a result, a few students among the 110 enrolled in the two Italian first year courses at the University of Auckland may have studied Italian at night school but the majority have little or no knowledge of the language or culture.

The courses are based on an integrated approach in which the following components interlace: interaction in class; use of a textbook; use of course web site and CD Rom resources; use of CECIL self-testing activities and a web-based research project. This approach follows the anthropological linguistic approach which views language structures not only as inextricable from their sociocultural contexts and embedded within their multiple systems of verbal and non-verbal signs but also as reliant on the vast and varied amount of background information which language users have to recognize and decode (Kramsch, 1999). When this kind of natural interaction with the information-rich host culture is missing, or cannot be easily achieved, we risk jeopardising the aim of avoiding abstraction. One remedy may be to substitute this natural interaction with interaction through multimedia. In Kramsch's view, the focus for language teachers

moves, with the use of multimedia, from teaching language structures only to "communicative practice", an activity in which the often unspoken set of values and beliefs of a culture is reflected in its speech: language learning becomes language and culture learning and the two aspects are mutually strengthening and inclusive.

A significant point to emerge from earlier studies (Brussino, 2002) was that although learners had specifically asked for more cultural information to be made available to them via the course web site, they were interacting very little with the world of web resources they had helped to design for the purpose. Apart from proving useful as a reference collection for language structures and course administration information, the web site was otherwise underused. While the collaborative learner-teacher creation of the resources was undoubtedly a useful activity in a number of respects, it became apparent that limiting students' use of the web to the simple task of accessing information restricted the use of a learning tool that held greater potential value. There is a growing body of literature that supports use of the web across the disciplines and also applies in this context to create effective learning environments along with efficient ways of communicating between students and teachers and among students themselves (Jonassen, 1995).

The challenge perceived in this context is to guide the interaction between teachers, learners, Internet-accessible sources of cultural information and language learning materials in ways that support efficient achievement of the course learning objectives. In addition to output targets, the objectives include increased learner autonomy, interest in, and understanding of the learning experience and motivation to continue exploring and learning beyond the classroom. Use of the web and Internet communications technologies also serves to promote the electronic literacies that constitute essential life skills which good pedagogy dictates should be invisibly integrated into the higher education curriculum. Electronic literacies also enable new forms of discourse as well as new ways to create and participate in communities. In the context of language classrooms that are geographically remote from the native speaker cultural group, the opportunities are considerable.

THEORETICAL BASE FOR DESIGN OF THE ACTIVITY

The web-based research project adopted a task-based approach. It uses key elements of Ellis's definition of a 'task' – a workplan which forces learners to process language pragmatically and is designed to ensure that an assessment of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed can be made. Learners have to give primary atten-

tion to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources; their language use has to resemble the way language is used in the real world (Ellis, 2003).

The key elements of the task are these: attention to meaning; engagement with grammar; use of authentic communication; social interaction; learners making use of their own linguistic resources; and use of language as it is used in the real world. The activity itself has to be rich in content, provide ways of learning from and through experience, offer opportunities for contextualized and responsive feedback as well as reflection, and ensure that its outcome can be assessed. With these principles and precepts in mind, we proposed to tackle the problem of the limited use of available materials by introducing into the two courses a web-focused project designed to allow learners to engage with authentic materials, become actively involved in true-to-life situations, work collaboratively and take risks.

In the context of this task, the use of websites generated by Italian organizations means that language learners have to meet linguistic challenges such as understanding practical and theoretical information presented in complex terminology designed for native speakers, make sense of it, and speak and/or act accordingly. This may involve managing discussions with native speakers on information retrieved, reflecting on its cultural and contextual aspects, rephrasing data, checking for correct interpretation and meaning. The project also promotes the ability of beginners to manage under such demanding circumstances. This was achieved by simulating the process in class with the support of the teacher and the confidence building aspects of group work prior to independent action.

The structural design of the project is based upon Second Language Acquisition (SLA)/Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA) methodology (Chapelle, 2005). In order to be effective in assisting learners to meet the known linguistic challenges, the route through to completion of the project needs clear signposts. Learners are guided step by step through a series of complex language learning processes defined by the SLA model charting the learner's progress through the various stages of apperception, comprehension, intake and integration between the initial input (the target language to which the learner is exposed) and the final output (the language produced by the learner).

The first step of the learning activity therefore has to support learner exposure to 'comprehensible and meaningful input', the necessary ingredient for language acquisition. This is achieved though directing learners to carefully selected web sites. Asking learners to focus on extracting particular items of information is the second step which aimed at scaffolding the apperception and comprehension stages. Scaffolding in this sense is

designed to provide a cognitive framework within which learners can assimilate content and begin to structure a knowledge base for a subject (Ausubel, 1960; 1978). The third step requires attending to the noticed input thus supporting the conversion of input into intake. This is signposted by directing learners to jot down on paper in isolated sentences, as they find it on the websites, relevant information to be reported back to their classmates. To support the next stage, i.e. the integration of intake and the reforming of the developing linguistic system, in step four the learners are directed towards and through the process of rewording the intake, this time using familiar terms and language structures previously discussed in class. The fifth and final step involves production of a report. In other words, finalisation and presentation of language output in oral and written form. All steps typically require coaching from the teacher and further assistance is provided in the form of collaboration within study groups.

THIS INTERNET PROJECT AS A TASK

The Internet project was designed as an unfocused (i.e., it has not one but many possible outcomes), open task (i.e., learners are not required to produce a target language structure in particular). It was introduced for pilot testing in the Beginners A and B courses in the Italian programme at the University of Auckland in 2002. Learners were asked to form groups of two or three and spend three consecutive class contact hours in the computer lab completing the following activity with assistance from their teacher.

Students had to choose between two topics closely associated with themes discussed in class (A-Italian media, B-horoscopes), or to propose their own topic according to personal interests. They were directed towards working on specific information, chosen by themselves, to avoid losing their way in the large amounts of detail provided by the web sites. An indication of time to be spent on each part of the activity was given as a self-management cue, as learners easily get distracted while exploring web sites. In order to make sure that everyone in the group became actively involved, each person was assigned a portion of the work by the group and required to present orally one part of the report.

Following the oral presentation of the report, learners reflected upon their learning in class, and by responding in writing to two questions: 'Do you consider this project a useful language-learning experience?' and 'What have you learnt from this project?' To the second question students were prompted to use several criteria in their answers: cultural information; language learning strategies; experience as a language learner; language structures and lexicon; use of technology; and group work.

LEARNER FEEDBACK

Learners' feedback was highly favourable to this activity. In their enthusiasm for the learning experience, a very high percentage of students who completed the questionnaire identified the activity as worthwhile in terms of interest, motivation and culture learning. Over 90% of 93 learners surveyed replied with a clear yes to the question: "Do you consider this project a useful language learning experience?" and then explained why. They identified the activity as worthwhile in terms of interest, motivation, independent learning and culture learning. The opportunity to speak the language aloud in front of the class was recognised as useful, however painful it might be. Speaking Italian in public may be daunting for anyone and necessarily generates a considerable level of anxiety for beginners, especially when linked to assessment. Some were none the less positive about the value of the experience, appreciating that to be forced to research and then speak only in Italian to an audience helped to put the concepts and information taught in a classroom environment into a real life context. This level of appreciation that learning takes place at the edge of one's comfort zone is encouraging.

CONCLUSION

This particular language learning task has maintained, over a period of years in which everything else, including the textbook, has changed, a high score of student satisfaction with the overall learning experience. Most of all, it has served to contextualise and motivate, addressing the specific challenges created by the New Zealand context. A combination of factors contribute to making this a successful learning experience, some generic learning design considerations, some related to computer facilitated learning and others specific to language learning.

Following from this overall positive experience, a similar project has also been introduced at higher levels. Enquiries into the outcomes of the project at later stages indicate that learners at intermediate and advanced level needed little or no guidance through the project as they had developed a degree of autonomy. This might point to the value of this activity in developing learner independence, a possibility noted by tutors in courses at later stages. The exercise was indeed acknowledged by students as making them more confident in their ability to teach themselves and to make the strategy a good resource for future learning.

This small-scale study adds to a growing body of evidence supporting the case that well-conceived use of technology can promote effective learning and development of productive learning strategies. 'Well-conceived' assumes a basis in sound pedagogical design, a generic possibility

articulated, in this case, through application of established principles of second language acquisition and technology supported learning. As Egbert (2005) notes, multiple theoretical perspectives are important in these times of rapid cross-cultural expansion, social change and technological diversity. The pace of change demands continuous innovation, reflection, evaluation and revision of learning opportunities and environments in order for full educational potential to be realized.

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Part 3

'L'intuizione che ci muove in questa iniziativa è quella di riattivare le forze vitali presenti nelle società civili … rivolgendoci, in primo luogo, ai docenti universitari.'

Cassamarca Lecturers
2000 -2011

REFLECTIONS UNDER SOUTHERN SKIES
THE CASSAMARCA LECTURESHIPS

The history of the establishment and funding of the Cassamarca Lectureships – the *Fondazione Cassamarca-Unione Latini nel Mondo* Lectureships, to give them their formal title – has been summarised by Loretta Baldassar in her contribution to Part 1. A few further details will help to round out the story. From the applications from nineteen universities for twenty-seven new positions, eleven positions were selected and approved by the Foundation. The first appointment to a Cassamarca Lectureship was made in February 2000 by Flinders University, followed in March by Australia's newest university, the University of the Sunshine Coast in southeast Queensland; the remaining lectureships were filled by July 2001. Since then the original eleven lectureships have been increased to twelve; many of the appointees have been promoted to Senior Lecturer or above; and a Chair of Latin Humanism, to which Yasmin Haskell was appointed, was established at UWA in 2003. Over the past decade twenty-one people have held Cassamarca lectureships across five states, nine universities and twelve departments for periods from one month to ten years. Their areas of teaching and research have covered almost the full range of interests usually collected under the rubric of Italian Studies: language and literature, film and television, cultural studies, history, migration studies, anthropology and politics. The continuing geographical, institutional and disciplinary spread of the lectureships has thus preserved the original intention of the APC to allocate the lectureships in such a way as to reinforce existing centres of strength, encourage development in new places and support as many different academic areas as possible.

We invited all those who hold or have held Cassamarca Lectureships, plus some recent members of the Management Committee, to contribute short personal pieces of no more than 1500 words which contained reflections on the role that Italy and Italian culture had played in their lives, professional or private, in Australia. We encouraged anecdotes and the identification of key moments in which the appreciation of some feature of Italian cultural or social life had changed how they thought about Italy or Australasia or their work as daily mediators of Italian culture in academic contexts. We hoped for an entertaining array of pieces utterly different in content and style which together would illustrate the diversity

of interests in the field of Italian Studies. The enthusiasm with which all the contributors responded to the invitation and the flair which they have brought to their contributions have certainly met those hopes and offer a vivid testimony both to their appreciation of Cassamarca support for their own positions and to the vitality of Italian Studies under the Southern Cross.[1]

1. Contributors, in alphabetical order, are identified by the places and dates of their tenure of a Cassamarca Lectureship; some have moved on to non-Cassamarca positions. Two other Cassamarca lecturers, Carolyn James (Monash University 2000 -) and Claire Kennedy (Griffith University 2001 -), appear in Part 2. Contributors who are not Cassamarca lecturers but serve on the ACIS Management Committee are identified as such.

REFLECTIONS UNDER SOUTHERN SKIES

Neanche esclusivamente australiano

Matthew Absalom
University of South Australia 2000

Sono un'anomalia. Nato da genitori di origini anglosassoni e cresciuto in un ambiente decisamente monolingue ho finito per condurre la mia vita in un mondo 'mistilingue'. Sono ormai quasi 15 anni che ricorro alla lingua italiana ogni giorno della settimana, e non soltanto per lavoro. In classe mi faccio chiamare «Matteo», soprattutto perché da fonologo mi da fastidio la pronuncia italianizzata del mio nome: [mettju] oppure, ancora peggio, [mettʃu]. Poi, però, ci sono altri due motivi. Primo, per gli studenti pronunciare il mio nome in inglese rompe il ritmo dell'italiano e comporta scontri fonologici tra il sistema australiano e quello italiano. Secondo, l'uso del mio nome italiano rappresenta simbolicamente la mia identità mista o frantumata – dipende dal punto di vista… Trasformare in italiano il nome è un conto, pensare di fare altrettanto col cognome è tutt'un altro discorso, sicché il mio cognome tradisce sempre la mia non-italianità. Per questo motivo, tutti mi dicono sempre «Ma sei innamorato dell'Italia, dell'italiano e di tutte le cose italiane, vero?» Purtroppo la risposta è un «no» enfatico. Per me, questa domanda rappresenta un modo di pensare troppo semplicistico, o forse troppo da monolingue. Certo che amo l'Italia, cioè quell'Italia dell'immaginario, idealizzata, il paese del buon costume, del mangiar e bere bene, della gente simpatica e espansiva ma anche impegnata, del caffé sempre e comunque buono, degli occhiali (solo in Italia si vedono uomini di una certa età che portano l'ultima moda in materia di occhiali), il posto ove lascio e ritrovo il mio cuore ogni volta che ci vado, ma anche l'Italia delle Italie e, infine, un'Italia di tutti i giorni…

Ma, nel mio caso particolare, questo discorso è sbagliato. Anzi, sbagliatissimo. Per me è molto di meno ma anche molto di più. Non sono un altro Frances Mayes o Elizabeth Gilbert anche se il sangue che mi corre nelle vene è erede in un certo senso di quell'adorazione pedissequa verso l'Italia dei miei avi inglesi. Ho detto prima che sono cresciuto in un contesto prettamente monolingue. È vero che la mia mamma nata in Inghilterra

e emigrata in Australia quando aveva 10 anni parlava solo l'inglese, e che anche il mio babbo di quarta o quinta generazione australiano ma di origini anglo-irlandesi sapeva solo l'inglese. Ma nella mia piccola cittadina, a parte gli australiani di stirpe anglosassone, c'era un'altra etnia – gli italiani. Le zone agricole hanno sempre avuto un certo fascino per la diaspora italiana e non c'era niente di diverso nel mio paese circondato com'era di frutteti – una curiosità: adesso si fa un ottimo olio d'oliva da quelle parti. Diciamo che le mie parti avevano un clima mediterraneo – lunghe estati calde e asciutte e inverni assolati ma freddi. Nei primi nove anni della mia vita abitavamo in paese. Poi dopo ci spostammo in aperta campagna – spostamento dovuto a cambiamenti familiari, la solita musichina fine ventesimo secolo: divorzio, nuovi compagni, nuove case, ecc. Ma queste sono altre storie, concentriamoci sul mio primo periodo «italiano» - i miei primi nove anni di vita per l'appunto – periodo chiave per capire chi e come sono oggi. Coloro che conoscono la storia dell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra sanno che ci furono ondate di emigrazione italiane verso gli Antipodi che durarono fino agli anni Ottanta. Di solito arrivavano prima i mariti e padri di famiglia, lavoratori che hanno praticamente costruito l'Australia, per poi essere raggiunti da mogli e, a volte, dalla progenie. È successo proprio così nella casa accanto alla nostra: quando avevo solo un anno, sono arrivati moglie e figlio del siciliano silenzioso e serio, nostro vicino di casa. Come archetipi di una visione stereotipata della cultura italiana si chiamavano Adam(o) e Maria (riassumendo con il loro nome il rapporto tra l'Italia e il cristianesimo – aspetto storicizzante), i genitori del piccolo Frankie (nome italiano per eccellenza nei contesti della diaspora italiana – aspetto modernizzante). Anche se gli italiani lasciano la terra madre e la patria, portano sempre con loro un'identità infrangibile – prova di ciò ne è l'ubiquità della cucina italiana. I miei vicini di casa non si sono accontentati di stare lì fermi ad adeguarsi alla nuova realtà della terra incognita, del giovane paese senza una chiara identità culturale, degli Antipodi liberati dal peso della storia ma incarcerati dalla loro stessa libertà. Anzi. Sradicati linguisticamente e culturalmente, hanno provato a riprodurre, a trapiantare, a ricostruire l'Italia che si sono lasciati alle spalle.

E gliene sarò eternamente grato. Il giardino sul retro, il «backyard» o la «iarda», come si dice in italo-australiano, diventò un nirvana del Mezzogiorno – un orto come solo gli italiani sanno farlo. E Maria, l'instancabile calabrese, era sempre occupata con le varie faccende di casa: il pane che preparava, le lenzuola che asciugava sul praticello (pratica ignota agli australiani) e i fagioli che metteva a seccare, il sapone che faceva lei in una specie di crogiuolo che io pensavo fosse magico. Nel mio piccolo mondo strettamente monoculturale di taglio anglosassone arrivavano dunque odori, rumori e sapori di un'Italia paradisiaca. Ero precoce nel cammina-

re sicché sapevo già scalare il piccolo recinto che separava le nostre case all'arrivo di Maria e Frankie. Per una fortunata coincidenza di due fatti, avevo una vincente motivazione che mi portava sempre dai D'Aquila: la mia mamma (sto per scrivere una cosa non molto politically correct ma alquanto vera a mio parere) essendo di origini inglesi non sapeva cucinare per niente, ma proprio per niente. Anzi, sapeva preparare solo cose incommestibili, schifezze insomma. Maria invece era la Madonna della cucina – sapeva fare di tutto e lo faceva sempre bene, ma proprio bene. Il secondo fatto era che avevo due genitori giovani giovani che mi lasciavano fare – per la mia mamma che restava a casa tutti i giorni col figliuolo birichino e troppo vivace forse era una benedizione mandata dal cielo il fatto che il pargolo amasse stare dai vicini dal primo mattino fino alla sera. Mi ricordo tanti dettagli della vita dei miei carissimi D'Aquila: Frankie che mangiava tutt'un pacchetto di teddybear biscuits con il caffellatte per la colazione, Maria che sfornava pagnotte fatte dalle sue carnose mani anche durante il caldo d'estate, Adam che aveva una voce stentorea che mi faceva una paura. Mi hanno fatto provare una goccia di vino all'età di tre anni, e poi verso i cinque anni il bruciore amico della grappa fatta in casa. Un rumore che mi è sempre rimasto impresso nella memoria: la voce di Maria che gridava «Venn acca, Franco» dalla veranda dietro casa dove pendevano salumi di produzione artigianale davanti alla vigna di famiglia.

Non sono italiano, ma non mi sento neanche esclusivamente australiano, soprattutto perché certe mie cose sono di provenienza diversa. Forse sono cose banali, ma per me le banalità hanno una loro verità innegabile, essendo talvolta subconscie. Ad esempio, devo bere il caffè (sempre e comunque espresso – ma così lo bevo da ben 20 anni, cioè prima della mania australiana del buon caffè) dopo mangiato: mi viene naturale. Si fa così. Non riesco a mangiare e bere il caffè allo stesso tempo. Non è abitudine acquisita questa, è che non mi va ora come non mi è mai andato prima. Mi sono reso conto un giorno, soffermandomi in un bar pratese, che la maggior parte degli italiani chiude il mangiare con il caffè, non lo accompagna. Come me. Il mio italiano ha radici non dissimili da quello di tanti «italo» (recentemente mi sono trovato a Venezia dove la commessa in un negozio Vodafone ha descritto i figli di emigrati italiani così) – un contatto precoce in un ambiente familiare. Così come il contatto italiano ha trasfigurato in modo postmoderno un *backyard* australiano in un eden 'suditaliano', il contatto con degli italiani mi è entrato dentro riconfigurandomi linguistico-culturalmente avvicinandomi per sempre all'umanesimo europeo sia in quanto proprio della mia eredità culturale, sia in quanto caratteristico della cultura italiana che mi ha adottato.

In front of a (digital) camera lens

Giorgia Alù
University of Sydney 2008-10

There I was, in my room, in a Bed & Breakfast in Annandale. I had just arrived from Europe to take up a two-year post as Cassamarca Lecturer at the University of Sydney in 2008. I was sitting in front of the camera lens of my laptop, trying to fix and frame an image of myself. I needed a portrait for the website of my new Department. I could finally have one, like all the other lecturers around the world. And I could finally state my membership of that 'community'. I was posing and finding the best way to emphasise that statement.

After almost three years I am now looking again at that same photograph. I can see that my pose, background and lighting are meant to harmonize with me in order to enhance my serious, calm and dignified expression. This portrait has to express duty and decorum and I need to avoid any emotion; its function is to permit the viewer to look at the subject portrayed, not into her. In this way, my room – as a photographer's studio – becomes 'a place of ritual transcendence and self-contemplation' (Deborah Poole, *Vision, Race and Modernity,* Princeton, 1997, p.110). In my room, in front of the camera, my pose and facial expression replicate those already adopted by thousands of other colleagues. This image captured and immortalized through the lens, would remain as a testimony of a moral, material and professional achievement. Such an image, however, marks something else: my condition as expatriate, as an emigrant.

I have turned to a digital reproduction in order to endure a social, spatial and temporal displacement. Posing, staring at the camera and choosing to fix an idealized image of myself in time and space, I reinforce my presence not only within the academic community but also in the host society: Australia. I have entered this complex mechanism in the attempt to reconstruct a personal identity and a new life for myself. It is a symbol of a (re)gained individuality.

Through this image I-migrant can overcome my 'absence-presence dilemma', in Abdelamlek Sayad's phrase (*The Suffering of the Immigrant,* Cambridge, 2004, p. 124). I am simultaneously present and absent in both native and host society. My body, therefore, becomes my referent and the only certainty in my temporal and spatial dislocation. I live in the space and time of the memory of home and in the present reality of the new country. Through my own photograph I can fill both my absence in Italy

or Europe and, at the same time, reinforce the presence and visibility of my body in Australia. And what was invisible of me (aspiration) as a component of an anonymous mass, is now made visible and presentable in such a constructed photographic portrait; a public visual exterior displays a private concealed interior. As Sayad puts it:

> We present ourselves and are present through our bodies, and the body is the bearer of social identity: it is that identity. That is why the body is the object of attempts to make it presentable, or in other words to model it in such a way as to make it conform as closely as possible to what is seen as a legitimate configuration (p. 260).

My presence-absence as migrant mirrors my presence-absence as subject of the photograph, as explained by Barthes in his *Camera Lucida.* In the photographic portrait my body is frozen in a death-like pose. By deciding to photograph myself I participate in my transformation into an other and an object. To be photographed is like to be rendered dead. At the same time, I become spectator of my own photographic body. I can look at my own image which is simultaneously a trace of a past moment and of a desire.

My identity is thus shaped through a complex intersection of experiences that include what I was in Europe (Italy and England) and what I am becoming – or desire to become – in the new land. My identity is also a cultural process that attempts to give imaginary and real coherence to personal displacement. As Stuart Hall argues, cultural identity is indeed a process in constant transformation; it is not just a matter of 'being' but rather of 'becoming'. Moreover, it is an unstable point of identification constructed through language, acts and artifacts, including images.

This photograph has the function of prolonging an idealised self carefully chosen for public display. In front of the camera I learn a new way of seeing myself in the eyes of others and to see myself as 'an image'. The portrait, in fact, offers the 'promise of the individual through a system of representation which at once hides and distorts the subject before the lens' (Graham Clarke, *The Portrait in Photography,* London, 1992, p.3). The portrait's meaning exists, therefore, within wider codes of significance – space, space, posture and dress, for example – which have, in turn, already framed and fixed the individual. To repeat: through such a portrait I can assert my visibility and personality. Yet, paradoxically, this same photograph entails the loss of my uniqueness as my body is transformed into its own likeness and into a consumer's image-object, digitally reproduced and made to respond to precise representational codes. I, as a migrant academic, act out a role to be seen and to be remembered as a successful individual in a foreign country. The photograph arrests life through a fictive construction. In this way my aims are positioned according to what

the Other (family, friends, as well as institutions back in Europe) wants to see. Some of them will see the subject of this portrait as their own desire (See Anne Marsh, *The Darkroom: Photography and the Theatre of Desire,* Melbourne, 2003). However, the object is never fully captured, as in the photograph it never becomes present: it is rather frozen and framed in time and space.

