

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN**

**Forms of Faith:
*The influence of religious change on artistic, literary,
and musical culture in sixteenth-century Italy***

Bodington Hall, University of Leeds, 30 - 31 March 2007

Description

This symposium will bring together specialists in the fields of Renaissance literature, music, history and history of art to address the question of the relationship between religious change and artistic form in sixteenth-century Italy. Specific issues to be addressed will include the ways in which religious developments are reflected in changing modes of literary expression (for example, the adoption of different modes of discourse - philosophical, Petrarchan, liturgical - in Christian poetry), techniques in the visual arts, and techniques in musical composition; and the role of changes in artistic form in shaping sixteenth-century religious sensibilities. All speakers will address current work in progress in extended papers of around an hour's duration.

Registration is now open. Download the Registration Form here [http://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/italian/news/Forms of Faith registration.pdf]. Deadline for registration: 31st January 2007.

List of speakers with paper titles

- Dr Stephen Bowd, Lecturer in History, University of Edinburgh. *Religious Friendship and the Republic of Letters in Renaissance Italy*
- Dr Abigail Brundin, Lecturer in Italian, University of Cambridge. *Riforma al femminile: Vittoria Colonna's poetic legacy*
- Professor Antonio Corsaro, Istituto di filologia moderna, University of Urbino. *The dissemination of spiritual poetry in mid-XVIth-century Italy*
- Dr Chrysa Damianaki, Associate Professor of Art History, Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università di Lecce, Italy. *Pontormo's lost frescoes in San Lorenzo reconsidered*
- Professor Iain Fenlon, Professor of Music, University of Cambridge. *Varieties of Experience: Music and Reform in Renaissance Italy*

- Professor Harald Hendrix, Chair of Italian Studies, University of Utrecht. *Representation of Suffering and Religious Change in the Early Cinquecento*
- Professor Alexander Nagel, Canada Research Chair and Associate Professor of History of Art, University of Toronto. *Soft iconoclasm: Some forms of the image debate in Italy in the 1530s*
- Dr Tom Nichols, Lecturer in History of Art, University of Aberdeen. *'Recalled from the infernal regions': Venetian mythological painting in an age of religious reform*
- Dr Noel O'Regan, Senior Lecturer in Music, University of Edinburgh. *Church reform and devotional music in 16th-century Rome: the influence of lay confraternities*
- Dr Letizia Panizza, Honorary Research Fellow, Royal Holloway, University of London. *Paradoxes in Cinquecento Italy: Friends or Enemies of Religion? The Case of Ortensio Lando*
- Mr Matthew Treherne, Lecturer in Italian, University of Leeds. *The Tridentine liturgy as theological discourse in Tasso's late works*
- Professor Raymond B. Waddington, Professor of English, University of California at Davis. *Aretino, Titian, and 'La umanità di Cristo'*

Professor Brian Richardson, Professor of Italian Language, University of Leeds, will act as respondent and deliver a final summing up at the end of the second day of the event.

Programme

Thursday 29th March 2007

5pm – 6pm Registration, Bodington Hall, University of Leeds

Friday 30th March 2007

9am – 9.30am Registration, Bodington Hall, University of Leeds

9.30am Welcome

9.45am Alexander Nagel (University of Toronto)
Soft iconoclasm: Some forms of the image debate in Italy in the 1530s

10.45am Coffee/tea

11.00am Chrysa Damianaki (Università di Lecce)

Pontormo's lost frescoes in San Lorenzo reconsidered

- 12.00pm Letizia Panizza (Royal Holloway, University of London)
Paradoxes in Cinquecento Italy: Friends or Enemies of Religion? The Case of Ortensio Lando
- 1.00pm Lunch
- 2pm Harald Hendrix (University of Utrecht)
Representation of Suffering and Religious Change in the Early Cinquecento
- 3pm Raymond B. Waddington (University of California at Davis)
Aretino, Titian, and 'la umanità di Cristo'
- 4pm Coffee/tea
- 4.30pm Abigail Brundin (University of Cambridge)
Riforma al femminile: Vittoria Colonna's poetic legacy
- 5.30pm Antonio Corsaro (University of Urbino)
The dissemination of spiritual poetry in mid-XVIth-century Italy
- 7.30pm Conference dinner, University of Leeds

Saturday 31st March 2007

- 9.30am Stephen Bowd (University of Edinburgh)
Religious Friendship and the Republic of Letters in Renaissance Italy
- 10.30am Coffee/tea
- 11am Noel O'Regan (University of Edinburgh)
Church reform and devotional music in 16th-century Rome: the influence of lay confraternities
- 12pm Tom Nichols (University of Aberdeen)
'Recalled from the infernal regions': Venetian mythological painting in an age of religious reform

- 1pm Lunch
- 2pm Iain Fenlon (University of Cambridge)
Varieties of Experience: Music and Reform in Renaissance Italy
- 3pm Matthew Treherne (University of Leeds)
The Tridentine liturgy as theological discourse in Tasso's late works
- 4pm Coffee/tea
- 5pm Closing remarks/roundtable

ABSTRACTS

Stephen Bowd [Stephen.Bowd@ed.ac.uk]

Religious Friendship and the Republic of Letters in Renaissance Italy

In his book *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* Jacob Burckhardt described how Italy after c.1300 began to 'swarm with individuality'. The paradox suggested by Burckhardt is useful when one considers friendships between religious, and religious ideals of friendship, which were not only moulded by monastic ideas of brotherhood but also by classical notions of perfect friendship and by humanist debates about action and contemplation. During the period c.1500-c.1540 a number of Venetian literary and religious networks of friends emerged which engaged with these questions. In this paper I examine the output of Venetian neo-Petrarchan lyricists such as Vincenzo Querini (1478-1514) and Tommaso Giustiniani (1476-1528), and I consider the way in which such verse served as vehicle for religious friendship and for a constructive engagement with reform through discussion and meditation with other men on sacred and profane letters. In many cases an eremitic withdrawal was attempted as an adjunct to, or progression from the 'republic of letters'. This oscillation between literary and religious friendship, action and contemplation, is revealed by paying attention to the hitherto neglected relationship between Gian Pietro Carafa (Pope Paul IV) (1476-1559) and Giustiniani. These men shared literary interests, and both attempted to find eremitical or semi-eremitical solace. However, the ultimate divergence in their religious journeys not only sheds light on an obscure episode in Carafa's biography but also on the nature of early modern Catholicism, the impact of literary culture on religion and religiosity, as well as on the influence of religious change on literature in sixteenth-century Italy.

Abigail Brundin [asb17@cam.ac.uk]

Riforma al femminile: Vittoria Colonna's poetic legacy

Vittoria Colonna's innovative, evangelical spiritual Petrarchism from the early 1540s took the Petrarchan genre in new and previously uncharted directions. This paper exams the influence of her feminised lyric evangelism on younger contemporaries (Nicolò Martelli, Luca Contile), as well as on the later outpouring of *rime spirituali* in the second half of the sixteenth century in Italy. In particular, it will ask how far the poetic response to reform was necessarily gendered, or 'feminised', both as a result of Colonna's direct influence and in response to the currents of evangelical spirituality that sought an anti-intellectualised and instinctual response to faith.

Antonio Corsaro [a.corsaro@fastwebnet.it]