This same photograph should register a corporal trace, an index, while simultaneously fixing, in the way that Benjamin and Barthes emphasize, such an image in a temporal and spatial dimension. The portrait of me is, however, a digital photograph. I could have altered this image in any way: fewer wrinkles or less white hair. In this way it is no longer, necessarily, an index to an objective truth and an assurance of a pure presence. It is a lie and therefore it can imply another absence, that of a subject that was not really there in her authentic physicality (see Claudio Marra, *L'immagine infedele,* Milan, 2006). Nevertheless, the time is still the past of this photograph; whenever the portrait is looked at by me or by somebody else it refers to a public (constructed and manipulated) moment that 'has been', to a presence-absence, and to both a physical and a visual journey to many idealized identities.

Cosa farò da grande...

Laura Ancilli
Swinburne University of Technology 2001-2004

Quando nel 2001 vinsi il concorso per diventare "Lettrice Cassamarca" presso l'Università di Swinburne si avverò un altro dei miei sogni di bambina: quello di insegnare. Alla tradizionale domanda "Cosa farai da grande?" rispondevo puntualmente "L'insegnante e la giornalista!" e quando mi veniva fatto notare che dovevo scegliere una delle due carriere, ribattevo impertinente che volevo fare tutte e due le cose... Giornalista lo sono diventata nel 1995, lavorando per la redazione italiana della radio SBS fino al 2001 quando ho iniziato la mia seconda carriera nell'insegnamento, grazie alla Fondazione Cassamarca e all'Università di Swinburne.

Come lettrice Cassamarca venni incaricata, dall'allora capo di dipartimento Laura Hougaz, di due progetti in particolare. Il primo era di creare un corso di "italiano commerciale" per gli studenti che seguivano la doppia laurea in Economia & Commercio e Lettere. L'idea del corso era di insegnare la lingua e la cultura italiana dal punto di vista commerciale

per mostrare agli studenti la prospettiva imprenditoriale italiana e dargli la possibilità, una volta terminati gli studi, di lavorare nell'ambito del rapporti commerciali tra l'Italia e l'Australia.

Il secondo progetto di cui fui incaricata era quello di creare, in collaborazione con la Fondazione Cassamarca e con la succursale dell'Universita' Ca' Foscari a Treviso, un programma di quattro settimane di studio a Treviso per dare la possibilità agli studenti di "toccare con mano" la realtà imprenditoriale italiana, studiare per un mese in una situazione di "full immersion" nella lingua italiana e, chiaramente, visitare il Veneto e la bella Treviso.

A giugno del 2002 un folto gruppo di 35 studenti accompagnati da Bruno Mascitelli e da me arrivò a Treviso per la prima edizione del Programma Treviso. Gli studenti erano completamente elettrizzati. Per molti di loro era la prima volta che viaggiavano al di fuori dell'Australia senza i genitori e per parecchi era anche la prima volta che visitavano l'Italia. Circa il 50% degli studenti del Programma Treviso era di origine italiana e molti di loro avevano dell'Italia un'immagine passata loro da genitori e nonni. Il Programma Treviso divenne per loro l'opportunità di crearsi la propria immagine e i propri ricordi del loro Paese d'origine.

Il giorno successivo all'arrivo, dopo aver fatto colazione, ci incamminammo verso la fermata dell'autobus che ci doveva portare dall'Istituto Canossiano dove eravamo alloggiati alle aule del magnifico Palazzo dell'Umanesimo Latino dove si sarebbero svolte le lezioni. Il piccolo autobus di linea che andava da Viale Europa a Piazza dell'Università venne quasi completamente riempito dai nostri studenti che durante tutto il tragitto continuarono a chiacchierare tra di loro indicando di tanto in tanto palazzi, vicoli, angoli di Treviso che nelle settimane successive sarebbero diventati punti di riferimento, luoghi d'incontro e posti favoriti dove mangiare un gelato rinfrescante o dove leggere un libro seduti su una panchina tra gli alberi.

Durante le quattro settimane del nostro soggiorno, grazie all'incredibile ospitalità dei trevigiani per i quali diventammo quasi subito "gli Australiani", e grazie soprattutto alla Fondazione Cassamarca, alla generosità del Presidente De Poli ed all'impagabile e costante aiuto di Antonella Stelitano, gli studenti fecero delle esperienze indimenticabili. La visita alla Stonefly, ad esempio, durante la quale agli studenti venne spiegato passo per passo (perdonate il gioco di parole!) la produzione delle famose scarpe, dal *design* fino al prodotto finale. Il Museo dello Scarpone, dove ci venne offerto un delizioso pranzo, e dove gli studenti scoprirono la storia di uno dei famosi distretti industriali italiani. E poi senz'altro la favolosa gita alle Dolomiti, il giro in funivia e la camminata su una delle cime...

L'italiano, sia parlato che scritto, degli studenti fece dei passi avanti

incredibili, documentati tra l'altro in uno studio che io e Laura Hougaz pubblicammo l'anno successivo ('Out-of-country Experiences in the International Business Curriculum: A Case for the Successful Integration of Languages', *International Journal of Learning,* 2003, vol. 10). Ma, a parte il prevedibile miglioramento puramente accademico, l'esperienza a Treviso fu per gli studenti, e continua ad essere, un incredibile momento di crescita, di scoperta e d'incontro. Ognuno di loro aveva, prima di partire per l'Italia, una propria idea ed immagine di quello che avrebbe trovato e visto. Ed ognuno di loro, al ritorno a Melbourne, portò con se nuovi ricordi, nuove immagini dell'Italia, della splendida ed accogliente Treviso e dell'ospitalità ed amicizia dei trevigiani.

A me personalmente la Fondazione Cassamarca e il Presidente Dino De Poli hanno offerto un'indimenticabile esperienza di insegnamento e di crescita oltre, chiaramente, alla realizzazione di uno dei miei sogni di bambina!

Dino De Poli with Swinburne University of Technology staff and students 2002.

Portogruaro-Treviso, via Melbourne

Simone Battiston
Swinburne University of Technology 2006 -

La distanza tra Portogruaro, città dove sono nato, e Treviso è di circa una cinquantina di chilometri; distanza che si può comodamente percorre in macchina lungo la statale 'Postumia', o in treno grazie al recente ripristino della vecchia ferrovia. È una tratta, quella tra Portogruaro e Treviso, che rappresenta un collegamento non solo tra la provincia di Venezia e quella di Treviso, ma anche tra una realtà, quella del portogruarese a vocazione prevalentemente agricola e il cuore di una provincia, quella di Treviso, a vocazione imprenditoriale e commerciale. Treviso ha rappresentato (e ancor'oggi rappresenta) una delle storie di successo del 'miracolo economico' nel nordest italiano. Questa tratta l'ho percorsa varie volte negli anni, prima da bambino con la famiglia, poi da giovane adulto con gli amici. Ma per me Portogruaro-Treviso ha assunto, da qualche anno a questa parte, un significato tutto particolare. Alla dimensione locale e veneta, se n'è aggiunta una internazionale e squisitamente australiana. Complice la Fondazione Cassamarca.

Anche se la presenza della Fondazione Cassamarca in Australia è stata per me fino ai primi anni del 2000 una realtà abbastanza nuova, la banca Cassamarca è un'istituzione bancaria della città di Treviso e provincia che conosco da anni. Ricordo quando la Cassamarca si chiamava 'Cassa di Risparmio della Marca Trevigiana', la banca a Treviso. Un po' come il Monte dei Paschi immagino sia per Siena, la banca Cassamarca, oltre a essere il simbolo della rinascita economica della zona della Marca trevigiana, era il marchio distintivo che accompagnava tutte le iniziative cittadine di un certo valore, dal restauro di antichi palazzi al finanziamento di opere cittadine. Dopo essere emigrato in Australia nel 2000 per cominciare il mio dottorato di ricerca a La Trobe University, pensavo di aver messo una certa distanza tra me e la mia regione di origine (Veneto) e per diversi anni mi sono immerso nella cultura e stile di vita australiani, lasciando un po' in secondo piano la mia provenienza regionale. In fondo ero uno dei tanti studenti internazionali 'with a first language other than English', come si scrive nei formulari, e il Veneto e i suoi particolarismi non mi sembravano piu' così importanti.

E' stato alla fine di giugno e inizi di luglio del 2005 che le cose per me sono cominciate a cambiare, quando ho partecipato alla mia prima

conferenza ACIS proprio nella città di Treviso. Ho un bellissimo ricordo di quella manciata di giorni passati tra il Palazzo dell'Umanesimo Latino e Ca' dei Carraresi. Mi sembrava di essere tornato 'letteralmente' a casa, pur mantenendo la mia nuova identità di italo-australiano, come amo definirmi adesso un po' scherzando. Infatti, si trattava di una piccola enclave australiana a Treviso, una dimensione magica, che mi ha fatto cominciare a riflettere come fosse non solo possibile, ma incredibilmente bello, sentirsi allo stesso tempo veneto e australiano. Ho un ricordo particolarmente intimo di questa conferenza perché in quell'occasione ho incontrato mia moglie Sabina che al tempo era anche lei una studentessa di dottorato in Australia, e da allora siamo sempre andati insieme a tutte le conferenze che sono seguite a questa. Nel febbraio del 2006, un'altra decisiva svolta, grazie ancora alla Fondazione Cassamarca, con la nomina a 'Cassamarca Lecturer' presso presso la Swinburne University of Technology di Melbourne. La cattedra 'Cassamarca' alla Swinburne University era stata istituita nel 2001 con lo scopo di contribuire alle attività di insegnamento, ricerca ed extra-curriculari nell'area degli studi di italianistica, studi europei e studi internazionali. La Swinburne University si era specializzata in particolare nell'insegnamento dell'italiano nel mondo degli affari offrendo una laurea interdisciplinare in Economia e Commercio/Lettere (indirizzo lingua e cultura italiana). Il collegamento tra Swinburne University e Fondazione Cassamarca non era solo incarnato nella figura del docente Cassamarca, ma anche nel programma di studi 'Treviso', concepito con l'obiettivo di offrire agli studenti di lingua e cultura italiana della Swinburne University la possibilità di fare dei corsi di studi intensivi proprio a Treviso.

Ed è nell'immaginario dei nostri studenti di lingua e cultura italiana che 'Treviso' (o 'Trev' o 'Trevvy') coincide con l'omonimo programma di studi della Swinburne che si svolge ogni due anni tra giugno e luglio, ora all'ex convento di San Francesco a Conegliano ma fino a qualche anno fa nella sede distaccata di Treviso dell'Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia. Da quasi dieci anni il programma, sviluppato e coordinato in Australia dalla Swinburne University e organizzato in loco grazie al generoso aiuto della Fondazione Cassamarca, ha fatto conoscere a qualche centinaio di studenti il patrimonio culturale, economico, sociale e umano di Treviso città e della 'Marca'. L'esperienza 'Treviso' è stata per molti studenti una delle esperienze più intense e formative del loro periodo universitario. Per alcuni studenti, il soggiorno estivo a Treviso ha poi coinciso con un percorso personale di (ri)scoperta della proprie radici italiane (o venete), per altri un contatto intimo, diretto, contemporaneo con l'Italia di oggi, le sue bellezze e le sue idiosincrasie. Ed è proprio durante il programma 'Treviso', assieme ai nostri studenti e docenti Swinburne, che ho conosciuto per la prima volta il Presidente De Poli nel 2006. La visita al Presidente

e alla sede della Fondazione era, ed è, una tappa fondamentale del programma: visita che conferma il forte legame che unisce il nostro ateneo al Presidente, alla Fondazione e alla provincia di Treviso. Nel corso degli anni, l'ospitalità del Presidente verso il gruppo degli 'australiani' in visita non è mancata di certo e si è manifestata in vari modi e occasioni, e tra queste ricordo la tradizionale gita a Cortina che il Presidente ha sempre offerto agli studenti del programma 'Treviso'. Ma è anche grazie a figure vicine al Presidente che il nostro rapporto con la Fondazione è maturato e si è consolidato nel tempo. *In primis,* quella di Antonella Stelitano, che si è da sempre spesa a facilitare i rapporti tra noi della Swinburne University, il Presidente, la Fondazione, il campus universitario di Treviso e ora l'ex-convento San Francesco di Conegliano per l'uso di strutture didattiche durante il programma 'Treviso'.

Portogruaro-Treviso via Melbourne quindi. Un'esperienza personale e di gruppo tra regione del Veneto e stato del Victoria, tra italianità e australianità, tra scoperte e riscoperte identitarie. Complice ovviamente la Fondazione Cassamarca.

From the Sunshine Coast to Sardinia via Vancouver

Linda Bull
University of the Sunshine Coast 2000-1

When I was invited to write a piece about my experiences as a Cassamarca lecturer I needed to do some memory work as I took up the position back in 2001. At the time I was working on my PhD and teaching as a sessional tutor at Griffith University when I applied for the lectureship at the recently-established University of the Sunshine Coast. I was both surprised and delighted when I received the call to say that I had been appointed. What came next was a crazy year - stressful but also satisfying, a real learning experience, both professionally and personally. I was just 26 at the time; it was my first full-time teaching position as a lecturer; and I was also solely responsible for the Italian programme at USC. Luckily for me there were two Italians – who also taught Italian in the local school system – to help me teach the first- and second-year courses. Paola Bosio and Tiziana Campaner quickly became my very much appreciated colleagues and new friends. They were a joy to work with and the three of us organised extramural events with the students as well as teaching the language courses. Having two "real" Italians to work with was a treat as it

gave me the opportunity to grasp the ways in which Italy and the Italian language and culture were seen through their eyes. What was particularly interesting was to see how they adapted to living in Australia as "new" Italian immigrants while managing to retain their "Italianness". Of the many events we planned during that year at USC, one sticks in my mind – taking my students on a field trip to the local *bocce* club to learn how to play the game and express ourselves (shouts of joy, groans of disappointment) in Italian while doing so! The Italian women involved in the club made us pizza while the men showed us how to strut our stuff on the courts. It was both entertaining and instructive to see how much fun could be had whilst playing a game in a foreign tongue, a new activity for most of my students. Having direct contact with native speakers in such a relaxed setting was a great way to "learn". And, of course, who could not like the idea of the home-made pizza waiting at the end?

Not having grown up speaking Italian, but having had to learn it myself as a teenager at school and university in Brisbane (it was useful for my musical education), I feel that I had something unusual in the Australian context to offer my students with regard to learning the language. I owe a large debt to my teachers for instilling in me a love and deep understanding of the language and the culture and also for encouraging me at every turn to expand my range of skills and experiences. I feel very lucky to have had the chance to work alongside Claire Kennedy, Tiziana Miceli and Sara Visocnik-Murray first as a student and then as a colleague. I also quickly learned to appreciate the effort and dedication needed to provide a high quality educational experience – what I then aimed to transmit to my own students at USC.

Since then my life has taken a different turn and I no longer teach Italian at university (I may go back to it). But I do use Italian in my life almost every day in some way or other. Since moving to Vancouver, Canada, in 2003, I have been drawn into the local Italian community. Vancouver has about 70,000 inhabitants of Italian or part-Italian descent, most of whom arrived from the 1930s onwards initially to form a characteristic – but today multicultural rather than ethnically Italian – Little Italy. I live in the part of town which became the centre of the Italian business community in the 1940s and 1950s, although many Italians then moved out to Burnaby Heights, which retains a strong Italian presence. I work as a music consultant for the Italian Institute of Culture here in Vancouver, helping to bring musicians from Italy to perform in Canada and translating for them when needed (more often than you might expect). The last year has seen a visit by the *Klezmerata Fiorentina,* made up of four of the principal players from the *Orchestra del Maggio Musicale,* performing at Vancouver's Chutzpah! Festival of Jewish culture, and virtuoso classi-

cal mandolinist Carlo Aonzo and his duo partner pianist Elena Buttiero from Savona gave a performance to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Italian Republic (listen to their CD, *Fantasia Poetica,* if you can). I have also given a lecture on Fabrizio De André, presented a film about a world music orchestra from Rome (*l'Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio*) and interpreted on stage for a group of *tenores* singers from Sardinia (*i Tenores de Neoneli*). The *canto a tenore* is a style of guttural, polyphonic vocal singing which gained UNESCO world heritage status in 2005 and is performed by a group of four men. Their separate voices are the *bassu, contra, oche* (or *boche*) and *mesu oche* (or *mesu boche*) and the timbre is said to be reminiscent of the sound of sheep, which reflects the pastoral element in Sardinian culture. This group toured with a father-and-son duo, Orlando and Eliseo Mascia, who accompanied the singers on *launeddas* (Sardinia's unique polyphonic instrument dating from the 8th century BC, consisting of three pieces of cane of different lengths, two of which are tied together, and played by use of circular breathing), *sulitu* (a bamboo flute), *trunfa* (jaw harp), *organetto* (button accordion), *tumbarinu,* and many *others.* Sardinia has in fact become a favoured destination, especially the villages of Seneghe and Bonacardo where I have family connections. The Sardinian reputation for hospitality and for the staging of dramatic spectacles (the Festival of St Efisio in Cagliari in early May is a marvellous example) is something I can endorse from personal experience. I have also spent time in Alghero in north-west Sardinia, with its Catalan connection reflected in the local speech form known as *algherese.* Perhaps its best-known exponent is the singer Franca Masu, daughter of the artist Manlio Masu, who uses *algherese* to convey the many emotions of Mediterranean music; she performs not only alongside traditional vocalists like Elena Ledda but also shares the stage with jazz musicians, including trumpeter Paolo Fresu from Berchidda where he hosts the annual jazz festival. So my next language project: learning Sardinian (but which of the four dialects to choose without causing offence to my hosts? Nice dilemma).

Perhaps my most rewarding Italian project is the weekly radio show that I have been producing and hosting for the past four years at CiTR Radio 101.9 FM at the University of British Columbia. Every Tuesday afternoon I present an hour of Italian music (mostly folk, traditional and modern, but also music by singer-songwriters and some jazz and other genres) and conduct occasional interviews with musicians as part of my programme. The show is unique in Vancouver for being in both English and Italian and focused on musical genres that are rarely heard on the radio. I try to introduce listeners to new music which ensures I keep in constant contact with the language and culture. I can get to Italy fairly regularly so I have been able to interview musicians and singers and recently

to tour with singer-songwriter Luca De Nuzzo from San Severo, Puglia.

My time as a Cassamarca Lecturer in Australia and the related pleasures from working with dedicated colleagues and students gave me skills and enriched my life in many, some quite unexpected, ways. From the Sunshine Coast to Sardinia via Vancouver - who says Italian can't get you anywhere?

Italiano ed educazione al plurilinguismo

Marinella Caruso
University of Western Australia 2001 -

Nel riflettere sulla mia attività da docente Cassamarca, mi compiaccio nel constatare che il riconoscimento per il progetto intrapreso più di dieci anni fa dalla Fondazione sia condiviso tra gli studenti. Di recente, nell'ambito del mio corso "Italiano e migrazione" all'Università di Western Australia analizzavo il declino degli studi di italianistica nelle università australiane negli anni 90, conseguenza del razionalismo economico imposto dal governo sul settore terziario. Dopo aver discusso le politiche linguistiche e gli interventi che avrebbero potuto assicurare – o che hanno assicurato – la sopravvivenza dell'italiano nelle università australiane, dichiarai "Io stessa devo ringraziare l'Onorevole De Poli per il lavoro che ho in quest'università", affermazione alla quale una studentessa replicò spontaneamente "E anche noi lo dobbiamo ringraziare per avere te". Poter insegnare la mia lingua e far conoscere la mia cultura in un paese come l'Australia è per me la sfida e allo stesso tempo il destino più grande che potessi mai aspettarmi professionalmente.

Di nascita e formazione italiana, e con interessi di ricerca rivolti alla linguistica, in Australia ho trovato un fertilissimo terreno per le mie indagini sul logorio linguistico, oltre che un paese capace di offrire stimoli continui a chi è impegnato nello sviluppo della cultura italiana. Sebbene l'italiano sia ancora ufficialmente la lingua più parlata in Australia dopo l'inglese (il censimento del prossimo agosto 2011 sicuramente ci offrirà un quadro diverso), sappiamo bene che sta perdendo terreno soprattutto rispetto alle lingue asiatiche di più recente immigrazione quali, per esempio, il vietnamita o l'arabo. I miei studi confermano uno stadio avanzato di abbandono dell'italiano a favore dell'inglese, con conseguenza per le strutture della lingua italiana che nel passaggio intergenerazionale risulta notevolmente ridotta e semplificata. Per la seconda generazione di par-

lanti, infatti, l'italiano si presenta più come una lingua seconda (L2), il cui apprendimento non trova condizioni favorevoli per un pieno sviluppo. Ovviamente, a determinare l'esito dell'originale bilinguismo (o più precisamente trilinguismo, includendo il dialetto) della seconda generazione concorrono numerosi fattori sociolinguistici. Per esempio, nel caso di due miei informatori, due sorelle gemelle nate in Australia negli anni 50, la comune formazione linguistica si è risolta col tempo e col cambiare delle circostanze di vita, in divergenti modalità comunicative: abbandono e logorio dell'italiano in concomitanza di un matrimonio esogamo; mantenimento e recupero dell'italiano nel caso opposto. Al di là dei vari fattori che hanno un ruolo nel mantenimento dell'italiano in Australia, è comunque indubbio che senza il supporto di interventi educativi formali, l'italiano delle generazioni successive alla prima è destinato a un graduale declino. Ne consegue pertanto la vitale importanza di un solido programma per lo studio dell'italiano nell'ambito delle istituzioni scolastiche.

Proprio di recente pubblicazione è il documento *Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum – Languages* (January 2011)" steso dalla collega Angela Scarino della University of South Australia su commissione dell'Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), trovabile sul sito web <http://www.acara.edu.au/languages.html>). Il documento offre gli strumenti concettuali che guideranno la preparazione del primo curriculum scolastico nazionale per la lingua straniera, il che rappresenta uno sviluppo significativo nel campo delle politiche linguistiche scolastiche australiane. L'individuazione di tre diversi percorsi per l'insegnamento della "lingua straniera" – come L2, come lingua parlata a casa e come prima lingua – costituisce uno degli aspetti più innovativi della nuova proposta di educazione linguistica, ambiziosa ma in sintonia con la realtà australiana. L'italiano ha un ruolo di rilievo in questa fase di programmazione, essendo la prima lingua (insieme al cinese) per cui si intende elaborare il nuovo curriculum, grazie alla presenza dell'italiano nella scuola primaria (la più diffusa) e in quella secondaria (la seconda più diffusa). L'opinione pubblica è stata invitata a esprimere commenti su questo documento, disponibile per la consultazione tramite il sito ufficiale dell'ACARA, e credo sia importante che tutti noi seguiamo attivamente e criticamente gli sviluppi del nuovo curriculum. Per molti l'incontro con la cultura italiana avviene proprio nel contesto scolastico ed è vitale che tale esperienza sia positiva e che stabilisca le premesse per un continuo interesse da parte degli studenti. Sebbene i contatti con l'Italia siano sempre più facili, grazie alla rivoluzione nelle tecniche di comunicazione a distanza e alle maggiori opportunità di viaggi all'estero, un'accorta politica scolastica e linguistica è necessaria per la diffusione dell'italiano e affinché la perdita della lingua nella comunità italiana possa essere contenuta.

Senza dubbio l'esperienza che ho maturato nel campo del contatto linguistico e le conoscenze legate alla realtà linguistica australiana sono state determinanti nel definire il mio ruolo professionale, che non vedo esaurito nell'impegno ad insegnare l'italiano e la cultura italiana, ma che mira a far apprezzare le risorse linguistiche dell'Australia, un paese multiculturale e multilingue per eccellenza ma paradossalmente ancora lontano dal riconoscere pienamente il valore delle lingue "straniere". Per restare in tema di politiche linguistiche e scolastiche, basti pensare al ruolo di secondo piano di cui gode la lingua straniera nell'attuale curriculum australiano (nel Western Australia non è obbligatoria a livello secondario), in contrasto con il curriculum europeo che ne prevede obbligatoriamente almeno due. In Australia la proporzione della popolazione che usa una lingua straniera è effettivamente in aumento, grazie ad alcuni fattori sociopolitici favorevoli, tra cui, principalmente, la rivitalizzazione da parte di nuovi immigrati (questi ultimi provenienti da paesi non europei). Eppure, come ha illustrato con grande lucidità il linguista australiano Michael Clyne, la cui recente scomparsa ha lasciato un vuoto incolmabile nel mondo accademico mondiale, questo patrimonio di diversità linguistica non si traduce in vero riconoscimento del potenziale linguistico del paese, a causa del persistente atteggiamento "monolingue" ("persistent monolingual mindset") che pervade la società australiana (*Australia's Language Potential,* Sydney, UNSW Press, 2005). Camilla Bettoni definisce la situazione con toni preoccupati e drammatici come "la maledizione del paese anglofono" ('Un profilo sociolinguistico della comunità italo-australiana', in Anna Ciliberti (ed.), *La costruzione interazionale di identità. Repertori linguistici e pratiche discorsive degli italiani in Australia,* Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2007, p.64). Io credo che una delle sfide maggiori che noi italianisti e educatori linguistici ci troviamo ad affrontare consista nel promuovere cambiamenti negli atteggiamenti linguistici dei cittadini australiani, così che la scelta di usare, trasmettere o studiare una lingua straniera nell'era del multiculturalismo non sia solo legata a cambiamenti nella popolazione (o a mode temporanee, come nel caso dell'attuale popolarità dello spagnolo, per quanto lingua globale), ma si ancori a una consapevolezza di quanto la conoscenza di una lingua straniera possa contribuire al capitale di questo paese non solo economico ma anche umano, sociale e culturale.

La mia esperienza d'insegnamento conferma che gli studenti rispondono con grande entusiasmo all'invito a riflettere sulla realtà linguistica australiana, e ciò offre nuova giustificazione alla direzione che ho dato al mio lavoro. Una mia studentessa in una e-mail preziosamente custodita afferma di aver trovato la sua "vocazione" studiando le tematiche delle politiche linguistiche, atteggiamenti linguistici, il rapporto lingua-identità ecc. nel mio corso di linguistica "Language in Europe". Mi scrive infatti: "This has hone-

stly been the most fascinating and enjoyable unit I have studied in two and a half years! (…). It has reawakened my passion for learning and inspired me beyond the specific course subject matter to become an ESL teacher, learn more languages myself and get into the education department here in Australia and make some improvements regarding the teaching of English and LOTE". Come si traduca questo entusiasmo resta da vedere, ma intanto una consapevolezza e una convinzione sul valore del plurilinguismo sono state maturate. In questo momento della mia carriera professionale, trovo che il mio ruolo di mediatore della lingua e della cultura italiane in Australia sia strettamente legato alla promozione di un'apertura al valore delle lingue.

Il dialogo "Italia-Australia" non può tuttavia esaurirsi con un eventuale aumento di studenti d'italiano, per quanto auspicabile. Anche in Italia, ora paese di immigrazione, le lingue immigrate influenzano lo spazio linguistico e stabiliscono il nuovo plurilinguismo del territorio, che va ad aggiungersi a quello tradizionale. In Australia la ricerca nel campo delle lingue minoritarie ha esplorato con profondità numerosi paradigmi teorici, a cui gli studiosi italiani ora fanno riferimento per conoscere e descrivere la realtà italiana. Antropologi e sociologi australiani hanno dimostrato come un'identità italiana, per quanto fluida, mutevole e soggettiva, sia mantenuta o costruita in Australia. Ricordo come alla domanda "Ma tu ti senti più italiana o australiana?" posta da una turista italiana ad una giovane italo-australiana nata in Australia, quest'ultima avesse risposto: "Ma come 'ti senti'? Io sono italiana!", enfatizzando il "sono". In Italia si dibatte ora sull'identità dei figli, nati in Italia, dei tanti immigrati, rumeni, cinesi o ganesi che siano. Le opportunità per uno scambio di prospettive tra il contesto italiano e quello australiano sono immense.

Alla Fondazione Cassamarca, con riconoscenza

Flavia Coassin
Flinders University 2000-8

Due canti

Da inattese geografie
del pensiero
nacque
e rinasce
- nel segno di Aretusa -

la figlia di Mnemosine

Isole lontane
a lungo intraducibili
amore difficile che matura
accento straniero che perdura
poi - canto parallelo
parola che risuona altra nota
ma fa vibrare la stessa corda
trascende geografie

L'incontro di due lingue
infine intra-ducibili
diviene traslato
ed un mestiere:
far risuonare in un'aula
a studenti che leggon tra le righe
quel "rigo musicale
sopra il canto"
…la musica che s'annida
nelle trasmigrazioni
all'interno della frase
in un congiuntivo
non strettamente necessario
in un remoto
scolpito a tutto tondo

Da Treviso
che accolse le nostre parole
che fluivano assieme a soave prosecco
ritraslata
di città in città non mie
il dono
di nuove note
e riflessioni
Ed ecco:
il senso delle mie translazioni
l'essenza del mio essere e lavorare
- anch'esso nel segno d'Aretusa -
non tradurre
ma questo trasfondersi
di un canto in un altro.

Blog di una cassamarchista

Luciana d'Arcangeli
Flinders University 2008 -

Entry 1: Aforisma

Oggi ho fatto a mio marito il più bel regalo di compleanno che potesse aspettarsi: una nuova vita. Ci siamo parlati ma non sto più nella pelle, devo dirlo a qualcuno, che mi hanno dato il posto: Casssamarca Lecturer! Per una notizia del genere non si può usare telefono: prendo l'autobus. Solo chi mi conosce bene sa quanto io odi gli autobus, specie quelli romani, ma l'occasione è troppo ricca: vado. Il mio migliore amico mi abbraccia forte stampandomi un bacio in fronte, poi mi allontana un po' e mi guarda dall'altro dei suoi quasi due metri con un sorriso ebete stampato in faccia, tra il contento e il dispiaciuto dice "…in Australia? Ti sento già lontana!".

Con amici simili chi ha bisogno di nemici?

Entry 2: Documentari

La prima cosa che succede quando decidi di andare a vivere in un altro paese è un improvviso intenso interesse verso tutto ciò che ne viene riportato sui media. Per gli europei l'Australia significa coccodrilli che mangiano signori incauti in gita domenicale, pitoni che mangiano chihuahua garruli, ragni che si mangiano uccelli (dimensioni di ambedue sconosciuti ma effetto terrorizzante assicurato). Non so bene che reazione questo provochi negli altri Lettori, ma a me lascia un certo spiacevole effetto all'altezza dello stomaco, specie se poi, la sera, nell'impazzito sgabolare tra Berlusconi o un altro politico ottuagenario italiano, il telecomando ti fa "atterrare" in una delle poche isole felici rimaste in tv: il documentario. Scopri allora che agli antipodi vivono i 4 serpenti più velenosi della terra – in realtà anche il sesto ma, povero pirla, si è fatto sorpassare a sinistra da un rettile da corsa – così come i coccodrilli marini. Questi ultimi sono talmente grandi che gli squali fanno figura meschina - escluso i bianchi, of course. E poi i ragni. Anche questi velenosi. Non sempre mortali - per gli umani that is - ma sicuramente molto fastidiosi. Fastidiosi? Diciamo che mi vengono in mente una decina di altri aggettivi, ma lascio perdere e cerco qualcosa da bere che allievi quella sensazione alla bocca dello stomaco che proprio non ne vuol sapere di andarsene.

Entry 3: Si parte!

OK, l'Australia è piena di animali pericolosi ed è lontana: con queste

idee ci ho fatto pace. Una cosa è accettare un appuntamento al buio e tutt'altra mettere il piede sull'aereo: ti scorrono in testa tutte le foto, le mappe, tutti i siti che hai studiato fin nei minimi particolari negli ultimi sei mesi. Metti il bagaglio a mano nello stipo sopra la testa cercando di non metter via anche l'entusiasmo che hai coltivato per mesi. Ti siedi e allacci la cintura di sicurezza. Se sai pregare bene, altrimenti non ti resta che guardare la rotta verso gli antipodi che il minischermo che hai di fronte disegna e con la tua famiglia far finta che sia solo una vacanza.

Entry 4: Evviva!

Bello, bellissimo. Tutto. L'aria frizzante, il colore del cielo, lo spazio infinito, i jacaranda in fiore, gli uccelli, la gente. *Awesome!*

Oggi sono andata all'università per il mio primo giorno di lavoro alla Flinders University. È molto bello il campus moderno con il laghetto centrale, ed i miei nuovi colleghi sono molto simpatici e alla mano. Un gioioso alleluja! si leva, silenzioso, dal mio cuore. Mi portano a destra e a manca fino a fermarsi davanti ad una porta. Non capisco. Guardo meglio: c'è l'intero mio nome sulla targhetta, con tanto di titolo "Cassamarca Lecturer"… Come faccio a imbottigliare questa sensazione? Sola, mi siedo e me la godo. Fuori un cacatua tra i rami del noce mi guarda divertito.

Entry 5: Il non detto

Quello di cui aver tema è il non detto. Tutti si sono chiesti a un certo punto il perché dei tappi di sughero che penzolano dal cappello del bovaro australiano. Bene, sostituiscono la coda, bovina o equina che sia, per scostare la più noiosa delle creature: la mosca. Più opportuno sarebbe il plurale, perché una sola sembra un esercito dispettoso che non demorde di fronte a nulla: ti cammina imperterrita fin dentro il naso… Capiamo ora il perché delle zanzariere di metallo che potrebbero tenere a bada nugoli di vespe impazzite: dopo cinque minuti pagheresti oro pur di toglierti una, singola, fastidiosissima mosca di torno!

Dopo qualche giorno finalmente ti accorgi che la gente fa il bagno a mare, gira in ciabatte o a piedi nudi, mette coccodrilli finti in piscina e coltiva l'orto senza tema. Insomma, l'unico vero fastidio in città sono le mosche, possibile tutta questa paura? Passata una settimana, ti senti una cretina, ti fai coraggio e cerchi di scordare le immagini dei documentari che hai visto e provi a mettere anche solo l'alluce nell'acqua dell'oceano. L'acqua gelida nasconde l'effetto pelle d'oca.

Entry 6: Shelob

Scocca il dodicesimo giorno, anzi sera, ed ecco che sono al primo incontro ravvicinato. Il mio primo ragno. Grosso. Non so bene come si

misurino i ragni ma da zampa a zampa faceva più di 8 cm - venite a misurarvelo voi, se volete essere precisi. Prima buona notizia: il ragno non è nero – più sono neri più sono pericolosi. Seconda buona notizia: la schiena non è rossa, i *red-back spider* hanno un morso molto fastidioso e sono molto comuni. Terza buona notizia: la schiena non ha puntini bianchi - altro ragno degno di documentario, visto proprio la settimana scorsa. Rincuorata e molto curiosa gli avvicino il manico del primo attrezzo che trovo solo per vedere… l'effetto che fa. Zac! Primo morso. Velocissimo attacca il legno e si ritrae. Chiamo rinforzi. Riproviamo. Arizac! Secondo morso. Forse più veloce del primo. Il ragno rimane a zanne/zampe alzate. Pronto. Non so voi ma avere una versione ridotta di Shelob in giardino non è proprio tranquillizzante e quindi siamo tornati dentro casa, al riparo delle zanzariere. Chissà cosa ci riserva il domani sotto la Croce del Sud.

Entry 7: Il mondo (ri)conosciuto

Dò per scontato che tutti, almeno una volta siate entrati nel mondo Ikea e che vi siate tornati, felici di aver trovato delle cose decenti a dei prezzi possibili. Se così è, quindi, avrete, bene o male, in mente dove sono le cose, come si usano le scorciatorie. Bene. Ora vi invito a fare un esperimento: andate in un altro negozio Ikea, sì, avete capito bene, non il vostro ma un altro. L'esperienza è bellissima. Potrebbe esserci un po' di panico nel parcheggio ma una volta trovata l'entrata… *voilà* il negozio flat-pack: uguale ovunque voi siate! Non sei a Roma, Madrid o Glasgow, sei ad Adelaide ma potresti essere ovunque, circondato dagli stessi Norberto (Norebo, ok, ma ci sei affezionato), Billi (no, lo so che è con la y ma "Billy" era il nome del cane di papà e così lo differenzio), e dagli omini in magliette gialle che si nascondono come leprecauni in foreste di mobili svedesi. Caricato il tutto in un furgoncino noleggiato si torna a casa a creare l'ennesima versione di casa stile *Fight Club.*

Entry 8: Quarantena

Li ho pensati spesso. Qualche volta ho anche spedito dei messaggi ed una volta ho anche telefonato, ma per la maggior parte del tempo ho fatto finta di niente e con me il resto della famiglia. Oggi tornano dopo un mese di soggiorno in quarentena i nostri gatti. Ci terranno il muso? Felicità è un gatto… caldo!

Entry 9: Container

Dopo due mesi è arrivato il container: 266 pacchi. Fa un certo effetto ritrovarsi le proprie cose qui, conferma lo spostamento definitivo, la lontananza, e lo fa in maniera molto più forte dell'esotico cacatua bianco che, appollaiato sull'albero fuori dalla mia finestra, schiaccia noci mentre

lavoro. La vita è quella di sempre: pranzi, cene, colazioni, letti da fare, cose da leggere o da scrivere ma, ogni tanto, alzi gli occhi e la fronda dell'albero tropicale ti spiazza: ti ricorda dove sei.

Passa uno stormo di ali bianche, stridono degli strani rimproveri, il sole mi ferisce. È un attimo. Torno al blu senza nuvole.

Entry 10: Australia Day

C'è qualcosa di profondamente appagante nel prendere un cucciolo al canile, che riscalda il cuore - ce ne fosse bisogno con oltre 40 gradi! Il nostro Bruce poi è tutto nero e sembra abbrustolito: ha imparato a stare seduto a comando in dieci minuti e ha anche scoperto che i pomodori e le pesche dell'orto sono molto buoni! Quando ruba ha un muso birichino e sembra ridere per poi subito venire a scusarsi.

Che bello non dover far nulla, riposarsi, decidere cosa fare all'impronta. Pranzo? Ma io non ho fatto colazione! Fa niente, meglio così, ingrasso meno. Il tempo passa pigro quando sei in vacanza e ti trascini al mare a cercare conchiglie sul bagnasciuga nel sole rosseggiante della sera. Poi ti giri, guardi casa e ti rendi conto che, si, è vero, sei in vacanza ma... questa è casa tua, ovvero mia. Arrivata. Impagabile.

The Post-Colonial Humanist: Remembering an Artist and a Scholar

Catherine Dewhirst
University of Southern Queensland
(ACIS Committee member)

Jo-Anne Duggan (19.3.1962 - 8.3.2011)

In her reflections over the last nine months of her life, the words of my very dear friend might resonate with readers of this special publication:

'… at the end of the day… material wealth, work priorities, domestic demands all fall by the wayside - and relationships are all that count.' These poignant words suggest the wisdom gained from the knowledge of, and preparation for, impending death. Yet they also intimate the way my friend lived her life and engaged with her professional calling.

I should mention that I had originally intended to submit something to this volume about the teaching of Italian history to students in two south-eastern Queensland universities. But this idea slipped into insignificance when Jo-Anne Duggan died at the age of just 48 in early March. Many members of the Cassamarca Foundation and the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS) knew, loved, and respected Jo-Anne and her work. I am aware, too, that her network of associates and friends was also more extensive and complex. So this reflective contribution will not do justice to the personal memories and feeling of loss of those who read it. For me, however, Jo-Anne's friendship was central to my research, teaching, academic life and comparatively unproblematic personal and professional challenges. She was not only an inspiring artist and scholar but also a confidante. I therefore felt that devoting a piece to her was not only important because of her contributions to knowledge in the field and to the Foundation's Australia Project but also imperative because of who she was. The recollections that follow cover my experience of four of her creative outputs and her research through ACIS.

The words I quoted above are from the 'Eulogy' Jo-Anne wrote for herself and which one of her closest friends, Wendy Chandler, read out at her memorial service a week after her death. It was a service that Jo-Anne and her life partner, Kevin Bayley, had had the luxury of time to plan in the short journey after her diagnosis of pancreatic cancer last year. The time that they shared from that point onwards, as we might guess, was traumatic - by no means a luxury. Even with the diagnostic warning, the degree of preparation they were given might not have been possible due to the ferocity and aggression of her particular tumour. Such diagnoses inevitably come too late and leave too little time to assimilate the devastating news for those in such circumstances. Jo-Anne told me how the necessary arrangements for winding up her life were tedious and time-consuming, which she described as a process of administering the bureaucracy of her life.

Medically Jo-Anne defied the odds against her as another of her friends, Gary Ianziti, put it. Yet she also transcended the trauma of her diagnosis and the pain of her disease. She continued to produce scholarly pieces and choreograph her final exhibition while simultaneously remaining true to herself in what can only be considered a state of joy. My personal admiration for Jo-Anne aside, this commemorative volume is a timely occasion

to reflect on the generous contributions made by a leading Australian artist and scholar since the inception of the Foundation. Describing herself as a post-colonial artist, Jo-Anne was also a remarkable historian, using her talents with precision and leaving us with an indelible message about the role of the scholar in investigating history for our contemporary understanding.

I met Jo-Anne for the first time ten years ago at the inaugural ACIS conference in Canberra in 2001 and felt an immediate kindred spirit. I was struck by her spontaneous kindness, sincerity and encouragement, by her astonishing intellect and by her infectious laugh. She was excited about the possibilities that ACIS offered. We discussed numerous things, including our respective disciplinary training and work. Since she did not present a paper at the conference, I only later discovered the incandescence of her photographic talent and the uncompromising commitment and focus that she brought to her work.

When we met again at the second biennial ACIS conference in Perth in 2003, I made my way to Perth's Western Australian Museum, excited about seeing Jo-Anne's work for the first time. She had never really talked much about her research and creativity despite my many questions. She tended to describe her work briefly, then turn the conversation in another direction. This was not self-depreciation. What I understood it to be was contentment with the primacy of her creative life without the least need for self-promotion. Arriving at the Museum, I was curious about the results of her inter-disciplinary studies and the kind of creative terrain she had been exploring. I was richly rewarded that day. As anyone who had the chance to observe her 'Impossible Gaze' will attest, the exhibition was breathtaking (see the illustration on the back cover of this book).

Jo-Anne's inter-disciplinary engagement with art history, critical theory and photomedia articulated something revolutionary. The 'Impossible Gaze' was quite simply a dynamic introduction for me to the ways the art-practice of photography could facilitate interpretations of, and relationships with, the past. Of course, it was not until much later that I realised her stubborn commitment to the use of the analog rather than digital camera contributed to the exquisite beauty of her photography. What she captured through the lens and creative imagination so central to this artistic collection was the intimation of personal involvement in the process of viewing objects of art. By projecting moments from history, Jo-Anne decoded and demystified the seemingly insignificant cursory glances at 'ordinary' objects that we all experience in visits to museums or art galleries, not least in Italy.

Viewing Jo-Anne's work in this exhibition, I felt drawn into a refreshing place which involved, firstly, seeing her own 'gaze' and, secondly, my own

imaginings about the history of the objects she depicted so skillfully. Hers was an approach reminiscent of the intimate photographic direction in some of Martin Scorsese's films. Every minor detail told a story. In effect, she mediated a process of emotional engagement. Refocusing the expectations inherent in museum or art gallery visits, Jo-Anne's work usurped the traditional roles of curator and audience, challenging the relationship between the observer and the observed. The exhibition was profound and sublime.

If Jo-Anne's 'Impossible Gaze' invoked multiple readings from the transitory moments experienced in viewing Italian art collections, her 'Sites of Convergences' exhibition suggested another level of perspective and relationship. I went to its launch in 2006, which was held at the Noosa Regional Gallery in Tewantin, where I discovered that the series was an invitation to move into a number of shared historic and contemporary settings of rooms within several Italian or Italian Australian public institutions. This transnational dynamic already spoke to the important history of relations between Italians and Australia. However, emptied of their human forms, voices and activities, Jo-Anne's focus on these rooms emphasised communal and civic encounters through four visual effects, as I read later - architecture, lighting, decorations and furniture. The absence of people in the photographic frame only accentuated the meanings behind the ritual use of each space. Seizing the interiors of these buildings in this way, Jo-Anne was creating a new language to encourage discussion about the past and the present, and our connection to both.

By the time of the fourth biennial ACIS conference in Brisbane in 2007, Claire Kennedy had involved a small group of scholars from cross-disciplinary backgrounds working in south-east Queensland universities, including Jo-Anne, in the local working-party. At the conference, Jo-Anne presented a joint paper with Suzanne Goopy on their collaborative work on representing Italian migrant culture visually, which reflected on concepts of space, place and identity. This was a theme that Jo-Anne took up again with Enza Gandolfo in another collaborative project, presented at the fifth biennial ACIS conference in Auckland in 2009. Their work resulted in the 'Other Spaces' exhibition, focused on the multi-layered interpretations we can make of the multicultural migrant donations to the Migration Collection of Museum Victoria. Her slides displayed photographs of the poignant mementos of the donors' cultural and personal histories, as well as their archival resting places. It was clear from Jo-Anne's paper and her touching images that her project formed part of an invisible dialogue about homeland and host-society. She was also pointing to the role of the museum as a repository for storing the cultural narratives of our migrant past.

Over the last four years, Francesca Laura and I met Jo-Anne for coffee and cake fairly regularly in Peregian Beach or Eumundi - locals of Queensland's Sunshine Coast that we have been. Sometimes there were only two us when one or other was in Italy. For the most part, this was Jo-Anne, largely due to one of her final projects on the Gonzaga family of Mantova, which took her and Kevin to Italy together on two occasions. Her great love had always been for Renaissance Italy on which she had already published some reflections, '*Rinascimento* through a contemporary lens', in the volume *Australians in Italy,* edited by Bill Kent, Ros Pesman and Cynthia Troup in 2008. However, with the generous assistance of Loretta Baldassar, Jo-Anne launched her 'Wondrous Possessions' exhibition at the Monash University Prato Centre in 2010, a set of works which pay homage to the dazzling *palazzi* and *archivio* she had the privilege of working in. Although viewing her 'Wondrous Possessions' only through her official website, I could nevertheless distinguish the sumptuous tones that have come to typify her art-form. Suggestive of Leonardo da Vinci's innovations with gold, the angular series of photographs convey what must have been a dramatic and beautiful visual spectacle to the audience in Prato, doubly appropriate for the regional context of the Italian Renaissance.

In this light, the impact of Jo-Anne's life and her articulation of visual and material culture recall for me the path-breaking work of Renaissance humanists at once as experimental as critical, imaginative and original. Indeed, in the 'Invisible Presences' booklet (Arts Queensland, Brisbane, 2006) in which she brought together a selection from three of her exhibitions, Bill Kent described her approach as being 'at the edge of new directions in combining academic and creative research methods and outcomes'. In the same publication, almost anticipating the words of her 'Eulogy', Jo-Anne recorded how these three exhibitions in part conveyed 'our transitory encounters with the visible representations of the past that continue to circulate in the contemporary world'.

Jo-Anne's own relationship to both art and history counted for a great deal in her professional life. More striking perhaps, as her closest circle must have felt over the last year, as did I, was how firmly she maintained her lucidity, her humour, her empathy and her positivity to her last hours, transcending what many of us might not have coped with so well. While we are yet to discover how significant her work will be for future artists and scholars, Jo-Anne's presence remains with us through the legacy of her stunning achievements and the personal memories many of us will cherish.

Why Florence?

Nick Eckstein
University of Sydney 2000 –

My first serious research-trip to Florence, though not my maiden journey to Italy, was in 1985. In the quarter-century since then, countless friends and acquaintances, both professional colleagues and non-academics, have in various ways asked me: "Why did you decide to study Florence?" Fellow Aussies always do so out of friendly interest, but they ask also because Italy is so very far from home, and conducting research there is self-evidently a complicated, time-consuming and expensive business. Europeans and Americans ask for a different reason. Even in the twenty-first century, outsiders – even many who have visited – seem to calculate the distance between Australia and the northern hemisphere in light-years rather than kilometres. To them Australia remains an exotic place, exquisitely remote from the major cultural centres of Europe. What essence, they wonder, fuels the unquenchable enthusiasm of antipodeans, a people apparently immune to the effects of jet-lag, who in the same week will cheerfully fly half-way around the world and back to attend a three-day conference on the Italian Renaissance?

For as long as I have tried to explain 'why Florence?', I have offered two related answers. The first concerns my parents, who in the year prior to my birth, 1959, undertook an extended voyage to Europe that included a southerly pilgrimage to visit artefacts of the Italian Renaissance they had studied as undergraduates at the University of Melbourne. Returning in 1975, they brought the additional baggage of two sons and mapped an Italian journey of three weeks, with stops of several days each in Venice, Florence, Rome and Naples. My second answer relates to the historical accident of my growing up in Dandenong, only fifteen minutes by car from Monash University, where Bill Kent happened to be running undergraduate classes that have become legendary for those lucky enough to have taken part in them. In recent times, I think, I have come to understand the effect of both factors on my subsequent academic career.

Less faded than the 860 colour slides I took during that 1975 visit are my memories of it as a fourteen-year old which I preserve as a bricolage of sharply-focused images and brief, animated vignettes. The constituent elements of the latter – the human voices, ambient sounds, the smells and temperature of the surrounding atmosphere – seem to me as vivid as when I experienced them. In one we walk *en famille* from our Florentine

pensione in via Faenza to attend a piano recital in the Palazzo Vecchio. As the soloist lifts his hands to play, a political demonstration erupts in the piazza outside, drowning his attempts to be heard. He persists stoically for ten minutes before admitting defeat. He apologises, the concert is abandoned, and the Florentine audience adjourns without missing a beat to join the highly-charged crowd that is cheering the amplified speeches coming from the rostrum, a few steps from where Savonarola was burnt in 1498.

Rome is the setting for another of these sequences. The convent by Saint Peter's where my parents have booked accommodation is full, so although we eat with the other guests in the refectory, we stay some distance away in the apartment of an elderly lay friend of the order, a Signora Corsetti, who treats my brother and me as her own. During a fond farewell several days later, my parents thank the Signora effusively for her kindness and hospitality. The simple humanity of her reply, 'Siamo tutti figli di Dio', reduces my father, a non-practising, non-believing Jew who lost most of his own family to the Nazis, to tears.

Discovering the shape of one's own career ('order' might too strong a word) is by definition a partly retrospective exercise. It occurs slowly and is ever a work-in-progress. Nonetheless, I began seeing connections between personal experience and academic inquiry just five years after the trip with my family, when as a second-year undergraduate I sat in Bill's unforgettable tutorials, where insight so often surfaced amidst what seemed the most informal kind of talk. I find it difficult to disentangle my sense of Bill as teacher, later as mentor and friend, from the lessons I learnt about early-Renaissance Florence as his student. For, like Bill himself, the larger-than-life Florentines he understood as well as any scholar alive took it for granted that intellectual inquiry is, or at least should be, part and parcel of one's everyday humanity. Bill, it goes without saying, was fully aware that there can be no distinction between the *studia humanitatis* and the life well lived. I may perhaps be forgiven, therefore, for adapting lines he wrote in a recent tribute to his own late supervisor, Nicolai Rubinstein, and the wife of that great scholar, Ruth Olitsky Rubinstein, herself a distinguished historian of art: 'One continues to miss him very much indeed. Not only for his contributions to Renaissance scholarship, but for the humanity (not without its lovable flaws) and kindness which were inseparable from his learning, for his example in leading a civilised, that is to say useful and expansive, life…' ('Nicolai Rubinstein (1911-2002), Ruth Olitsky Rubinstein (1924-2002)', *Renaissance Studies,* 20, 3 (2006), p. 398).

Perhaps it is no accident that Bill chose to study a society whose people (their lovable flaws aside) display their humanity so frequently that one rapidly comes to take it for granted. In Florence during the Gulf War in

January 1991, I escorted a group of Australian students on an intended site visit to the Laurentian Library at the Medicean parish church of San Lorenzo. We arrived to find the entrance locked. A sheet of paper had been hastily taped to the door, on it a handwritten announcement that the staff had closed the Library to protest against an unjustifiable war. With much of Florence already in the streets, we watched as men and women old enough to remember the catastrophe of warfare on their own soil marched alongside their children and grandchildren. The white-hot rage of that crowd at a senseless invasion is unforgettable, and in my mind it always triggers a comparison with the very different response of my own country. This massive, entirely peaceful, protest also reminded me of the fact – axiomatic to every student of late-medieval Italian society – that the public space of the city is the stage on which Italians instinctively perform their identity as citizens.

Another war was on the way in 2003, when I returned as a visiting professor with my wife, son and daughter to inhabit the scholarly nirvana of the Harvard Center at Villa I Tatti. This time Iraq was the target, and the western behemoth invaded on 20 March. Social researchers probably have a formula that would allow one to convert the number of rainbow *PACE* flags on each residential palazzo into the percentage of the Florentine population that opposed war in 2003. All I can say is that rainbow flags smothered every building, lined every street, and in months I met no Florentine who supported the war. In the hours and days that followed 20 March, as the Italian people magisterially enacted their constitutional right of 'descending into the piazza', my wife, children and I joined the larger family of the Florentine citizenry in the streets leading to the city's ancient seat of popular protest, the piazza Santa Croce. The Florentines were angry, as I had seen them a dozen years before, but the atmosphere of the massive crowds now filling the streets of the *centro storico* every night is memorable not for its rage but its transforming serenity, its clarifying unity and sense of common purpose. *Stranieri* like us were actively welcomed as fellow-citizens, because we shared the cause. My children, who proudly wore their *PACE* flags as capes to demonstration after demonstration, who display them still on their walls, who experienced democracy in action in the streets of the *comune di Firenze,* learned a lesson in applied civics that neither will ever forget.

As a student of Florence history, I continue to be most preoccupied by dynamics of sociability and community, the bonding forces which united and animated the astonishingly creative social networks of the fifteenth-century city. (I am equally interested in forces that threaten to undermine or shatter the myriad interlocking unities of the city's social web.) Then as now, the citizens of Florence daily defined and remade themselves by

occupying, exploiting, modifying and engaging with their public spaces. This is a principal reason for the cliché – true of course – that Italian city centres have traditionally evolved on a human scale. They are, and have always been, cities for walking; indeed they are cities where meeting and sharing public space with fellow-citizens are political acts, and where living publicly in groups is the foundation of one's collective identity in a humane, democratic society. It is this particularly Italian genius for living, I believe, that affords me the self-indulgence of a twinge of homesickness whenever I return to Australia.

'A rare and unexpected gift': Reflections on Flinders University and the Cassamarca Foundation

Diana Glenn
Flinders University
(ACIS Committee member)

Fortunate to be in Italy on the eve of the national holiday on 17 March 2011, I joined the excited night-time crowds swirling in and out of the museums and galleries that were open and offering free entry in commemoration of 150 years of Italian Unification. This 'opening of cultural doors' was a wonderful gift that brought many people into the heart of their cities in order to celebrate together many examples of the artistic patrimony of their country. The free outdoor concerts and fireworks in the piazze were an added incentive. However, the museums and galleries, packed to capacity, were full of light and movement as enthusiastic patrons, especially many young visitors, strolled happily through the elegant halls and connecting corridors of their national cultural institutions.

The enjoyment of this vibrant atmosphere of community spirit and cultural pride led me to reflect on the myriad exemplars of Italian culture that thrive in diaspora communities all over the world. In particular, the transmission of Italy's language and culture to tertiary students in faraway communities has been a cherished aim of many academics like myself who are immersed in the field of Italian Studies.

The teaching of Italian language and culture at tertiary level was first established in my home state of South Australia at the Flinders University of South Australia. Founded in 1966 and situated on a wooded hillside looking out across the Adelaide Plains, ancestral lands of the Kaurna people, Flinders University has consistently supported the teaching of

European languages and culture through the School of Humanities. The University's Italian Discipline enrolled its first students in 1971, and it is evident that the support and generosity of many people in the academic and wider community contributed to the creation of an Italian language discipline whose foundation staff made a lasting and positive impact on generations of students and whose current staffing complement carry on the academic legacy.

Italian at Flinders was under the leadership of Professor Desmond O'Connor when news of the Cassamarca Foundation's three-year commitment of three billion It. Lire to Italian Studies in Australia began to filter through Italianist circles. The news stunned many of us. Funding of this magnitude by a private organisation was an unexpected but welcome initiative, especially in the light of the staffing cuts and closures that were being endured by Italian departments across Australia at the time. We had been delighted when our Flinders colleague, Marinella Caruso, was appointed to the Committee of the Australia Project chaired by Loretta Baldassar. At the time, the Committee, whose brief was an assessment of the parlous state of Italian Studies in Australian universities, had no clear indication of the level of funding that would ensue.

Through Hon. Dino De Poli's visionary leadership, the Cassamarca Foundation gift to Australian universities, in the form of the Cassamarca Lectureships, opened many doors and provided a unique and precious linguistic and cultural inheritance whose true value is inestimable. The gift of the Lectureships, originally envisaged as three years of funding, has multiplied in ways that were scarcely imaginable in the early phases of the project, and the most fortunate beneficiaries have been our language students whose teaching and learning in Italian language and culture have been enhanced immeasurably in the past decade. In addition, the scheduling of successful Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS) conferences demonstrates the solid commitment to research excellence generated by the Cassamarca Foundation's ongoing support.

During my nine-year stewardship of the Italian Section at Flinders University, I was pleased to be involved in the appointment of two Cassamarca Lecturers. Courses on Italian theatre, with specialist focus on the works of Luigi Pirandello and Dario Fo, have been revived with exuberance by the Flinders Cassamarca lecturers, Flavia Coassin and Luciana d'Arcangeli. Moreover, the teaching of Dante, a long-standing tradition at Flinders, became a joint venture between Flavia Coassin and myself. This shared research interest led to our co-convening of the biennial Dante Conferences held at Flinders in 2002, 2004 and 2006, which produced the volume *Flinders Dante Conferences 2002 & 2004,* edited by Margaret Baker, Flavia Coassin and Diana Glenn (Adelaide, SA, Lythrum Press,

2005). More recently, Luciana d'Arcangeli has been actively involved in the organisation of a symposium on Scotland and Sicily (coinciding with a visit to Flinders by Professor Joseph Farrell) and will be convening a workshop and conference on new-millennium Italian cinema, 'A New Italian Political Cinema?', a research-based initiative that links effectively with the teaching of Italian cinema at Flinders.

The Cassamarca Foundation has enabled the consolidation and strengthening of Italian offerings, both at the Flinders Campus and through the Outreach Language Program delivered by Flinders teaching staff at the University of Adelaide. The Cassamarca lecturers have enhanced the profile of Italian and the Department of Language Studies at Flinders through their pedagogy, research expertise, conference design and convening, and generous community engagement. Desmond O'Connor and I have also had the pleasure of serving on the ACIS Management Committee and Scholarships Committee and this experience has enabled us to collaborate with a cross-section of esteemed interstate colleagues, in particular, Loretta Baldassar, David Moss, Bill Kent and Gino Moliterno.

Today Australian universities acknowledge and pay tribute to the Cassamarca Foundation legacy that has constituted a new era in private funding and has consolidated teaching and learning in Italian and Latin Humanism; granted scholarships for postgraduates to undertake valuable research overseas; enabled the creation of a vibrant web space; facilitated the development of expert curriculum and research materials; and supported Italianists in Australia and New Zealand through the excellent biennial ACIS Conference series. We thank Hon. Dino De Poli for his magnanimous spirit and rare foresight in enabling us to harness our collective energies in order to carry on his enterprising vision of a collaborative community of scholarship.

Itinerari italiani

Isobel Grave
University of South Australia 2006 -

Il mio interesse per l'italiano coincise con un momento storico nell'evoluzione della società australiana – il periodo del grande risveglio del multiculturalismo degli anni settanta. Già negli anni sessanta da noi si cominciava a insegnare l'italiano nelle scuole, il quale velocemente si sostituiva al francese e al tedesco grazie al vivo legame che creava con la realtà mul-

tietnica—ma prevalentemente 'greco-romana' – della società australiana di allora. Noi studentesse di liceo mentre ci preparavamo all'esame della maturità in italiano ci rendevamo conto che adesso si studiava una cultura che faceva parte integrante della nazione, che aveva la propria voce in una lingua che si sentiva parlare tra vicini di casa, che si sapeva la lingua madre di molte delle compagne di banco. D'accordo che lo si insegnava con metodi che per la glottodattica di oggi non esistono più, basati soprattutto sulla traduzione dall'inglese all'italiano e viceversa, attività svolta con ottimistico spirito di ricerca di nuove esperienze culturali ma forse con scarse abilità di saperle individuare e analizzare in chiave *interculturale.*

Negli anni settanta la cultura italiana cominciava a affermarsi anche nelle università dove si propagava e si diffondeva sempre di più grazie alla fondazione di cattedre di italianistica, ognuna con il proprio orientamento—quella dell'University of Western Australia dove mi sono laureata io si segnalava per la letteratura ottocentesca e gli studi medievali. Vi affollavano studenti di due tipi: studenti di madre lingua italiana e studenti prevalentemente di origine anglosassone: quelli volevano conoscere la lingua e la cultura del paese natio dei nonni e dei genitori, e questi una lingua nuova ed affascinante che sempre di più si manifestava come sorgente di una cultura saldamente agganciata alla realtà sociale contemporanea. Distinguere due tipi di studenti può sembrare divisivo: invece in realtà ci aiutavamo a vicenda, e dall'ottica anglosassone (la mia) gli italiani della classe rappresentavano un microcosmo dell'Italia di cui la maggioranza di noi non aveva nessuna esperienza diretta.

Laureatami in lingua e letteratura italiana ho intrapreso una tesi di dottorato approfondendo il mio interesse per la lirica cortese medievale che nacque in Italia con la scuola poetica siciliana. Così ho passato tre anni tra salamandre e basilischi, amanti tormentati dal fuoco d'amore (e da donne angeliche) a svolgere uno studio – sulle immagini beninteso – della poesia amorosa. Non mi si è mai presentata un'ombra di dubbio sull'attinenza di questo filone dell'italianistica, né allora né adesso, e a ribadire la perenne attualità della letteratura italiana delle Origini è un nuovo studente iscrittosi quest'anno al mio corso di specializzazione per i laureati: sta svolgendo una tesi su Jacopone da Todi e la nascita della lirica religiosa in Italia.

Ombra di un altro tipo incombeva invece sull'Australia degli anni novanta – una crisi economica che minacciava di tagli i corsi universitari di italianistica, sottoponendoli a criteri di redditività del tutto alieni al loro inerente valore culturale. Difatti cominciavano a chiudere i dipartimenti di italianistica, o a ridurli oltremodo, togliendo spesso i corsi più avanzati con meno iscritti – spesso quelli di letteratura che servivano a ispirare gli studenti a intraprendere corsi di specializzazione in vari campi di ricerca. Si rischiava di perdere quello che si era consolidato nell'ambito dell'italia-

nistica accessibile al livello universitario finché non intervenisse la Fondazione Cassamarca sotto la direzione dell'onorevole Dino De Poli, con la creazione di ben undici posti di lettorato nella università australiane e borse di studio per gli studenti.

Io ho avuto la fortuna di aver ricevuto cinque anni fa la nomina al posto di lettorato Cassamarca presso il Dipartimento di Italianistica dell'University of South Australia. I veri protagonisti dell'itinerario percorso in questi cinque anni comunque sono gli studenti: ne scelgo alcuni per evidenziare la gamma di interessi culturali e linguistici curati dal lettorato Cassamarca nonché le attività avviate e appoggiate dalla Fondazione Cassamarca diretta dall'onorevole De Poli.

Rosanna, di origine italiana, unisce nella sua formazione e prassi due filoni opposti: è maestra di scuola elementare dove insegna lingua e cultura italiana ai bambini del secondo anno. Inoltre, ha appena presentato la tesi su Stefano Benni, una ricerca che comprende la traduzione di una raccolta dei racconti dell'autore. Sono scelte professionali animate da una evidente passione per l'italiano – sul versante pedagogico per la sua continuità tra la nuova generazione e sul quello della ricerca per la sua maggiore diffusione, nella figura poliedrica di Stefano Benni, presso il grande pubblico anglofono.

Kenneth è professore di liceo, dove insegnava anche lui italiano fino a poco fa. Poter svolgere una ricerca sul poeta mistico duecentesco Jacopone da Todi vuol dire per lui unire all'indagine intellettuale sul pensiero religioso medievale un iter spirituale personale – Kenneth è frate con alle spalle una formazione classica, essendosi laureato in latino prima di intraprendere da noi una seconda laurea in italianistica.

Per la tesi vuole indagare sulla valutazione del poeta Jacopone da Todi fatta da studiosi e critici attraverso i secoli, dalla prima fortuna dell'opera tudertina testimoniata dalla ricca tradizione manoscritta all'inquadratura crociana, fino ai giorni nostri. Accoglie per l'appunto il rinnovato interesse nel poeta per il filone fisiologico manifesto in alcune delle poesie che ci permette di avvicinarci alla vita medievale nelle sue oscillazioni dualistiche tra spirito e fisicità.

Il medioevo esercita il suo fascino (a mo' di basilisco) su Cristina la quale l'anno prossimo inizierà uno studio sull'*Inferno* dantesco prendendo in esame alcune delle tante traduzioni del capolavoro in lingua inglese – una ricerca che affonda le radici nei secoli di scambi intercuturali tra la cultura italiana e quella anglofona.

L'anno scorso abbiamo mandato in Italia un gruppo di oltre trenta studenti per seguire un programma di studi di lingua italiana. Per la maggioranza è stata la prima volta in Italia; per alcuni voleva dire ricollegarsi alla cultura degli antenati, per altri sperimentare dal vivo quanto visto fino ad

allora solo sulle pagine dei testi di lingua. Vorrei concludere con un commento molto semplice espresso da uno dei nostri principianti che aveva fatto il viaggio: "L'Italia è bella. C'è tanta storia. Tanti monumenti. Non volevo lasciarla. Ci voglio tornare. Voglio che sia parte per sempre della mia vita." L'appoggio della Fondazione Cassamarca ha fatto sì che l'Italia sia per sempre parte della vita di tanti giovani (e non più tanto giovani) australiani. Per conto mio e loro vorrei ringraziare l'onorevole Dino De Poli e la Fondazione Cassamarca.

Teaching and learning in Australia

Meg Greenberg
University of Melbourne 2010-11

I came to Australia from the UK in July 2009 to work in the Italian department at the University of Sydney for one year. Although I had been living abroad for some time, I could not pass up the opportunity to test out my recent PhD on the relationship between scientific innovation and Futurism in a new and unfamiliar system of higher education. During both semesters at Sydney I taught elementary and intermediate language and literature courses to first and second year students. As a non-native speaker of Italian, I rely on the model of teaching that most influenced my own language learning as an undergraduate majoring in Romance Languages. I began studying Italian at Middlebury College's Italian Language School in Vermont where the emphasis is on immersion. Students sign a pledge to speak only in the target language, which has the effect of making New England and the Green Mountains seem foreign. Although I studied in Italy as part of a junior year abroad, my time at Middlebury convinced me that it is possible to simulate some part of the foreign exchange without leaving the classroom. My own approach is much less formal but has the same aim of pushing students to think about connections between the material covered, knowledge of their own culture, and their working understanding of Italian identity.

When I began in Sydney, despite my focus on instruction through immersion, something happened that was more than I could have anticipated. Even though we worked through the medium of Italian, the classroom became the place that I felt I was being given the greatest exposure to Australian culture. Students educated me about the history of immigration to Australia, national politics, regional differences, and local environmental

issues. They taught me about the histories of their families, their perceptions of the United States, the impact of bushfires, problems associated with the shark nets in Sydney Harbor, and what to do if a bluebottle jellyfish stings you. After a year I was not ready to leave.

I moved to the University of Melbourne to replace the Cassamarca Lecturer Andrea Rizzi who had won a twelve-month I Tatti fellowship. The classroom continues to be a laboratory where we use Italian to investigate cultural differences. My understanding of Australia is constantly evolving and changing due in large part not only to moving to a new city but also to occupying a different kind of role teaching film, Italian cultural studies, and Futurism, my own area of specialization, to third-year and honours students. Despite working at two different institutions, I can now see across the curriculum and have an appreciation for the various educational backgrounds of incoming and continuing students. In addition, involvement in an ongoing language curriculum reform project that aims to ensure the integration of specific cultural components and themes into the three-year programme has helped to clarify for me the mechanics of the Australian tertiary sector. Discussions related to the need to provide a student cohort experience and what it means to major in Italian have underscored what makes studying in this kind of system unique.

Without the benefit of a second year I would not have felt like I was anything more than a visitor. Instead, through immersion, it has been possible to develop a holistic awareness of the teaching of Italian Studies in Australia that will no doubt form a crucial point of reference in years to come. This sense is in large part due to the warm welcome and sense of collegiality that have made me feel at home both in Sydney and in Melbourne.

Italian Migration Studies and the urgency of the present

Nick Harney
University of Western Australia 2001 -

The Cassamarca lectureship in Italian Migration Studies has offered a unique interdisciplinary opportunity for me to expand my intellectual trajectory and to build sustainable, forward-looking and relevant programs for students to become active scholars and citizens. It has enabled me to engage with methodological and conceptual issues around both emigration and immigration on three continents (North America, Europe and

Australia). This tri-continental, international experience provides a rare comparative perspective on migration that I think speaks well for the Cassamarca Foundation's foresight in creating a position in Italian Migration Studies to link various temporal migratory streams over the course of nearly a century and a half. The example of nearly twenty-six million migrants extending the frontiers of Italy and being intimately involved through their everyday lives with transforming notions of belonging and nation within settler societies across the globe offers much for us to consider as we cope with greater physical and virtual mobility aided by technology, but, also, more systemic exclusions and forms of control exercised by states in concert with global institutions in the contemporary world.

It is in this context that the Cassamarca lectureship has created opportunities for me to bring together three fields of academic inquiry: 1) into belonging, identity and place with respect to migration in a globalising context; 2) into knowledge and power in underground or informal economies; 3) into how migration studies can contribute alternative accounts of global processes, offer a critical insight into contemporary organizational practices, policies and governance strategies, and address contemporary intellectual concerns in scholarly thought. So, for example, in a recent piece, 'Accounting for African migrants in Naples, Italy', in the journal *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* (2011), I extend the new interdisciplinary academic interest in audit and accounting to examine the role of audit practices in interpreting and erasing the presence of Sub-Saharan African migrants in the Naples region. Campania, a region deeply implicated in the history of Italian outward migration from the peninsula or northward to other parts of Italy and Europe, is confronted by the transitory flow of migrants from the Global South even as it copes with its seemingly intractable social and economic problems. My experience in the emigration of Italians overseas and the institutional prestige that comes with being a Cassamarca Foundation lecturer has enabled me to engage with scholars, politicians, policy makers and ordinary Neapolitans about the challenges and opportunities in current migration trends. This ability to address global processes from the migration perspective in an unusually expansive way through time and geography (space) based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork experience in both contexts has been remarked upon by state officials in Campania dealing with emigration and immigration and those in Canada confronting new challenges. Migration studies forces the scholar to reorient his or her research away from methodological nationalism towards a more globalised perspective. Ironically, this academic exercise is still a challenge within academia that despite the rhetoric of university officials and funding agencies retains an implicit bias to nation-making research programs, but not with migrants

themselves who see spaces as part of a global field of opportunity.

My research has focused on migration and community-based and informal economic activity, against the backdrop of contemporary neoliberal economic and political practices and through the stories of irregular migrants in Italy. My ethnographic research into migrant economic practice and innovations at the margins of or outside the formal economy engages with ideas circulating about globalising processes across disciplinary fields. This interest has found empirical stimulation through my ethnographic research in both the Italian diaspora (in Canada and Australia) and with non-EU migrants in Italy. Initially, my multi-sited expertise enabled a transnational approach in which I was able to follow Italian migrants around the globe in the diaspora and link them with socio-political issues back in the Italian peninsula. Examining one ethnic/migrant group has been a key contribution of social scientists in the last fifteen years. In addition, my work extends beyond this model to pose questions around the intersection of mobile peoples in both immigration and emigration. My latest research in Naples, Italy (2004-2005, 2008) examined the precarious insertion of non-EU migrants (Bangladeshis and Sub-Saharan Africans from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Nigeria) into the local Italian informal economy and a socio-political setting self-consciously aware of a legacy of Italian emigration. These local realities operate in the context of neoliberal governance and the increased focus on securitisation in migration discourse and policy in Europe. I can compare and contrast the experiences of the first major phase of post-war migration (Italians and the diaspora) and the second major phase in the last half-century after the economic and political restrictions starting in the 1970s (non-EU migrants from [South] Asia, Africa, etc.). I did this explicitly in 'Alternative economies, migration and the Real in the Italian nation space', *Mobilities* (2006) 1(3), pp.373-390, which examined the (Italian) nation's very becoming or possibility and how emigration and immigration as forms of mobility might suggest the limits to the symbolisation of nationalism.

Since my more recent research engagement with irregular migrants in Europe, I have published a series of articles that ask how migrants do a certain kind of knowledge-work in organising their migrant enterprises or, how rumours work as communicative devices that migrants use to interpret their migratory chances in Italy in general, and more specifically, entrepreneurial conditions available to those engaged in informal economic activities. I examine the precarious position migrants find themselves in as they negotiate competing representations of themselves as sources of innovation and economic renewal, as examples of an undifferentiated migrant condition, and as evidence of the continuing informal economic conditions of the south of Italy. Even so, the questions around

the 'nation' becoming continue to force themselves upon me and I find my interlocutors in Europe and North America citing my position astride the different temporal cohorts of migratory trends, an artifact of the Cassamarca lectureship, as crucial for understanding the urgent social challenges of analyzing problems today from 'social cohesion' to exclusion. In a recent piece, 'Neoliberal restructuring and Multicultural legacies: the experiences of a mid-level actor in recognizing difference', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2011), I return to the nation becoming in examining the implications of neoliberal governance for the solidaristic, multiculturalist ethos and practices at a non-state organization in Canada. This organization is currently housed on the campus of Villa Charities, the pre-eminent Italian Canadian social service agency in Canada, which speaks to the kind of alliances that form in multicultural societies.

Villa Charities, formally under the name of the Italian Canadian Benevolent Corporation, was one of the migrant and ethnic community centres and organizations I have studied. It links entrepreneurial and innovative capacities within transnational economic development, which had often been overlooked by scholars. My first book, *Eh, Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto* (University of Toronto Press, 1998 [2nd Edition 1999]) examined the role of ethnic entrepreneurship and governance within ethnic communities in an urban space and the locally specific ways Italian migrants and their descendants from 1950-2000 creatively used their skills, social networks, knowledge and opportunity to innovate and thrive in the postwar Canadian economy. A recent focus of my work here has been the way in which 2nd and 3rd generation Italian Canadians creatively use ethnic identity to create niche economies in both the emergent cultural industry sector of multicultural Canada and the global cultural economy.

Italian migration studies can contribute significantly to understanding contemporary local and global changes. My experience with ethnography, informed by the cultural turn in anthropology, necessarily requires critical attention to the productive tensions between theory, methodology, 'empiricism' and subjectivity. The experiential empiricism that is integral to ethnographic practice has forced me continually to confront my research assumptions. I should say I would be remiss in any accounting of the challenges, opportunities and 'experiential empiricism' encountered during my years as a Cassamarca lecturer if I did not note that during this time my four children have been born or grown up in Italy so much so that they plan ahead for the next adventure when their father 'goes off to talk to people' and they enjoy the Bay of Naples.

Mediazione a tavola

John Kinder
University of Western Australia
(ACIS Committee member)

Le mie riflessioni sugli incontri avuti con il Presidente Dino De Poli sono accompagnati dal ricordo di una digestione accelerata. Tranquilla e senza problemi di sorta, sia chiaro, ma accelerata.

Le visite australiane del Presidente sono state, fin dall'inizio, segnate da incontri a tavola: i primi, se ricordo bene, in certi ristoranti umili nei pressi della University of Western Australia, ma poi man mano che il rapporto si approfondiva tra De Poli e l'Australia, le tavole diventavano quelle ufficiali del Rettorato dell'Università e luoghi affini. Gli incontri, per la presenza di persone importanti e potenti, avevano la potenzialità di essere pomposi e pesanti, ma si sono sempre rivelati di tutt'altro tono: si riunivano persone provenienti da background personali e professionali diversissimi, riuniti da questa proposta ideale e concreta di potenziare la conoscenza e lo studio della cultura italica e italiana in questa parte del mondo, e non solo.

Io ero invitato in quanto membro del Dipartimento di Studi Italiani, ma la prospettiva di un *free lunch* non doveva realizzarsi. Serviva un traduttore, cioè uno che non solo traducesse *viva voce* le parole pronunciate dalle persone importanti ma in genere facilitasse i rapporti tra personaggi presenti, italiani e australiani, attraverso una mediazione linguistica.

Lo stile dei pranzi era, si può dire, molto australiano. Cibo e vino tutto westaustraliano, e di ottima qualità, e tono informale. In particolare ricordo l'evidente feeling tra il Presidente De Poli e il nostro Rettore, Alan Robson. Si salutavano come vecchi amici, con sorrisi, ammiccamenti, risate, perfino pacche sulle spalle, sembrava perfino che comunicassero tra di loro a parole, ma la memoria in questo caso sicuramente inganna, perché nessuno dei due mastica quasi neanche una parola della lingua dell'altro. Per il traduttore, riuscire a insinuarsi in questi momenti di saluto per cercare di rendere il senso delle mezze frasi che tutti dicevano più o meno simultaneamente, era già impresa che meritava sì un pranzo gratis.

Durante il pranzo, poi, la cosa diventava seria. Tra un piatto di barramundi e un bicchiere di chardonnay della zona di Margaret River, il mio compito era di tradurre i discorsi pronunciati a braccio tra i vari ospiti – una parola! Mentre prima, nella fase dei saluti, si trattava di un *chuchotage* piuttosto rapida, la traduzione a tavola era quella che si dice una consecutiva lunga, molto lunga, poiché in questi momenti il Presidente aveva tutto

il tempo per prendere un buon ritmo. E io, a tentare di interromperlo con "Scusi, forse posso..." "Eeeeh, magari sarebbe il momento per ..." E lui, "sì sì, è vero, va bene", pieno di comprensione, mi lasciava lo spazio per il mio duro lavoro, ma poi dopo cinque minuti rieccoci di nuovo, con un'abbondante porzione linguistica da rigirare.

E' chiaro che gli interlocutori principali, italiani e australiani, ignoravano le lingua dell'altro e in una situazione del genere, in un ambiente cordiale e disteso, il traduttore magari può prendere il tutto sotto braccio e rendere il senso degli enunciati con una certa ... elasticità. Purtroppo però (per me) la metà dei miei commensali era composta da cari colleghi italianisti di varia estrazione disciplinare ma tutti capaci quanto me di intendere sia la lingua italiana sia l'inglese, e capacissimi quindi di giudicare il mio povero rendimento. Ci riuscii? A loro l'ardua sentenza. Altro che indigestione accelerata!

Dicevo "tradurre". Oggi si dice "fare mediazione linguistica". E la moderna circonlocuzione, a differenza di molte altre, coglie nel segno.

Mi trovavo a rappresentare a ciascuno dei due gruppi di commensali la lingua e il mondo dell'altro gruppo. Non a caso questo lavoro, di tradurre parole dette oralmente, viene chiamato "interpretare". Nel vivo dell'incontro linguistico, ci si trova non a tradurre parole ma a interpretare, ri-presentare e rappresentare un mondo.

Niente di straordinario. Stavo, in questi momenti di mediazione linguistica prandiale, come sto tutti i giorni davanti ai miei studenti australiani e davanti agli studenti italiani che vengono a studiare in Australia (Erasmus, per intenderci). Agli uni come agli altri, presento e rappresento un mondo che loro imparano a conoscere. Lo stesso si può dire per il nostro lavoro scientifico: nelle nostre istituzioni, nell'accademia insomma, il nostro studio, il nostro scrivere, la stessa nostra presenza consiste nel presentare un mondo a un altro.

Stavo a pranzo, quindi, come noi stiamo nel nostro lavoro di italianisti australiani. Verrebbe da definire il nostro stato come *in limine,* ma questa metafora, cara alle scienze sociali degli ultimi anni, ricorda il dio Giano e il suo sguardo bifronte su due mondi che contempla, questo sì, ma non abita. Noi, invece, viviamo, come Quinto Ennio, con più cuori. L'affermazione di Ennio ci è stata riportata da Aulo Gellio che interpreta i *tria corda* come riferimento alle tre lingue che egli dominava, "quod loqui Graece et Osce et Latine sciret". Ma sicuramente c'è di più. Ennio infatti sfoggiava un'identità composta da tre distinti elementi etnico-culturali: nato in una famiglia messapica (e quindi ellenica), volle identificarsi anche con le antiche tradizioni indigene italiche ("osce") oltre a riconoscere la sua cittadinanza romana. Se il cuore è espressione del rapporto dell'io con la realtà in cui ci muoviamo e di cui siamo fatti, allora non si tratta di un

unico modo di vedere e vivere la realtà, magari espresso in tre idiomi, ma di tre modalità di capire il rapporto con il reale.

Da qui il dramma della traduzione dei pronomi. Lì viene subito a galla l'ambiguità della posizione del mediatore, in quello che i linguisti chiamano la deissi personale. Come si traduce un "noi" e "la nostra lingua", detti da De Poli, oppure un "we" and "our relations with Asia", detti dal Vice-Chancellor, davanti a un pubblico misto di italiani, australiani, italiani residenti in Australia, australiani che si dedicano allo studio delle cose italiane?

Lo stesso problema l'avevo incontrato all'inizio della mia carriera. Scrissi la mia tesi di dottorato sui comportamenti linguistici di un gruppo di minatori italiani che per una ventina d'anni lavoravano e vivevano in una zona piuttosto remota della Nuova Zelanda. Mi ricordo che per alcuni di loro la mia persona causava problemi non indifferenti di riferimento pronominale. Parlando degli italiani dicevano "noi", e non si poteva sapere se il pronome era inclusivo o esclusivo, mentre per parlare dei neozelandesi dicevano qualche volta "loro" ma qualche volta "voi" e qualche volta non sapevano proprio scegliere. Lì, all'origine, mi rendevo conto della ricchezza e della problematicità dell'esperienza di studio e di vita che stavo intraprendendo.

La stragrande maggioranza dei minatori veniva dalle province di Treviso e Belluno, sicché nei miei primissimi anni di ricerca in questo emisfero mi sono imbevuto di dialetti e accenti veneti "esportati" e ho potuto anche passare una memorabile settimana girando tra i paesi della zona di Vittorio Veneto salutando le famiglie dei miei minatori-informatori.

Trent'anni dopo, l'italiano del Presidente De Poli che mi sono trovato a tradurre aveva la stessa cantilena, lo stesso misto di musica e di montagna, di cui era fatta la mia prima esperienza di impegno scientifico con la realtà italiana nella mia terra. Avevo l'impressione che si chiudesse un cerchio: da una mediazione linguistica in Nuova Zelanda a un'altra in Australia, passando in tutti e due i casi per la Marca trevigiana. E i cerchi si chiudono per girare, e girare, e portarti non sai dove.

Il cerchio della mediazione reciproca persiste come forma ideale del mio lavoro. Il progetto di ricerca che da qualche mese occupa il mio tempo e interesse mi porta a studiare delle lettere scritte, in lingua italiana, nel Western Australia durante il secolo precedente la grande migrazione italiana del secondo dopoguerra, vale a dire dai primi decenni dell'insediamento europeo in questo Stato alla fine della seconda guerra, 1850-1950 per intenderci. Storia australiana, evidentemente. Infatti uno degli obbiettivi principali della ricerca è quello di portare alla luce un filone della storia di questa terra che è stato sepolto negli archivi e dimenticato, ossia la polietnicità dell'Australia coloniale sino agli albori delle migrazioni del secondo Novecento. Cioè presentare all'Australia un'altra delle facce

dell'Italia. Che è anche australiana perché le lettere e gli altri documenti personali che si vanno scoprendo analizzando studiando e presentando nascono dalla esperienza di vita vissuta su questa terra.

Ma la ricerca si rivela di già un contributo alla storia della lingua italiana, cioè storia della lingua in Italia. Da un lato perché gli scrittori – i colti come gli umili – sono stati formati culturalmente e linguisticamente in una certa Italia di Otto-Novecento e quindi ciò che loro sono in Australia illumina ciò che erano stati in Italia. Dall'altra parte la corretta interpretazione di questi documenti rimanda a problematiche molto significative per la storia della lingua e la storia *tout court* dell'Italia dell'Ottocento. E' difficile comprendere l'esistenza di un patrimonio di scritti in lingua italiana come quello che stiamo ricuperando nel Western Australia, se ci atteniamo alle normali stime dell'italofonia nell'Ottocento – stime calcolate sulla base di interpretazioni inferenziali di dati censuari – che vanno dal 2,5% al 12,5% della popolazione. Così questo contributo italiano alla storia australiana si sta evolvendo, in questi primi mesi di elaborazione del progetto, in un contributo australiano ai dibattiti in corso sull'effettiva diffusione dell'italiano negli anni dell'Unificazione.

La generosità della Fondazione Cassamarca e del suo Presidente hanno permesso un ampliamento del concetto di "Italian Studies" e quindi una visione più ampia della "Italia" che noi siamo chiamati a presentare e rappresentare. E questo ci costringe, ci incoraggia e ci fornisce altri ingredienti con cui ripensare, in larghezza, tutta la dinamica della mediazione che costituisce il nostro lavoro quotidiano. A tavola, e oltre.

Partire per riscoprire

Francesca Laura
University of the Sunshine Coast 2001-7

Ho lasciato Saronno nella provincia di Varese subito dopo aver compiuto i quarant'anni. Biglietto aperto un anno, destinazione Australia. Alle spalle vicende famigliari un po' tristi, un lavoro sicuro da insegnante di inglese al quale, volendo, sapevo di poter ritornare e una vita di provincia che mi stava sempre più stretta. Davanti un futuro da inventare, aspettative di novità e qualche apprensione. La scelta dell'Australia non era stata del tutto casuale, ma nemmeno troppo ragionata: mi attiravano gli enormi spazi naturali letti e visti al cinema - 'Priscilla, la regina del deserto', appena uscito sugli schermi italiani, mi aveva enormemente affascinata - e

mi rassicurava la presenza di una comunità italiana dai connotati ancora vaghi che, all'occorrenza, avrebbe forse potuto fornirmi un punto di riferimento.

La vita da *backpacker* dei primi mesi aveva superato le mie aspettative quanto a facilità di spostamenti e alloggio; le occasioni di attività più o meno turistiche trovavano un limite soltanto nel budget che mi ero imposta e ogni giorno era un piacere decidere il da farsi secondo l'estro del momento. Una cosa mi era stata chiara fin dal principio: l'Australia mi piaceva e molto anche ed ero decisa a rimanerci. Tra un'escursione e una nuotata mi dedicavo a ricerche di lavoro presso istituzioni di vario genere, nella cui denominazione comparissero le parole 'Italia' o 'italiano'. La risposta era quasi sempre la stessa: i miei titoli professionali erano buoni, ma purtroppo il visto turistico non mi consentiva di avere un impiego.

Come dicono, 'la fortuna aiuta gli audaci' e quando già mi preparavo a proseguire per la Nuova Zelanda alla ricerca di altre avventure, un'insperata offerta di lavoro quale insegnante di italiano in un Programma di Immersione arriva da una scuola statale del Queensland. Da un giorno all'altro mi trovo immersa io stessa in un ruolo famigliare ed insolito. Insegnare è stata la mia occupazione principale dalla laurea in poi, ma questa volta l'oggetto del mio insegnamento – matematica e scienze in italiano a ragazzi di madre lingua inglese – mi porta a vivere un'esperienza mai fatta prima. La mia italianità di lingua e cultura è la ragione del mio impiego e diventa occasione di sperimentazione metodologica e riscoperta di linguaggi e contenuti dimenticati dai tempi del liceo. Pur avendo una predilezione per le materie scientifiche, all'università avevo poi optato per una laurea in lingue e mai mi sarei aspettata di rispolverarle in Australia per insegnare frazioni, teorema di Pitagora, sistema solare e corpo umano a dei vispi ragazzini che, di propria volontà, avevano deciso di studiare materie curricolari in una lingua diversa dalla propria. Impresa non facile, ma stimolante sia per loro che per me. Mi rendo conto ben presto che l'obiettivo è insegnare a comunicare in italiano, le materie sono soltanto uno strumento che deve essere accompagnato dalla trasmissione di una cultura che renda vivi linguaggi di per sè piuttosto aridi.

Alla ricerca di spunti e di una motivazione che spieghi l'esistenza di questo programma in una zona rurale del Queensland, scopro una presenza italiana in sordina: una presenza fatta di negozi che vendono macchine per la salsa di pomodoro, tradizioni e feste di santi perpetuate con orgoglio e tenacia, dolci di pasta di mandorle sul tavolo del vicino che mi invita a bere il caffè, piante di fichi d'India inframmezzate a vigne e frutteti, una piccola sezione della 'Società Dante Alighieri' che mi ricorda i 'bollini' comprati alle elementari. È il mio primo contatto con una comunità di immigrati arrivati in Australia soprattutto nel secondo dopoguerra

che mi porta in un'Italia di altri tempi, un'Italia che conosco poco e che mi affascina per le storie personali e collettive che racchiude. Non è semplice incorporarla nelle lezioni di matematica e scienze, ma serve a motivare me, a confermarmi che è importante continuare questo percorso di lingua e cultura che si sono trasformate ed evolute con modalità diverse in luoghi lontani da quelli in cui hanno avuto origine.

Anni dopo, quando il mio desiderio di vivere in Australia si è ormai realizzato, l'occasione di mantenere il rapporto con l'Italia si ripresenta sotto forma di un lettorato finanziato dalla Fondazione Cassamarca presso l'Università della Sunshine Coast. Il programma di italiano, l'unica lingua europea insegnata in questo piccolo ateneo, è ancora agli inizi e si propone di attirare un pubblico di studenti per la maggior parte alle prime armi con lo studio della nostra lingua e di una lingua straniera in generale. Di nuovo inizia per me una ricerca di stimoli che invoglino un'utenza prevalentemente giovane alla scoperta dell'Italia e dell'italiano finora 'assaggiati' soltanto in qualche ristorante locale che propone 'linguini' e 'bruscetta' e per i più fortunati vissuti di persona in un rapido giro turistico delle più belle città italiane.

Anche in questo caso il compito non è semplice, soprattutto quando si tratta di sostenere la motivazione al di là del primo anno di studio, quando le difficoltà della nostra lingua appaiono con regolare frequenza e le occasioni di mettere alla prova quanto si è imparato in classe si presentano raramente. Ma ecco che di nuovo anche sulla Sunshine Coast vengo a conoscere una realtà italiana, meno compatta di quella incontrata precedentemente e più variegata per età, provenienza geografica, motivazioni e attività lavorative, che riflette un'immagine più immediata della lingua e della cultura dell'Italia di oggi. Sono in gran parte 'immigrati per scelta' quelli che ne fanno parte, ben integrati nel tessuto sociale del paese ospitante, forse meno determinati a mantenere a tutti i costi la propria italianità, ma sicuramente capaci di farla riemergere con forza ed orgoglio quando la situazione lo richiede. L'occasione si presenta con un progetto che li coinvolge in prima persona: per dare maggiore autenticità allo studio della lingua, chiedo loro di incontrare i miei studenti individualmente, di creare rapporti uno-a-uno in cui si instauri un clima di pazienza e disponibilità che metta a proprio agio i miei apprendenti alle prime armi e dia loro la possibilità di usare in contesti autentici l'italiano imparato in classe. L'esperimento funziona e si creano amicizie che talvolta continuano oltre la fine del semestre. I partecipanti invitano gli studenti nelle loro case, mostrano fotografie, li coinvolgono in attività di cucina, descrivono i posti in Italia dai quali provengono e con passione cercano di far partecipi i loro nuovi amici di quell'indefinibile insieme di gesti, azioni, modi di essere e di rapportarsi che caratterizzano un popolo ed una cultura. Io

seguo questi incontri attraverso i diari degli studenti e nelle loro riflessioni trovo conferma di quanto l'Italia sopravviva all'estero e sia una risorsa importante sia per loro che per me.

Il filo che mi lega al mio paese di origine rimane presente anche nella fase attuale della mia vita australiana quando la crisi dei cinquant'anni mi spinge ad un altro cambiamento di rotta. Lascio l'università e mi iscrivo ad un corso di medicina naturale con una particolare enfasi sull'alimentazione. Studio che la dieta mediterranea è tuttora considerata una delle più sane ed equilibrate e mi lancio in una ricerca di ricette della nonna, sapori della Liguria dove sono nata, ingredienti di sicuro valore nutritivo e terapeutico. Ne studio le proprietà, ma soprattutto mi lascio trasportare dalle associazioni emotive che quegli aromi fanno emergere e provo un po' di nostalgia per quel non-so-cosa che non trovo quando assaporo gli stessi piatti qui in Australia. Forse una delle ragioni che mi spinge a mantenere vivo il mio rapporto con l'Italia è proprio quella di avere sempre a portata di mano quel magico 'ingrediente' mancante.

Lettera aperta dalla Cassamarchesa di Sydney

M. Cristina Mauceri
University of Sydney 2000-8, 2010-

Sydney, 1.1.2011

Gentile Avvocato De Poli,

Ormai da quasi dieci anni occupo la posizione di Cassamarca Lecturer presso il Dipartimento di Italiano dell'Università di Sydney. Sembra essere trascorso tanto tempo da quando, all'inizio del nuovo secolo, vennero istituiti questi posti in diverse università australiane, un'autentica manna, se posso usare un termine biblico, per noi che abbiamo l'onore, la soddisfazione, il piacere nonché l'impegno di coprirli.

Nel 2000 vivevo già da svariati anni in Australia (per vanità non rivelo quanti). Quando ci si trasferisce in un altro paese, uno dei problemi da affrontare è quello di decidere se mantenere, se è possibile, una continuità con il lavoro che si è fatto in precedenza o voltare pagina e iniziare una nuova attività. Entrambe le scelte richiedono la pazienza e lo sforzo di riqualificarsi per poter entrare ad 'armi pari' in un diverso mondo del lavoro. Ho avuto la fortuna di poter 'tradurre' il lavoro che facevo in Italia, cioè insegnare germanistica all'università, in Australia e dedicarmi all'insegnamento della lingua e della cultura italiana anche se, per anni, mi sono di-

visa tra diverse istituzioni e in balìa delle ore di insegnamento disponibili. Tuttavia mi ritengo fortunata perché ho sempre potuto continuare a fare un lavoro che mi piaceva, contribuire a formare delle giovani e dei giovani (e anche alcuni anzianotte e anzianotti) interessati all'italiano e alla sua letteratura. Noi italiane e italiani del mondo svolgiamo un ruolo importante come rappresentanti del nostro paese e, spero, dei suoi aspetti migliori.

Ma il lavoro è solo uno dei tanti problemi che chi si trasferisce altrove deve risolvere. Un altro, altrettanto e forse più importante, riguarda il cambiamento e il mantenimento della propria identità. Solo dopo anni ho riflettuto di quanto sia stato e sia ancora importante per me insegnare la lingua e la cultura del paese da cui provengo. Questa attività mi permette di mantenere un filo diretto continuo con l'Italia, in questo modo soddisfo un desiderio personale e, nello stesso tempo, mi tengo aggiornata su quello che avviene nel paese, poiché è importante per chi si assume l'impegno di trasmettere la sua cultura all'estero mantenere questo contatto.

Quando la Fondazione Cassamarca ha offerto generosamente diversi posti alle università australiane, che all'inizio del nuovo secolo non stavano attraversando un periodo felice, specialmente per quanto riguardava gli studi umanistici, e io ho avuto la fortuna di vincerne uno, mi sono sentita una 'miracolata' per diversi motivi. Prima di tutto, mi veniva garantita stabilità e tranquillità nel lavoro perché così potevo concentrarmi sull'insegnamento in un solo posto e dedicarmi alla ricerca. Agli inizi del 2000 ho avuto la fortuna (o perspicacia? o tutte e due) di iniziare a interessarmi a un campo di ricerca nuovissimo che stava allora emergendo, la letteratura della migrazione in Italia, e di collaborare con l'Università di Roma La Sapienza che in Italia è uno dei principali centri di ricerca di questo fenomeno letterario.

Con orgoglio posso dire che, grazie alla Fondazione Cassamarca e al posto di lavoro che ha offerto all'Università di Sydney, sono stata la prima ricercatrice in Australia che ha studiato e si è adoperata per far conoscere, non solo qui ma anche in Italia e in altri paesi europei, gli scrittori migranti. Quando partecipo a un convegno o sono invitata a parlare in qualche università europea ed extra-europea, per me è un piacere quando vengo presentata sentire menzionato il nome della mia "mecenate", perché è in questi termini che io penso alla Fondazione Cassamarca, e con un senso dell'umorismo un po' "cheeky", lo ammetto, mi definisco coi colleghi 'la Cassamarchesa' dell'Università di Sydney.

Desidero esprimerLe la mia gratitudine per la generosità della Fondazione che Lei presiede, non solo per i posti nelle Università ma anche per l'ACIS che ha creato una rete di comunicazione e di ricerca che riunisce i diversi italianisti (Cassamarchesi e non) di questo continente.

Con i miei più cordiali saluti.

Maria Cristina Mauceri

Humanism and Patronage: Reflections on Italian Studies in Australia

Nerida Newbigin
University of Sydney
(ACIS Committee member)

More than forty years ago, as I was planning my first trip to Italy, I asked my professor and supervisor Frederick May for advice and, inevitably, for a reference for the scholarship that would fund my research. He was generous with both, and reminisced about his own first research trip to Italy just after the Second World War. Along with the reference and assorted pieces of advice, he mentioned his debt of gratitude to his own teachers, observing: "We can never repay a kindness, we can only pass it on." The occasion of this volume, reflecting on our disciplines and remembering our benefactors, invites us to reflect on the continuities that link us and our students to our teachers, our teachers' teachers, and all the way back to the humanist revival in that epicentre of Latin Humanism, Medicean Florence.

I have felt very much at home in this academic world. The Florentine justification of the Humanist curriculum as an education for public life still applies in twenty-first century Australia. While *Grammatica* – the study of Latin grammar and language – is no longer central, the formal acquisition of a second language is still, as then, the means by which we consolidate the formal structures of our mother tongue. *Rhetorica* provide us with the tools to argue and persuade. Literature, history and moral philosophy provide us with the intellectual basis for understanding the world, and nourish and nurture us towards that Renaissance goal of *Inventio* – the discovery and creation – by which we will make the world a better place.

Such education, however, does not just happen. It requires a form of patronage that allows scholars, teachers and students sufficient *otium* – ease, relief from the pressures of earning a living through commerce – to commit themselves to study. For many, that study becomes an end in itself, no longer the activity of *otium,* but its opposite, *negotium,* busy-ness and business. Some patronage comes from governments through publicly funded universities, through research grants, and through a broad willingness of successive parliaments to fund the pursuit of excellence in any field, in the expectation that excellence – like kindness – could in fact be transmitted from one generation to the next.

The subject of my own research – the plays, processions and festive

culture that were part of lay religious life in fifteenth-century Florence – may not at first seem a useful part of the education of a future prime minister or High Court judge, but the lessons this research then offers about how society works and how people seek a higher good – or even a Higher Good – is both useful and pleasurable in every age. Poetry can teach and delight at the same time, and there is nothing shameful in the pleasure of teaching, *docere delectando.* Mastery of another language is another, more voluptuous kind of pleasure. The discipline of language learning can be justified pedagogically across the whole curriculum, but nothing can rival the pleasure of slipping into another *persona* to live a second life from the inside.

Several years ago, a group of scholars from Harvard's Center for Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti gathered in the rotunda of Michelangelo's Biblioteca Laurenziana to look at some manuscripts: not just any manuscripts, but a special group of manuscripts that helped to shape western civilization. Bound in red leather, decorated with Medici *palle,* and annotated by Poliziano and Ficino, they included volumes of Plato, Plotinus and Hermes Trismegistus that had arrived in Florence in the baggage of Greek scholars and had so excited that group of Florentines whose education and wealth had permitted them to develop a new profession as Humanists. Our teacher on that day was a young scholar, Maurizio Campanelli, and his erudition and passion brought that excitement back to life. Ficino and his contemporaries wrestled with the complexities of ancient languages and ideas and then exploited the new technology of the printing press to make them known. This occasion led me to reflect on the continuities and connections of learning, and the responsibilities that come with wealth, both public and private.

Cosimo de' Medici had accumulated unprecedented wealth through a combination of native intelligence and – or course – opportunity, but with it he acquired a circle of friends with learning, taste, and piety, and through them he extended his influence to every aspect of political and cultural life. The books that he and subsequently his sons and his famous grandson Lorenzo acquired or had copied for their libraries form the nucleus of the Biblioteca Laurenziana, designed by Michelangelo and opened to the public in 1571.

As I have come to know this library better, I have become more and more aware of the unbroken line of succession from the moment an idea is put to paper, through the printing process, binding and shelving, collecting, selling, acquiring and dispersing, rebinding, cataloguing, and most recently making available through the electronic media. In all those steps there are individual men and women whose choices have ensured the survival of books and shaped our understanding and enjoyment of them, and

as intellectual curiosity (once a defining driver of vice, now a virtue) leads me to understand how these people bequeathed their experience to the next, I discover with some delight that I am part of that line of succession, even if Australia was never imagined by the people whose writings I read.

My own professor, Frederick May, was English. His knowledge of Italy was shaped by Italian intellectuals who found political asylum in England; his research tools in Britain were the great Italian libraries acquired by the new money of the industrial revolution, libraries that had been formed by Italian antiquaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and sold off when the economic and intellectual climate changed. For May, the memory of heroes of the Risorgimento who had made temporary homes in London was still "recent" past, and part of a living tradition.

What we do, then, as teachers, is to trace this *traditio,* the process of handing down both material culture – archives and books, paintings and palaces – and ideas. Objects are relatively easy to track: they may change in appearance and configuration, but they have a way of being commissioned, valued, documented, and attributed that allows them to be traced. Sophisticated developments in the electronic media and in search engines, and most importantly the extension since the 1970s of these developments from military and industrial uses to the humanities, has enabled scholars to reconstruct ever more complex networks of patronage and interconnection from antiquity to the present. Ideas also have their histories, and cultural history or the history of ideas comes in an infinity of forms and variants shaped by national, religious and cultural determinants, and passed on as much by direct engagement between teacher and student as by publication.

No electronic medium has yet replaced the magic that happens when a great teacher challenges a receptive learner with an idea that helps to makes sense of a complex mess of disparate facts, or when a student handles for the first time a book copied on vellum and illuminated with beaten gold. For such things to happen, we continue to need universities and libraries, and those universities and libraries are as ever in need of benefactors, both governments and individuals, who recognize the responsibilities imposed by wealth to contribute to the common good.

All of us in Italian Studies in Australia are beneficiaries of the *magnanimitas* and *magnificentia* that created our universities as grand statements of belief in humanistic education, and have continued to fund them for the last century and a half. A number of our universities have also received the support of the Cassamarca Foundation, and have made appointments that have given new optimism and enthusiasm to our field. But the field has been changing too. "Language departments" are no longer poor relations in our universities: they now employ more highly quali-

fied and more productive scholars than ever before, and those scholars and teachers move freely in intellectual networks that stretch around the world. And their students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, have opportunities to study and research in Italy that were unimaginable forty years ago.

It is particularly apt that this volume should honour a great benefactor in Dino De Poli and a great teacher in Bill Kent. Both of them have made a generous investment in our community, in the expectation that we would make this investment – in Latin Humanism in its broadest sense – work to the betterment of society as a whole. To them I say thank you: it is an honour to be part of a volume that pays tribute to those whose generosity we now pass on.

Experiencing Italy through travel: reflections from a study trip

Mariolina Pais Marden
University of South Australia 2000-3

One of the most significant experiences that I had during my time as Cassamarca lecturer was the planning and organization of a study trip to Italy for a group of university students of Italian. The trip took place during the Australian university vacation in January 2003 and consisted of three weeks of language instruction at a private language school in Siena, a wide range of extracurricular activities including excursions, films, cultural seminars, tasting of local food and wine, cookery evenings, and three days in Rome. The trip was organised with the idea of providing students with the opportunity to 'live' in Siena for a short period of time and experience first hand the Italian language and culture.

The participants were 10 students at the University of South Australia, one teacher of Italian and three other mature-age participants. As the majority of the participating students had never been to Italy before, and as some of them had never traveled overseas before, we felt that it would have been beneficial to organise some focused information-sessions to prepare students for the trip and to help them maximise the benefits of the new experience. During these sessions students were asked to complete a questionnaire about their knowledge of Italian culture and about their expectations. Students were also given an encouraging booklet which included information on culture shock, and a series of guidelines about how to write a travel journal and what information had to be included. As

part of the assessment students were required to keep a journal of their trip and to note and reflect on the cultural and linguistic events that they deemed most relevant and significant as they experienced them. All the students were interviewed during and after the trip to gain greater understanding about their perceptions of Italy and of the Italian language and culture. During the course in Siena a number of guided round-tables on Italian culture were also organised in collaboration with the local teachers.

Some of the comments made by the students during the pre-departure questionnaire were particularly interesting and revealing of students' views and ideas about Italy and its culture. Before the trip the majority of the students commented that some of the key aspects that they associated with Italian culture were food, art, fashion, glamour, festivals and soccer. Students mentioned the different foods of Italy, the stylish appearance of Italians and their interest in fashion and soccer. Some of the students wrote about the art and architecture and some about the historical and cultural significance of traditional festivals and events.

When asked to talk about their perception of Italian culture during the final interviews at the end of the trip, several students mentioned some of the same aspects that were brought up in the initial questionnaires (food, art and fashion) but also added some other features. These features related mostly to the characteristics of Italians and to Italian society in a broader sense: hospitable, friendly, highly family-orientated, enthusiastic and animated. During their time in Italy students had the opportunity to experience Italian culture from within, through participation in community activities and local events and were also able to make contact with Italians and get to know them. This different engagement with the local culture encouraged students to notice and appreciate these less visible aspects.

The comments made by the students were significant because they indicated that the period of time that students spent in Italy did not change their pre-determined ideas and perceptions about Italian culture (the majority of the students still made the association Italy = food and fashion). The trip however did contribute to broadening students' perspectives and add a deeper layer of awareness about certain defining aspects of Italian society, which were not apparent or acknowledged before.

On a personal note: the students' comments prior and after to the trip made me reflect on my role as a language teacher and as a facilitator of students' encounters with Italy and Italian culture. I realised that, as well as assisting students to develop and consolidate their language skills, it is also important to provide them with the opportunity to experience Italy first-hand and to engage with the culture from within, in order to develop a deeper level of cultural awareness and appreciate the less obvious aspects of Italian culture and society.

Palomar's perspective? The observer observed

Kerstin Pilz
University of Melbourne 2000-4

All the way from front to back cover this book is saturated with observation, cultural and cross-cultural. I want to reflect briefly on the practice of observation, taking Calvino's use of his creation Mr Palomar as my stalking-horse. In Calvino's writings Palomar complements Qfwfq, the amorphous protagonist of the *Cosmicomiche.* Qfwfq had looked at the macrocosmos in order to integrate in it the microcosm of human emotions; Palomar looks at the microcosm in an attempt to see 'the minimal facts of everyday life in a cosmic perspective'. Like Qfwfq, Mr Palomar is an amorphous being, a pair of eyes, or better a brain with eyes; indeed, he is a post-modern embodiment of Valéry's equally cerebral Monsieur Teste. With Mr Palomar, whose name derives from the Californian observatory, Calvino investigates the possibility, or better, impossibility of overcoming the gap between observer and observed, subject and object, in order to arrive at some kind of holistic experience. Rather than allowing a glimpse of this seemingly unachievable ideal state, the stories reveal the insufficiency of our Cartesian models of analysis, or as Palomar puts it: 'How can you look at something and set your own ego aside? Whose eyes are doing the looking?' And he decides that 'To look at itself the world needs the eyes (and the eyeglasses) of Mr Palomar.' Werner Heisenberg persuasively argued that science is not just description and explanation of nature – it is what we generate out of a particular method of putting questions to nature.

In that perspective both science and literature offer fictions about the relation between the subject and the world, and while, as Calvino noted, it was in fact literature that problematised the observer's subjectivity before science acknowledged its own limitations, literature can adopt the scientific method of minute observation and precise description in an attempt to reassess and possibly renew the relation between human beings and the cosmos. Palomar's descriptions of nature ranging from a wave, a lawn, the night sky, the whistling of birds to a giraffe etc., resemble, as Gore Vidal has observed, those of 'a scientist making ongoing reports on that ongoing experiment' with 'a scientist's respect for data.' The most vivid examples are Palomar's descriptions of animals, for instance in 'The loves of the tortoises' or 'The gecko's belly', where the description of mating turtles or the belly of a gecko in anthropomorphic terms renders

strange precisely these terms, leading to bizarre questions such as 'what does eros become if there are plates of bone or horny scales in the place of skin?' In the three stories that make up the section 'Palomar at the zoo,' the attempt to interpret animal behaviour from an anthropocentric point of view allows Palomar to perceive 'a first daybreak of culture in the long biological night' in the albino gorilla's gesture of clutching a rubber tyre. Meanwhile the display of reptiles in 'The order of scaly creatures', a bestiary of antediluvian animals which belong to 'the world as it was before man', demonstrates 'that the world of man is not eternal and is not unique'. The stories illustrate Calvino's 'bet with himself,' begun with the cosmicomical tales, to describe anthropomorphically a universe in which humanity has only a very marginal position. Mr Palomar is a prototypical modern day human, conditioned into a state of perpetual apprehension and insecurity by the frenetic rhythms and congestions of the modern city which make him prone to the illnesses of modern civilisations such as heart attacks and ulcers. Hence his urgency to find a state of peaceful co-existence with nature, which is constantly interrupted by the urgings of his rational mind that force him to analyse his relationship with the world of nature. In 'The sword of the sun' he takes an evening swim and contemplates the gap that exists between the world he observes outside of himself and the one he harbours inside his analytic mind. He envisions his physical self, his 'swimming ego' as 'immersed in a disembodied world', a world of geometrical shapes that co-exists with another interior world where everything is less clear, where straight lines and vectorial diagrams are replaced by something less tangible, which for want of an exact term he describes as 'a lump, a clot, a blockage'. It is from this world that springs both the desire to immerse himself in the macroscopic world and become part of the cosmos, and the painful awareness that the world was not created for the human spectator, who, like the perpetually apprehensive Palomar, is left to his own devices to try and make existence meaningful by inventing a relation between the self and the cosmos. Likewise in 'Reading a wave' the seemingly soothing activity of observing the surf crashing on the shore becomes a nerve-racking experience when he tries to observe a single wave. A parody of our Cartesian methods of analysis of separating a fragment from the whole, the story plays once again on Heisenberg's indeterminacy principle that prevents us from describing with precision the fluid reality of matter.

Palomar's perpetual irritation when confronted with fluid forms is emblematic of Calvino's painful awareness that quantum physics poses a challenge to his narrative models – models informed by structural analysis and based on a combinatorial code that assumes that the world can be compartmentalised into fundamental building blocks. But the universe is in fact a universe in flux, where the division between subject and object

is blurred, making the subject part of the flux as Palomar's failed efforts at mastering a wave demonstrate. Calvino-Palomar's attempts ultimately fail since they are still informed by the ideology of mastery and control embodied in the very definition of literature as an instrument of knowledge. As Calvino acknowledged, the urge to write was connected with the desire for something to be possessed and mastered, something always elusive. Palomar is a mouthpiece of Calvino's resolve to approach the world by describing and observing it rather than interpreting it. Knowledge is a work in progress, an ongoing process of refining our understanding of nature and the empirical world, a process of always imperfect and ever-revisable form-making which includes the very forms of relationships we have with the world of nature. And which include, on our own miniature scale, the forms of relationships established between the Australian gaze at Italy and the Italian scrutiny of Australia.

Il mestiere della fuga?

Francesco Ricatti
University of the Sunshine Coast 2007 -

La fuga nella vita chi lo sa
che non sia proprio lei la quinta essenza
(Paolo Conte)

Go beyond borders
(CNN)

Life's borderless
(LG)

Se vince il no ce ne andiamo
(Sergio Marchionne)

Vivo ormai da più di otto anni in Australia, ma mi capita ancora spesso che parenti, amici e conoscenti mi chiedano che cosa mi manca dell'Italia. Rispondo allora compiaciuto, ma con un velo di malinconia: 'Totti e la pajata.'

'Eccolo lì –mi dicono allora– eccolo lì il solito romano provinciale...'.

Provinciale io? Sono cresciuto in Sardegna, vivo in Australia, mia moglie è tailandese e i miei migliori amici sono tedeschi, spagnoli, colom-

biani, coreani, australiani e giapponesi, più qualche italiano, e persino un laziale. Dunque, provinciale io proprio no! Ma parlare di Totti e di pajata è solo un modo un po' provocatorio per parlare d'amore, l'amore vero che non si può spiegare. Come li spieghi Totti e la pajata? A spiegare Totti ai profani ormai nemmeno ci provo più. Ma pure la pajata come la spieghi? Come lo spieghi che le intestina del vitello da latte elevano il plebeo rigatone a raffinatezza culinaria? Comincio di solito con la semplice descrizione: 'si fa un sugo a cui si aggiungono le intestina del vitello da latte…'; e qui la gente già ti guarda disgustata. Allora provo un approccio più didascalico: 'dato che il vitellino prende solo il latte della mamma, la parte iniziale del suo tratto intestinale contiene una specie di caglio che in cottura si coagula formando una sorta di ricottina deliziosa…'; niente da fare, stessa faccia disgustata, e in più ti guardano come se fossi un barbaro sterminatore di vitellini innocenti...

Parlo di Totti e di pajata perché ciò che amo e a volte mi manca non è l'Italia in sé, come astrazione geopolitica o come richiamo patriottico alla madre patria, ma aspetti concreti e specifici della sua lunga storia, della sua complessa cultura, e di un presente in cui dimensioni e prospettive locali si intrecciano a fenomeni nazionali e transnazionali. Ogni aspetto della nostra vita che sembra relegato ad una dimensione regionale, provinciale, cittadina, può improvvisamente acquisire una dimensione e una rilevanza molto più ampia: per esempio, la recente partecipazione di Totti alla TV cinese è stata seguita da più di duecento milioni di telespettatori. Allo stesso tempo un evento globale può avere ripercussioni enormi a livello locale: con la diffusione del morbo della mucca pazza la pajata è scomparsa (almeno per un periodo) da tutti i ristoranti di Roma, così come la bistecca alla fiorentina e l'osso buco sono per un po' scomparsi dalle tavole di Firenze e Milano.

L'importanza del ruolo della Cassamarca si può capire soltanto a partire da questa dimensione globale, ben al di là di retoriche binarie e facili dicotomie, per esempio sul rapporto fra Italia e Australia, o fra tradizione e innovazione. È all'interno dei processi di globalizzazione che diventa essenziale il ruolo di quelle istituzioni in grado di educare alla complessità, all'incontro e al dialogo. In un paese come l'Australia questo si può fare per esempio sfidando l'ancora dominante prospettiva anglocentrica e coloniale attraverso l'insegnamento di una lingua straniera.

Mi sono trovato di recente a riflettere sul peso che la mia vita privata ha sul mio mestiere di ricercatore e insegnante. Uso a proposito la parola mestiere, per sottolineare il carattere artigianale di chi con cura e pazienza cerca di costruire e trasmettere conoscenza. Certo un tempo i mestieri si imparavano a bottega, ma, come sia gli storici dell'arte e dell'architettura che gli storici dell'emigrazione sanno bene, tanti mestieri imparati

a bottega venivano poi praticati ed esportati in giro per il mondo. Tanti accademici italiani di oggi sembrano seguire simili sentieri, artigiani della scienza e della conoscenza che dopo aver imparato il mestiere in Italia si trasferiscono all'estero. Non si tratta e non si è mai trattato di fughe di cervelli, ma di professionisti che trovano in un contesto globale la loro più naturale collocazione.

Io sono nato in Italia, dove ho studiato fino alla laurea, per poi trasferirmi in Australia per il mio dottorato. Sono cittadino italiano e da qualche mese anche cittadino australiano. Sono di madre lingua italiana, ma nella vita di tutti i giorni e nel mio lavoro di ricerca parlo e scrivo prevalentemente in inglese. Parlo anche francese, capisco lo spagnolo e sto studiando il tailandese. Negli ultimi anni ho collaborato con colleghi che vivono in Italia, Australia, Nuova Zelanda, Regno Unito e Giappone, e ho incontrato colleghi da ogni parte del mondo. Insegno lingua e cultura italiana, ma anche storia delle migrazioni; e nella ricerca mi interesso soprattutto di storie di migranti e di storie di passione calcistica. Queste ricerche nascono dal desiderio di capire e studiare fenomeni storici ed eventi contemporanei che sfidino i confini e le identità nazionali, manifestandosi sia a livello locale che a livello transnazionale e globale.

Agli inizi della mia vita da 'cervello in fuga' mi sembrava che il cosidetto 'sistema Italia' mi avesse costretto ad andarmene. Oggi sono invece convinto che il mestiere del ricercatore abbia senso solo in una dimensione transnazionale, una dimensione complessa che sembra talvolta sfuggire a chi impone agli operai una rinuncia globale ai propri diritti, ma poi continua a fondare il proprio potere economico su un consumismo omologante, e il proprio potere politico su identità locali e nazionali immaginarie, sostenute da paure irrazionali e superstizioni religiose. La fuga, se così si vuole continuare a chiamarla, è diventata col tempo la quinta essenza della mia vita e del mio mestiere, un appassionato atto di ribellione, un invito, come suggeriva Foucault, non a scoprire chi siamo, ma a rifiutare chi siamo.

Dunque, in tale prospettiva, l'importanza della Fondazione Cassamarca non è per me nel suo contributo al recupero di memorie artificiali, di tradizioni inventate, e di grandi narrative storiche che connettano retoricamente frammenti di storie infinitamente più complesse. Non è neppure nel sostenere la retorica dell'identità a uso e consumo di politicanti e imprenditoruccoli. Il contributo della Fondazione Cassamarca, il motivo per cui sono fiero di essere un Lettore Cassamarca, è invece nella direzione di un processo di globalizzazione che deve essere basato su complessità, leggerezza e flessibilità, e non su omologazione, pesantezza e rigidità.

Insegnare la lingua e la cultura italiana in un'università australiana, grazie al supporto fondamentale della Cassamarca, significa per me prima

di tutto educare gli studenti a questi valori, facendo loro scoprire quanto si possa imparare e come si possa vivere quando si è pronti ad abbandonare una posizione comoda e rassicurante come quella del parlante madrelingua, per comunicare invece in una lingua altra, che i nostri interlocutori spesso conoscono meglio di noi. Dare agli studenti questa apertura mentale, dar loro la possibilità di avventurarsi in un terreno così misterioso come lo studio di una lingua e una cultura straniera, vuol dire prepararli ad un mondo della cui complessità bisogna essere coscientemente e criticamente partecipi, se non si vuole diventarne vittime. Allo stesso tempo, la Cassamarca dà agli studiosi che sostiene finanziariamente e a tutti coloro che usufruiscono delle sue iniziative la straordinaria opportunità di studiare, comprendere e interpretare meglio questa complessità.

Nella mia vita transnazionale ho avuto modo di ascoltare e contestare una serie infinita di stereotipi, fraintendimenti e generalizzazioni: sui romani, sugli italiani, sugli australiani, sulle tailandesi (per via di mia moglie), sui paesi d'origine dei miei più cari amici, sui gay e sui transessuali, sugli ebrei, i cristiani e i musulmani. Tali generalizzazioni, anche quando apparentemente positive, spesso rappresentano un fallimentare tentativo di semplificare e in qualche modo rifiutare la complessità dei nostri tempi e del nostro mondo, appesantendo e irrigidendo dentro corazze ideologiche identità che sono invece in continua trasformazione.

Oltre alla possibilità di insegnare la lingua italiana, la Cassamarca mi ha dato l'opportunità di studiare e insegnare la storia delle migrazioni transnazionali, comprendendo i rischi sociali, politici ed economici di chiusure razziste e xenofobe, e riconoscendo nella migrazione un fenomeno costante e centrale nella storia dell'umanità, vitale per il suo sviluppo economico e culturale.

L'Italia, come è stato detto in passato, è di per sé un'astrazione geografica. Andare al di là della retorica e degli stereotipi vuol dire scoprire e far scoprire un paese complesso, immaginario e carnale, che non è mai stato e mai potrà essere rinchiuso all'interno di quella astrazione. Non importa che si parli di Totti o di Michelangelo, di Belli o di Dante, di pajata o di tiramisù: la complessità dell'Italia e dei processi di continua trasformazione e interrelazione con il resto del mondo va studiata e compresa criticamente. Le iniziative all'estero della Fondazione Cassamarca e il lavoro dei tanti lettori Cassamarca sono per me dei tentativi coraggiosi di promuovere, attraverso lo studio e l'insegnamento delle storie, culture e lingue dell'Italia, ben oltre i suoi confini geografici e ideologici, una partecipazione cosciente e critica alla complessità del nostro mondo e del nostro tempo.

Humanism's Foundation and the Foundation's Humanism

Andrea Rizzi
University of South Australia 2003-4, University of Melbourne 2005 -

One of the first lessons I learned from my middle-school teacher in Milan was that *'imparare il latino è per un italiano come imparare la strada di casa.'* The apprehension of not being able to return to my family was enough for me to accept uncritically such a view of Latin language and culture as home. It was only once I began studying the Italian Renaissance at both high school and university that such an idea about my own origins started to look increasingly less straightforward. Instead, the *'strada di casa'* became a *'superstrada,'* with heavy traffic in both directions, and, since I moved permanently to Australia, a fascinating bridge between fifteenth-century Italy and Australian academia.

When first appointed as Cassamarca Lecturer at the University of South Australia, I quickly learned the importance of the contribution by the Cassamarca Foundation to the teaching and learning of Italian studies and, more broadly, Latin humanism in Australia, Europe and South America. The Cassamarca Foundation prompted me to learn more about the relationship between Latin humanism and the vernacular (Italian) language and culture and build new tools and perspectives on the teaching and learning of Italian Studies and humanism.

The two-way nature of the Renaissance *'superstrada'* influences my teaching and research practices as a Cassamarca lecturer in Australia. This brief article is an opportunity for me to celebrate the contributions Bill Kent and President De Poli made to my understanding of the Latin humanism of the Quattrocento and the connections this humanism has with the intercultural communities of Australian universities.

The learned milieux of Quattrocento Italy were diglossic, for they spoke and wrote in both a grammatically-learned and stable Latin and a less authoritative but more widely used *volgare.* In Renaissance Italy the superposed variety was the Latin language, which needed to be studied grammatically, in the sense that a technical and historical understanding of Latin was required. Similarly, Australian students might perceive English as the dominant language and the Italian they learn in class the grammatically more complex and codified variety which cannot be used in an everyday context but represents a 'vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature', as Ferguson puts it in his well-known study of diglossia. In other words, Italian can be seen by students as the Latin of

today (without hierarchical connotations) and English as the vernacular of Renaissance Italy.

In Renaissance Italy the supremacy of Latin as the standard means of communication among leaders and intellectuals remained undisputed throughout the fifteenth century. This rings true also for today's English. Accordingly, the still-unstable vernacular languages were seen as inferior to Latin, Greek and Hebrew. However, the usefulness of the vernacular as a popularising and communicative tool was not underestimated in the Italian Quattrocento. As a result, it should not surprise us that several humanists wrote in both vernacular and Latin—Leonardo Bruni, Leon Battista Alberti, Donato Acciaiuoli, Tommaso Benci, Girolamo Benivieni, Alessandro Braccesi and Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini, to mention just a few. There are even instances in which humanists translated their own work from one language into the other.

The bidirectionality of language and culture in Renaissance Italy — where humanists looked back to rediscover ancient cultures and dress their culture in classicised clothes while also reaching out to capture a broad audience — presents interesting connections with the academic communities of today. Cassamarca lecturers such as myself teach and research Italian and Latin languages and cultures and promote a diglossic society in which English is the dominant vernacular used for everyday communication and exchange, whereas Italian is for the university students embarking on Italian Studies the superposed, grammatically learned language that opens up a new and exciting window into their own culture and language. As Dante remarked in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia,* in order to be able to write well in the vernacular poets need to study and know Latin. Similarly, the study of any of the languages that are tastelessly and discriminatorily described in Australia as LOTE (Languages Other Than English) offer an outside view of the historicity and grammaticality of English language and culture. The study of a second language and culture provides a rational understanding of the communicative and cultural mechanisms of English while at the same time it connects one culture with another.

Allow me to spend a few words on the two-lane highway of Quattrocento Italy before returning to the Australian context.

Renaissance scholars tend to see the development of Latin humanism between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries as a manifestation of a sense of crisis of the late medieval Italian vernaculars and the conviction that Latin was the most apt and stable medium, as opposed to the highly unsteady and variable 'new' languages. This sense of crisis of the vernacular is expressed most strongly in Leonardo Bruni's dismissal of the three crowns of vernacular literature (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio) in Book One of his *Dialogi ad Petrum Histrum* (1401-1408). Even if Bruni in Book

Two of the same *Dialogi* restored the authority of the three writers for political reasons, the divide between a philologically-restored classical Latin used by scholars writing for the cultural and political élite as opposed to a multi-faceted and ubiquitous vernacular used for 'low' communication seems to become critical at the turn of the fifteenth century. However, the sheer number of vernacular translations produced in the same century—most of which were written by some of the most distinguished and influential humanists—prompted me to rethink the relationship between Latin and vernacular in the Italian Quattrocento. The case of Leon Battista Alberti writing in both Latin and the vernacular—not to mention his self-translations—is well-known. However, several other scholars used both languages in their literary and historical production. Donato Acciaiuoli, Giovanni Albino, Jacopo Angeli da Scarperia, Girolamo Benivieni, Matteo Maria Boiardo, Alessandro Braccesi, Pier Candido Decembrio are only some of the numerous humanists who wrote and translated texts not only in Latin but also in the vernacular. To this I should also add the fact that several of the works produced by humanists—be they translations from Greek into Latin or essays written in Latin—were almost immediately translated by fellow-humanists into one of the vernacular languages of the time. This is an aspect that has been recently highlighted by James Hankins as deserving further attention ('Humanism in the vernacular: the case of Leonardo Bruni', in C. Celenza and K. Gouwens eds, *Humanism and Creativity in the Renaissance. Essays in Honor of Ronald G. Witt,* Leiden and Boston, 2006, pp. 11-29). By reflecting on the understanding that humanism was an affair of élites, Hankins remarks that humanistic writings were translated into vernacular—mostly by fellow-scholars and translators—in order to make the teachings of civic humanism available to a broader community of readers. As a result, I picture the cultural milieu of the Italian Quattrocento as a busy developing traffic system in which the learned members of communities followed the high road of Latin and Greek history and heritage, while they also built local and vernacular lanes for classical texts and cultures to reach the wider community that could no longer understand Latin.

Back to Australia. In the university environment of Italian Studies, Australian students can be seen as the new humanists with the opportunities to shape and benefit from a diglossic cultural environment in which the study and use of a grammatically-learned language allows them to rediscover the historicity of their own culture and communicate more effectively in a supranational and intercultural context.

As much as the Latin humanism of fifteenth-century Italy was shaped by the dynamic interaction between vernacular and Latin, the Humanities of today should be founded on the exchanges between English and all the

other vernaculars beyond the cultural and political milieux of our own society. To paraphrase my Italian teacher, vernacular humanism allows students both to find their way home and to explore and appreciate new cultural '*superstrade*'.

How the Cassamarca Foundation changed my life

Susanna Scarparo
Monash University 2001 -

I was living on a beautiful island thirty minutes by ferry from downtown Auckland and had just returned to writing my PhD following a wonderfully rich, rewarding and exhausting ten months looking after my baby son. Still getting used to not sleeping through the night, I felt excited about getting back to writing but, given the small size of Italian departments on this side of the world, had little hope of finding a job as an Italianist. But then a friend from Australia called me to let me know that she had read in the paper that a bank from Italy was funding lectureships in Italian and that I should apply for one of them! The idea that a benefactor from Italy would invest into the field of Italian Studies in Australia seemed almost like a fairy tale. Could that be possible?, I asked myself.

And this is how it all began for me. I was appointed Cassamarca Lecturer at Monash University, and in December 2000, accompanied by my son and partner, I moved to Melbourne for what I thought was a one-year contract. Leaving our beautiful island was very difficult for us and in Melbourne we had no family or friends to support us. The transition from PhD student and casual lecturer/tutor to full-time lecturing and research was challenging. Nonetheless, the Faculty of Arts at Monash University provided me with exciting opportunities for developing my interdisciplinary and cross-cultural teaching and research interests, and the generosity of the Cassamarca Foundation made it possible for me to bring Italian Studies into the areas of general and comparative literature, cultural studies, film studies and women's studies.

A high point in my teaching career came in 2002 when I won the Faculty of Arts Award for Excellence in Teaching following nomination by my students. Teaching remains a passion for me and I am very grateful to the Cassamarca Foundation for allowing students on the other side of the world to share their excitement and curiosity for the Italian language and culture with me.

Since taking up my position at Monash, I have published a monograph, several edited collections and journal articles in four broad interdisciplinary fields of Italian Studies: Italian cinema, contemporary women writers (with special attention to autobiography and biography), Italian feminist theory (with special attention to sexual difference theory), migration and diaspora studies (focusing on narratives and life writing). At present, I am co-writing a book on Italian women film-makers and writing about migration and mobility in contemporary Italian cinema and literature.

I have also had the privilege of supervising Honours, Masters and PhD students on a wide range of exciting topics such as the cinema of Nanni Moretti, postcolonialism in Australian and Italian Literature, Historical Fictions by Italian Women Writers, Translation of Australian Literature in Italian, Women in Italian cinema, Italian Australian Theatre, Constructions of self and identity in Australian Italian literature, the songs of Fabrizio De André, modern Italian Lesbian Literature and Contemporary Italian Women Writers.

The establishment of ACIS and the Cassamarca's on-going support of its activities has also made it possible for Italianists based in the Australasian region to come together at conferences and, more significantly, to feel part of a community of scholars. On a personal level, being part of the group of Cassamarca Lecturers has assisted me in finding peers and colleagues with whom I have established supportive and valuable working relationships and friendships. One of my best friends in Australia is a former Cassamarca Lecturer who started at Melbourne University at the same time as I took up my position at Monash.

The continuing support of the Cassamarca Foundation made it possible for Monash to convert my initial one-year contract into a permanent position, thus giving me the chance to make Melbourne my home. As I am now moving into another stage of my career at Monash, having being seconded to the Faculty of Arts to take up a position as Associate Dean (Education), I wish to acknowledge the profound impact that the generosity of Avvocato De Poli has had on my professional and personal life. It is not an exaggeration to claim that the Cassamarca Foundation has truly changed my life.

Part 4

‘Giovani si diventa, non si resta. E si diventa costruendo ogni giorno il futuro, la voglia di rischiare.’

ACIS-Cassamarca Scholarship Winners
2001-2011

NEW VOICES: THE ACIS-CASSAMARCA SCHOLARSHIPS FOR RESEARCH IN ITALY

In 2000 ACIS decided that some of the funds provided by the Cassamarca Foundation would be used to establish two scholarships of $7500 in support of research visits to Italy by students enrolled in Honours or Research Higher Degrees (Masters and PhDs) at an Australian university. It created a small independent selection committee, called for applications in any field of Italian Studies (literature, film, history, language, culture, politics, society, art, migration) and selected the winners for formal ratification by the Management Committee. The same process – later increasing the number of annual scholarships and reducing their financial value, extending eligibility to students from universities in New Zealand, and joining forces in 2008 with the Monash-based Australian Foundation for Studies in Italy (AFSI) which itself had sent some thirty younger scholars and artists on scholarships to Italy since 1994 – has been followed each year thereafter. We thank Gary Ianziti, who joined the Committee to represent AFSI's fields of interests, for the work he willingly took on to ensure continuity and cooperation.

Since 2000 33 students, drawn from eleven universities, have been awarded scholarships from pools of up to a dozen applicants each year. Below is a collective portrait of the winners, with their affiliations and project titles, accompanied by their observations on the opportunities and achievements which the awards have helped to open up. All recipients have expressed their gratitude to the Cassamarca Foundation for the support received, often near the beginning of their research when resources are usually scarce and getting a feel for the kinds of data a particular project will require is paramount. Finding a way round the relevant archives or learning how best to conduct interviews is a vital skill, and Cassamarca support has been a very important element in enabling its early acquisition.

A striking feature of the projects is the range and historical span of their topics. Music, film, history (Renaissance, modern, contemporary), literature (novels, poetry), sociology, anthropology, intercultural education, politics, art, religion, material culture, the economy – all these areas figure among the successful applicants' fields of study. Given the relatively small size of the Italianist scholarly community in Australasia, this is a

notably diverse set of interests, which has brought to bear the instruments of many disciplines on aspects of Italy from the mediaeval to contemporary periods. Several scholarship holders have gone on to publish their findings and embark on research and academic careers in Italian Studies; others have pursued interests in other areas, using the skills and knowledge initially developed by working on Italian projects. We are very grateful for the enthusiastic responses we received from everyone and for the information on their post-scholarship careers which may sometimes have taken unexpected directions but have continued to find room for their knowledge and experience of Italy.

NEW VOICES:
THE ACIS-CASSAMARCA SCHOLARSHIPS WINNERS

2001

Kathleen Olive (PhD, Sydney)
Medieval pilgrimage literature:
preparation of an edition of the Itinerario *of Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici.*

"An English translation of the manuscript (the Codex Rustici) that the ACIS Scholarship enabled me to study in Florence will come out next year from the Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies in Toronto. It will appear in their *Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation* series: its publication is supported by the Australian Academy of the Humanities, and the College of Arts, University of Western Sydney. I presented a paper from my research at the ANZAMEMS Conference in 2008: "A Fifteenth-Century Florentine Memory Palace in Jerusalem." I have also worked on editions of plays written by 16thC Tuscan nuns and on literary constructions of memory and identity in 15thC Florence, as well as on the mnemonic functions of, and sources for, mediaeval Italian city descriptions.

I remain very grateful to ACIS for the financial assistance I received so early on in my PhD candidature. And Bill's generous collegiality – during my candidature; while my thesis was being examined (he was one of its readers); and afterwards, in recommending avenues for publication and further research – has made an enormous impact on my approach to my work and to the academy in general."

Sandra Graham (PhD, Griffith)
An oral history of Italian women directors
of feature films for cinema and television, 1969-1999.

"I owe so much to my ACIS scholarship and the Cassamarca Foundation. My three months of research in Rome still ripple through my life. Apart from the interviews and archive work I was able to carry out, it consolidated my love for Italy and gave me the opportunity to hone my knowledge of the language and culture. Alongside my continuing research on my scholarship topic, I have added a new interest - I am writing my first novel, *Case No.1,* which is set in Calabria in 1978. It's a crime novel but touches on the North/South divide, the deterioration of mountain towns because of migration, the impact of the feudal system and foreign systems of rule on Calabria, but most of all it takes its inspiration from

the incredibly long-drawn-out process to establish the Pollino National Park. I submitted my first chapter to the Crime Writers' Association (UK) competition Debut Dagger Awards and was awarded a rare "Highly Commended" for what the judges said was a 'charming and funny tale of a trainee detective investigating murder in a dying Italian town'. I am also developing a business called My Piece of Italy which caters to Italophiles in English-speaking countries. I've completed a trailer and business plan, and I am going to Italy in 2011 to make some contacts."

2002

Stephen Bennetts (PhD, UWA)

The social and cultural context of projects for the "rivalorizzazione dei beni culturali" in the South of Italy, particularly Naples.

"The Cassamarca grant assisted me to carry out ethnographic fieldwork in Calabria, Salento, Campania, Naples and Rome in 2002-3 for my PhD research project entitled 'Tradition and Contamination: an Ethnography of the Southern Italian Folk Revival'. Publications which derive from this work include: '"Berlusconi hasn't arrived here yet": the contemporary Italian Folk Revival as a response to Modernity' in Pass, G & Woods, D (eds) *Alchemies: Community Exchanges,* Black Swan Press, Perth 2004. My research has also informed the numerous reviews I have written of Italian books in recent years.

Fieldwork in Italy has also led to two positive spinoffs of an applied nature: the organisation of the Perth Social Forum in 2005; and, as a direct result of my fieldwork on Campanian Carnival in 2003, the establishment of the Fremantle Carnival in 2009. For its 2010 edition I curated and produced an ethnophotographic exhibition and catalogue essay by my principal Calabrian revivalist informant: ' "*Carnevale* in the Italian Countryside": the Ethnophotography of Angelo Maggio 2004-2009'. Details of the third edition (February 2011) can be found at <http://fremantlecarnivale.com/> which features a number of my fieldwork photos."

Gary Bonar (Hons, La Trobe)

Translation theory in practice: a novel by Stefano D'Andrea from Italian into English.

"During my research in Italy I conducted a series of interviews with Stefano D'Andrea which were invaluable in informing my translation of his novel. He also enabled me to meet other writers and widen my knowledge of contemporary Italian literature. I also made use of the extensive resources of the libraries of the University of Trieste and at the IULM

and the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, all of which have specialised collections on translation studies. After completing my studies with a First Class Honours degree at La Trobe and a Master in Education from Monash University, I returned to Italy to continue my career as an educator and budding translator. While the dynamic pace of life in Milano had its attractions, via a series of fortunate events we were able to move to one of Italy's most liveable cities, Verbania on Lago Maggiore. Though relatively small, Verbania has a vibrant atmosphere and it was always stimulating teaching English to tertiary students, professionals and the strong arts community there. Now back in Melbourne, I am fortunate to be able to share my passion for all things Italian and Japanese in one of my roles as a secondary school Italian and Japanese language teacher."

Margaret Toomey (Geoghegan) (Hons, Griffith)
The novels of Clara Sereni.

"The Cassamarca scholarship allowed me to complete research for my Honours project, meet with academics in the field of Italian women's literature, and to interview Clara Sereni, the author of the novels discussed in my dissertation. However, this scholarship gave me so much more than academic material, valuable though this was. It also gave me an opportunity for immersion in the Italian language and culture in a way that not only improved (dramatically) my competence with the language, but also gave me an insight into life in Italy on a daily basis. The people I met in Italy took me into their homes and their lives; they shared with me, often quite passionately, their opinions on many topics from food to politics, from literature to entertainment. Thanks to the Cassamarca scholarship I was able to continue my Honours degree with renewed enthusiasm and greater confidence in my linguistic abilities and cultural understanding. I have now completed a Post-graduate Degree in Secondary Education with English and Italian as my two teaching areas and am now teaching in Ipswich (Qld)."

2003

Natasha Bajan (PhD, Sydney)
Women as public intellectuals in Italy
in the late 18th to early 20th centuries: three cases of female journalists.

"My research builds on my earlier work which has appeared as "Women's Journalism in Late Eighteenth-Century Venice: Elisabetta Caminer

Turra", in Heather Merle Benbow, Guido Ernst, and Colin Nettelbeck (eds), *(Sub)Texts: New Perspectives on Literature and Culture* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 2002), pp. 27-43. My research trip to Italy enabled me to consult the works of three authors – Elisabetta Caminer Turra, Cristina di Belgioioso Trivulzio and Anna Maria Mozzoni – some of which are unpublished in any modern edition and many of which are unavailable for viewing except in the libraries that conserve them. These texts, in addition to representing the gradual cultural emancipation of women from the 18th to 20th centuries, also illustrate the increase in women's intellectualism and its increasingly public nature."

Adriana Diaz (Hons, Griffith)
Policies on language acquisition and acculturation in multicultural Italy: sociolinguistic issues.

"Being a recipient of the ACIS-Cassamarca Scholarship allowed me to conduct research in Italy which was integral to completing my Honours thesis. This has given me the opportunity to present my results at conferences and workshops in Australia and overseas and to publish a recent co-authored article (Liddicoat, A. J. & Díaz, A. (2008) "Engaging with diversity: Intercultural policies and the education of immigrant children in Italy", *Intercultural Education,* Vol 19, No 2, pp. 137-150). Between 2003 and 2008 I was a tutor in Italian and Spanish at Griffith and, from 2009, Associate Lecturer in Spanish. I have also completed my PhD, 'Developing a *Languaculture* Agenda in Australian Higher Education Language Programs', which uses case-studies based on Italian courses to develop an understanding of the acquisition of intercultural skills through language learning – an interest sparked by my original Honours research project. So I will always be grateful for the opportunity that the ACIS-Cassamarca Foundation scholarship gave me."

Sarah Finn (PhD, UWA)
Father of the Italian nation: Dante Alighieri and the construction of Italian national identity, 1861-1945.

"I used my scholarship to unearth and analyse many kinds of documents relevant to the use of Dante as a supreme national symbol but not available in Australia. I was able to consult sources in Florence *(Biblioteca Nazionale* and the *Società dantesca)* and in Rome *(*the *Archivio di Stato* and the archives of the *Società Dante Alighieri).* Since one aspect of my

study was the memorialisation of Dante in public spaces, I also visited Trento, Turin and Naples to analyse particularly important examples of the practice in monuments, streets and squares. Those materials enabled me to complete my PhD, entitled " *'Padre della nazione italiana':* Dante Alighieri and the construction of the Italian nation, 1800-1945", which examined the contradictory promotion of Dante as a symbol not just of the new secular Italian nation-state but also of a Catholic version of *italianità* and, later, of imperialism and the Fascist conception of the Italian nation. I am currently completing research on the image of the *Duce* in the Italo-Australian press after 1945 as part of a broader ARC-funded group project on 'The cult of the *Duce* in the wider world' led by Prof. Richard Bosworth."

2004

Mathias Stevenson (MA, Monash)
The Afflictions of an Outsider: Exploring the 'Paradox of Selfhood' in the Early Cinema of Nanni Moretti.

"The ACIS scholarship helped me achieve a First Class result for my thesis. I then worked at the Italian Institute of Culture for two years after which I have worked as an Italian teacher. I've applied to undertake a PhD in Italian Studies in 2011 which will enable me also to work up for publication materials from my Masters thesis."

Ivana Krsnik-Lipohar (Hons, Griffith)
The 'Youth protest movement' in Italy. Challenging the new social movement theories.

"I devoted my 3-month scholarship to conduct research and interviews in Milan and Bologna in relation to my Honours thesis. I was able to interview not only young activists from the social centres *Eterotopia, La Tribù* and *Vittoria* in Milan but also members of the youth sections of the Democrat Left and Communist Refoundation parties. In Bologna I attended a 'Free Software' convention at the University of Bologna and enrolled a number of media activists into my research sample. I was also able to interview a group of young activists from the social centre *Livello 57.* In both cities I also talked to some of the leftwing protagonists of the 1970s so I could compare their protests and experiences with those of the activists of the early 21st century."

Daniela Rose (PhD, Flinders)
A Study of Australian Migrants from Caulonia (Calabria) to South Australia.

"I used my ACIS scholarship to conduct research in Italy for my doctoral thesis, *Making Connections: A Study of Australian Migrants from Caulonia (Calabria) with Special Reference to South Australia,* a study of the history of Cauloniese migration to Australia. I am extremely grateful to ACIS and the Fondazione Cassamarca for having provided the financial assistance to enable me to conduct interviews in Caulonia and collect secondary sources on Calabrian and Cauloniese emigration, particularly to Australia. I could not have written a PhD of such quality without the scholarship.

I am now Lecturer and Director of Studies in Italian at Flinders University. My continuing research in Italy has led so far to several publications: "Calabria in Australia: Customs and Traditions of Italians from Caulonia", *Italian Historical Society Journal,* Vol. 13, No. 1 and 2, January-December 2005, pp. 26-32; "Connections with the homeland: community and individual bonds between South Australian Italian migrants from Caulonia (Calabria) and their hometown", *FULGOR,* Vol. 3, Issue 3, 2008; "Dall'Australia a Caulonia: esperienze di rimpatriati calabresi nel dopoguerra", *Studi Emigrazione* (Rome), XLVI, n. 173, 2009; and a substantial book (with Desmond O'Connor), *Caulonia in the Heart. The settlement in Australia of migrants from a Southern Italian town. Caulonia nel cuore. L'insediamento in Australia di emigrati italiani provenienti da una cittadina del Sud,* Adelaide, Lythrum Press, 2008. My research project has also served as a model for investigations of other communities and for comparative studies of migration by other ethnic groups."

2005

Catherine England (PhD, Sydney)
Children and childhood in Renaissance Florence.

"I was awarded my PhD in 2007 from Sydney University. Receiving the ACIS scholarship was instrumental in being able to complete my thesis; it enabled me to undertake a second research trip to Florence, during which I was able to examine large quantities of the material in the archives that formed the basis of my thesis.

In the later stages of my PhD and subsequently, I worked at the University of Newcastle as a lecturer and researcher in History, Theology, and

Religious Studies (2006-2009). Since then I have been working for Nick Eckstein as a research assistant; I could not have done this job without the experience in archival work that the ACIS scholarship made possible. I have now decided to devote myself to secondary-school teaching and have just completed a GradDipEd (2010).

Completing the PhD certainly enriched my own life and understanding and gave me the job opportunities I have had. I also believe that as a school teacher, having done the PhD, including travel overseas for archival work, I understand my fields much better and am far better equipped to teach school students the what and how of History - and also English - than would have been the case if I had not done the PhD."

Sandra Margon (PhD, UTS)

An assessment of the impact of Europeanisation and European Union policies on the Italian higher education system.

"The Cassamarca scholarship afforded me the opportunity to undertake the first part of my fieldwork research in Italy. As part of my research I interviewed over 90 academics, professional staff and students in universities in North, Central and South Italy in an effort to understand the transformations occurring as part of the Bologna Process in large and small institutions.

Professionally, the exposure to European higher education dialogues, transformations and contacts provided me with the expertise to move into a new role focusing specifically on Australia-Europe research interactions. The scholarship opportunity was and remains an invaluable tool in both my professional and personal development."

Cristina Potz (PhD, La Trobe)

The cultural and literary relationship between the Accademia Pomponiana and the circle of Spanish intellectuals and literati in Rome in late 15thC. and early 16thC.

Cristina Potz died in 2008. A year earlier she described her research interests at La Trobe University in these words: "In March 2004, I began my PhD research project. My doctoral thesis focuses on the literary relationship between Spanish and Roman intellectuals at the beginning of the sixteenth century in Rome and in order to further my research, this year I spent several months in Italy, consulting manuscripts held in Italian libraries and archives. Terribly interesting and, yes, also rather expensive! But I have been fortunate enough to be the recipient of an Australian Post-

graduate Award, as well as of an ACIS-Cassamarca Scholarship. Combined with a Research Grant approved by the Faculty, I received sufficient financial support to enable me to conduct my research overseas." At the ACIS Conference in Brisbane in 2007 she presented a paper entitled 'L'Historia Baetica: opera drammatica o documento storico?' which was subsequently published in the *Journal of Historical and European Studies,* 2007, Vol. 1, December, pp. 69-75.

At the time of her death Cristina was teaching in the Italian programme at Deakin University where she is remembered as an outstanding person, committed to teaching and passionate about life. She was awarded her PhD posthumously by La Trobe University in 2009.

2006

Glenys Adams (PhD, Melbourne)

The private rooms of San Filippo Neri at the Vallicella church in Rome: an interdisciplinary exploration in art, religion and society.

"The ACIS-Cassamarca Scholarship provided me with the opportunity to investigate on-site the Rooms of San Filippo Neri at the Santa Maria in Vallicella church in Rome, explore church and state archives, specialist libraries and photographic archives and visit comparative religious devotional sites in Italy to support research for an interdisciplinary PhD thesis in art history and museology.

That research would not have been possible without the support of the scholarship. The thesis, *Saints and Memory: The Private Rooms of San Filippo Neri at the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella (Chiesa Nuova) Rome* examines the relationship between the memory of a saint and the physical spaces created to perpetuate his or her cult in seventeenth-century Italy. On the basis of this research I have published 'Sites of Convergence and Divergence: Private Devotional Sites in Seventeenth-Century Rome' in Jaynie Anderson (ed) *Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration and Convergence* (Melbourne, Miegunyah Press, 2009) pp.459-465 and presented two papers: 'Private devotional spaces in Seventeenth Century Rome' at the *The Fourth Biennial ACIS Conference, International Conference of Italian Studies* at Griffith University in July 2007, and 'From Saintly Austerity to Lavish Cultic Display: The rooms of Saint Ignatius Loyola at the Gesù and the Rooms of San Filippo Neri at Santa Maria in Vallicella, Rome' at the symposium *Art in Baroque Rome, New Directions in Research: Baroque Arcadias - Baroque Display* at the University of Melbourne in November 2007."

Sally Grant (PhD, Sydney)
The idea of the garden in Early Modern Venice.

"As I near the completion of my PhD I feel fortunate to have this opportunity to thank the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies and the Cassamarca Foundation for their support in the initial stages of my doctoral studies – a vital signal of confidence in my ability at a very important moment. The ACIS-Cassamarca Scholarship that I received in 2006 was in fact the first grant that enabled me to travel to Italy to conduct the primary research that has been essential for my dissertation.

Studying the idea of the garden and what this meant to the eighteenth-century Venetian nobility has necessitated the analysis of paintings and texts, as well as of a number of Veneto country villas. Being able to examine these sites in situ has been invaluable to my research; it has allowed me an insight into an aspect of culture that was essential to early-modern Venetian society but that is perhaps overlooked today by the alluring pull of the city of Venice and her watery environs. I have been able to present my findings at a number of conferences in Australia and overseas since holding the scholarship. In February 2011 I presented a paper at the College Art Association's Annual Conference in New York entitled "Garden Chambers and Global Spaces: Giandomenico Tiepolo's Chinoiserie Room at the Villa Valmarana" which explored the landscape as a stimulus to imagination and story-telling and how this manifested itself visually in the room of a Veneto country estate to create a particularly Venetian rendering of the exotic land of Cathay."

Jodi Hodge (PhD, Monash)
Under the shadow: religious life and cultural exchange between Florence and Prato in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

"My research explored the connections between visual, religious and literary cultures in late Medieval and Renaissance Florence. My scholarship enabled me to explore the *Archivio di Stato,* the *Biblioteca Nazionale* and the Riccardiana library in Florence, as well as the *Archivio di Stato* and the *Biblioteca Roncioniana* in Prato, for relevant materials. Of particular interest was the way in which Dominican perceptions of Mary Magdalen had been fused with Aristotelian notions of civic and spiritual perfection. How these notions were made manifest in art and literature was the focus of my masters and doctoral research. My investigations encompassed the fourteenth-century sermons by Remigio dei Girolami who sought to unite a fractious Florence through his revision of Mary Magdalen as the

exemplum of cardinal virtue through imperfection. Nearly two hundred years later Fra Angelico would reignite the potency of Mary Magdalen as a symbol of ethical and moral growth in his 'Magdalen-esque' depictions of Saint Dominic in the novitiate cell frescoes at San Marco, Florence. Other research areas included the study of the cult movements in Florence, especially that of the Virgin Mary, the *sacra cingola* and the Bianchi of 1399. Although I am no longer in the academic field, I am in the process of translating Remigio dei Girolami's sermons (see Jodi Hodge, 'The Virtue of Vice: Preaching the Cardinal Virtues in the Sermons of Remigio dei Girolami', *Medieval Sermon Studies,* 2008, 52, 1, pp.16-18) and now reside in the Netherlands."

2007

Brigid Maher (PhD, Monash)
The translation of humour in literature.

"The research I undertook in Italy has led to the publication of several articles ('The sky here compensates for solitude: space and displacement in a migrant's tale', *Literature and Aesthetics,* 17(2): 174-191; 'The comic voice in translation: Dario Fo's *Accidental Death of an Anarchist', Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28(4): 367-379), two book chapters ('Identity and humour in translation: the extravagant comic style of Rosa Cappiello's *Paese Fortunato*', in Paschalis Nikolau and Maria-Venetia Kyritsi (eds), *Translating Selves: Experience and identity between languages and literatures,* London, Continuum, 2008, 141-153; 'Comedy in translation: keeping the faith', in Julian Lamb and Jan Lloyd-Jones (eds), *Art and Authenticity,* Melbourne, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010) and a book, *Recreation and Style: Translating Humorous Literature in Italian and English* (Amsterdam, 2011). Also to appear in 2011 is *Words, Images and Performances in Translation* (London: Continuum), co-edited with Rita Wilson. I continue to translate and research contemporary Italian literature, and now teach Italian language, culture and translation at La Trobe University."

Roza Passos (PhD, Melbourne)
Late-medieval illuminated manuscripts.

"My Cassamarca scholarship in 2007 related to research for my PhD,

'From Father to Son: Interpreting the Text and Illustration of the Cocharelli Family's Manuscript on the Vices and Virtues'. It focuses on two fragmentary Latin tracts on the Vices and Virtues, instructional guides for the children of the Cocharelli family, produced in Genoa c. 1335. The scholarship allowed me to consult a number of relevant late medieval manuscripts and frescoes in Italian collections, and to visit Genoa, the city where the Cocharelli lived. At the *Archivio di Stato di Genova,* with the help of the *molto simpatica* Dr Giustina Olgiati, I uncovered obscure genealogical references in old documents that have provided critical background information on the Cocharelli family."

Katherine Rowe (PhD, Monash University)
Early Modern Italian women in northern courts.

"My PhD project, provisionally entitled 'Friendship and Women's Political Networks in the Renaissance Courtly State', focuses on the study of networks among highly-placed women in Northern Italian courts in the period 1470-1550 and the ways in which the content and style of their correspondence had both personal and political importance. I shall be using the scholarship to undertake archival research in Modena, Mantua and Milan where substantial and hitherto unexplored collections of letters among women are held. Of particular interest are the letters written by Eleanora of Aragon and Lucrezia Borgia, available in the *Archivio di Stato* in Modena, and the letters of Isabella d'Este to her husband and to her female kin and friends, held in the *Archivio di Stato* of Mantua. In Milan I shall explore the letters in the *Carteggio Sforzesco, Potenze Sovrane.* In 2008 I shall be presenting a paper on "Sisterly Love and Friendship in the Early Letters of Isabella d'Este and Elisabetta Gonzaga" at ANZAMEMS (Australian and New Zealand Association for Mediaeval and Early Modern Studies)."

2008

Natasha Amendola (PhD, Monash)
Weaving and Unweaving Penelope: a study of her fortunes in Latin and vernacular literature from Ovid to Boccaccio.

"The research trip enabled by my ACIS scholarship allowed me to explore at first hand medieval and early modern manuscripts. I was able to

present the preliminary results of my research in 2008 at the 7th Biennial Conference of ANZAMEMS (Australian and New Zealand Association for Mediaeval and Early Modern Studies) in a paper entitled 'How Medieval Commentators Dealt with Penelope's Cunning'. A revised version will appear as "Weaving Virtue: Laura Cereta as a New Penelope", in Karen Green and Constant Mews (eds), *Virtue Ethics for Women 1200-1500* (Springer, 2011). Since then I have been awarded one of the 2011 Bill Kent Prato Prizes which will take me to Prato in January for a week-long series of workshops and seminars organised by the Prato Consortium for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. I shall be using this visit to develop my paleographic skills as I work towards completion of my PhD."

Josh Brown (PhD, UWA)
Multilingual communication in the letters of Francesco di Marco Datini.

"The award of an ACIS scholarship has been extremely appreciated and wonderfully beneficial for me. At the moment, I am in the very final stages of completing my PhD (Italian Studies) entitled "Early evidence for Tuscanisation in the letters of Milanese merchants in the Datini Archive, Prato, 1396-1402". The scholarship helped to finance my three-month research trip to Prato during June-August 2008 as well as enabling me to attend the 2009 ACIS conference in New Zealand and the 2010 AAIS conference at the University of Michigan. Based on my paper at the US conference, I have submitted a journal article, currently under review, entitled "Evidence for early Tuscanisation in the commercial letters from the Milanese merchant Giovannino da Dugnano (?-1398) in the Datini Archive in Prato".

Theodore Ell (PhD, Sydney)
Lichens on broken stone: Piero Bigongiari's Rogo *and the quest for survival.*

"My ACIS Scholarship enabled me to spend six months in Florence, working in several archives to reconstruct the life and work of the poet Piero Bigongiari in the 1940s. This research brought to light lost manuscripts, new connections between his poems and other writings, and the discovery of a previously unknown trip to Britain in 1948. On the basis of these materials I was awarded my PhD for "A Voice in the Fire" in October 2010. I am currently engaged in transforming these materials and conference papers based on them into article and book form. I am very grateful for the Foundation's help in getting me started."

2009

Annie Lord (Hons, Notre Dame)
An investigation into the status of the Catalan language in Alghero, Sardinia.

"My research project was designed to study the ways in which, often against the odds, minority languages are recognised and maintained, taking the case of Catalan in the town of Alghero in North-West Sardinia. Catalan was originally introduced into Alghero in the 14thC and has manage to survive despite its replacement as an official language first by Spanish and then by Italian. During my three-month stay in the town I was able to collect substantial materials from archives, libraries and theses as well as conducting semi-structured interviews with bilingual Catalan-Italian speakers. I found that apart from family encouragement to maintain the language there is also strong institutional and official backing. Forty teachers in nineteen local schools teach in Catalan assisted by the local Catalan language clubs and night classes taught by the local priest. The Regional Government of Catalonia has recently opened an office in Alghero which provides authoritative support for Catalan language and culture. Alghero's unique history and the fact that it is an isolated town on an island have also enhanced the conditions for the maintenance of a minority language.

Surprisingly, the most challenging and enjoyable part of this research was gathering the interviewees. Boldly approaching strangers in the street and introducing myself in Italian seemed an impossible skill for me. However, after the first few attempts, I began to delight in meeting people and learning their culture and personal stories. The completion of this project – which I am thinking of developing further at Masters level – did not mean the end of my relationship with them either. I am a member of many groups that help to support and diffuse the Catalan language and I am confident about its long-term survival. Furthermore, as a teacher, I can encourage my students who speak a minority language to value their own culture and show them the importance of maintaining their first language. These days I live in London and continue to visit the incredible island of Sardinia at least twice a year."

Emma Nicholls (MA, Monash)
The complex symbolic power of silk in Renaissance Florence.

"I was awarded the scholarship quite recently so I'm still in the process of completing my Masters. It has nonetheless had a very large impact

upon me. It allowed me to make my first research trip to Florence, which was hugely rewarding, both personally and intellectually. The time I spent in Italy as a scholarship holder confirmed to me that Renaissance studies is a field to which I would like to make a lasting commitment, and next year I will again be teaching in the area at Monash University as well as continuing my own research. In December 2008 I presented the first results of my work at the 7th Biennial Conference of ANZAMEMS (Australian and New Zealand Association for Mediaeval and Early Modern Studies) in a paper entitled 'The Symbolic Power of Silk in Renaissance Florence'. Happily, with the aid of a Bill Kent Prato Prize, I will be able to return to Italy in January to carry out further archival work and to participate in some of the early activities of the newly-instituted Prato Consortium for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. The support of the Cassamarca Foundation has been very important indeed in setting me on a path to what I hope will be a career in Renaissance studies."

Barbara Pezzotti (PhD, Victoria University, Wellington)
Realism and regional identity in contemporary Italian detective stories.

"Thanks to the Cassamarca scholarship I was able to go to Italy and interview the authors whom I analysed in my thesis. This has led to three publications so far: "Alligator is Back: Massimo Carlotto and the Northeast, the Corroded Engine of Italy", *Storytelling: A Critical Journal of Popular Narrative,*(2010) 10, 2; "Between Commitment and Disenchantment: an Interview with Andrea G. Pickets," *The Italianist,* 30 (2010), pp.151-162; and "Conversation on a New Sicily: Interview with Andrea Camilleri", *Storytelling: A Critical Journal of Popular Narrative,* (2009) 9, 2, pp.37-52. Having completed my PhD, I am now working towards its publication as well as co-editing a book about the representation of 'otherness' in international crime fiction. I remain very grateful to the Cassamarca Foundation for its support for my work."

Clare Tunney (Doctor of Musical Arts, UWA)
A study of violoncello-playing in Italy in the nineteenth-century.

"I am enormously grateful to the Cassamarca Foundation for its generous support of my research trip in 2009. The year in Italy was more fruitful and rewarding than I had ever anticipated and led to new opportunities for research and concert activities in Australia. In August 2010 I presented a paper – now in preparation for publication – at the UWA School of

Music on the use of vibrato in 19th-century Italian cello-playing. In addition, my library research in Italy uncovered several important Italian compositions for cello which have, quite undeservedly, been absent from the concert stage for over a century. I presented a selection of these works in public recitals in Perth in 2010 and will perform others in similar recitals at the University of Western Australia in 2011.

Some of the most important and satisfying outcomes of the trip have come from the friendships made with Italian musicians and scholars. *Maestro* Davide Monty (violinist) and Maria Cleary (harpist) of *Duo Ararat* are travelling to Perth in March 2011 at my invitation. Together we will perform programs of Italian works for violin, cello and harp in concerts at The University of Western Australia, John Septum's Roe School and Trinity College in Perth. We will conduct master classes and workshops on Italian baroque music with secondary-school students. The *Duo's* visit to Perth will also facilitate the planning of future concerts, as well as proposed recordings in Australia and Italy in 2011 and 2012. Prof. Giovanni Di Leonardo and *Maestro* Galileo Di Illion of the *Associazione Culturale* "G. Braga" *onlus* have also proven to be an ongoing source of mutual support and inspiration, both personally and professionally. They have invited me to return to Giuliani in July 2011 to perform concerts marking the launch of their most recent publication on the music of cellist Gaetano Braga. I am very much looking forward to this return trip to Italy and the opportunities it will provide me for further research and concert activities with Italian musicians, both in Italy and in Australia."

2010

Erika Piazzoli (PhD, Griffith)

The potential of drama-based pedagogies for the teaching and learning of Italian as L2/FL.

"My research in Italy, conducted in mid-2010, consisted in the data collection phase of my PhD on Process Drama for teaching Italian as a Foreign Language (FL). The project explores the relationship between communicative, intercultural and affective engagement in adult learners of FL Italian when using Process Drama. In Italy I worked with three different groups of FL Italian learners: monolingual Chinese students, multilingual student-teachers, and multilingual students, enrolled in three different schools of *Italiano per Stranieri* in Milan. Conducting the research in Italy provided a range of dynamics which will greatly enhance the breadth of the model I am developing for the use of Process Drama pedagogy for

teaching Italian in Australia. I have used this research to hold an in-service seminar for the teachers of the *Leonardo Da Vinci* school (Milan) and International House school (Milan); an intensive seminar at *Laboratorio Itals* (*Ca' Foscari* University, Venice); and a workshop for teachers of the Italian School Committee at the University of the Sunshine Coast. I have presented my research at several conferences and will be giving a paper to the National Drama Conference in 2011. I have also been commissioned to write a chapter for a book on process drama for FL teaching edited by Dr Joe Winston (University of Warwick) which will be published in mid-2011."

Melanie Smans (PhD, Monash)
The internationalisation of Italian immigrant ethnic entrepreneurs in Australia.

"I have recently completed research in Italy which will contribute towards the achievement of a PhD. My thesis explores how Italian immigrant entrepreneurs in Australia internationalise their business and the influence of networks and institutions on this process (Melanie Smans, Susan Freeman and Bill Schroder, 'The Internationalisation of Immigrant Ethnic Entrepreneurs', paper presented at the Australia and New Zealand International Business Academy Annual Conference, 2010). I have interviewed government and industry representatives to explore what incentives and assistance are available for Italian immigrant entrepreneurs to internationalise their business to Italy. This research builds on my previous work on third-generation Italians in Australia (Smans, M., & Glenn, D., 'Identity and cultural maintenance: Observations from a case study of third-generation Italian-Australians in South Australia', *Studi Emigrazione,* 2011, in press). My ambition is to use this experience to increase the academic and wider communities' appreciation and knowledge of the significant contribution of Italian immigrants to Australian society through both their culture and their business activities."

2011

Gianluca Caputo (PhD, La Trobe)
The Japanese presence in Italian culture.

"My doctoral research focuses on the representation of Japan in literary texts, travel writing, Jesuit accounts, and maps produced in Italy in the sixteenth century. I shall be using my ACIS-Cassamarca scholarship

to consult the Jesuit archives in Rome to study their documents on Japan. Three types of material are of special interest: the press privileges sanctioned by Superior Generals of the Company and confirmed by the Holy Office of the Inquisition; the original corpus of letters (written in Portuguese or Spanish) selected for publication; and the correspondence between the Roman editor Zanetti and his colleagues working in other Italian states. Projects beyond my PhD include the representation of Japan in late Renaissance Italian culture and the analysis of seventeenth-century Italian texts dealing with Japan after its closure."

Marco Ceccarelli (PhD, UWA)
Catholic responses to Islamic terrorism.

"My thesis explores the issue of Catholic public discourse and its response to Islamic terrorism. While much has been published on Islamic terrorism since 9/11, very little attention has been paid to the scholarly debate which has emerged among Catholic intellectuals. My thesis aims to fill this gap by examining works of Catholic scholars which engage with the relationship between Islam and terrorist violence. One essential component of my research project is to explore the archives of the Catholic journals I am analysing - *Civiltà Cattolica* and the *Osservatore Romano* - and to consult relevant sources in the Vatican library. A second key element is to interview one of the main subjects of my thesis, the journalist, political commentator and current Member of the European Parliament, Magdi Cristiano Allam, who was born in Egypt but is now an Italian citizen and convert from Islam to Catholicism. I hope my research will draw attention to the work of Catholic thinkers on a pressing issue of our times as well as examine theories on how to prevent further violence and avoid the so-called 'clash of civilisations'."

Francesca Ori (PhD, Sydney)
Giovanni Pascoli.

"My PhD is based on the compilation of a critical edition of Giovanni Pascoli's last work, *Odi e Inni,* composed between 1896 and 1907. Although Pascoli is regarded as one of the most important poets of Post-Unification Italy, not all of his works have been studied in equal depth. His later collections in particular have not yet received the same philological attention as the *Myricae* and *Canti di Castelvecchio* despite their historical, social and political relevance. Only a comprehensive study and critical edition of *Odi*

e Inni will therefore make it possible to test my hypothesis that among its 15 available editions the most authoritative copy-text – Pascoli's intended best text – is the last one published in the author's lifetime by Zanichelli in 1907. My ACIS scholarship will enable me to consult the necessary materials: the manuscripts preserved in the Casa Pascoli Archives (Castelvecchio, Lucca) and the newspapers, magazines and booklets in which poems later incorporated into *Odi e Inni* were originally published. The scholarship will also give me the opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the course of my research with experts on Italian philology and Pascoli from universities in Padua, Pisa, and Rome."

Elizabeth Reid (PhD, Macquarie)
Clothing the body: vice and virtue in Florence 1350–1500.

"My PhD research explores the role of material and metaphorical clothing in defining social and spiritual identity during the Florentine plague years of 1348 to 1528. Florence was a centre of the pan-European textile industry and one of the most self-reflective cities in Renaissance Europe. The manipulative semiotic function of clothing was utilised to identify vice and virtue. Florentines used garments to respond to their changing conceptions of immortality and social hierarchy and so characterize their physical, social and spiritual bodies. I shall be using my ACIS scholarship to consult a range of documents in the *Archivio di Stato* in Florence: sumptuary laws, inventories, diaries, sermons and saints' vitae. I shall also be analysing visual representations of early Renaissance clothing culture in churches and galleries."

Index

‘JO-ANNE DUGGAN creates gorgeous large-scale, colour beautiful photographs and arresting in themselves and an intelligent commentary on the nature of our engagement with historic visual and material culture, which often highlights the unexpected and the barely noticed. Her photographic approach is very sensitive to the complex history and meanings of the objects and interiors at which she gazes, very respectful of them, too, while remaining determinedly Australian and post-colonial in their presence.’

Bill Kent, ‘Introduction’, in Jo-Anne Duggan, *Invisible Presences,* Brisbane, Arts Queensland, 2006.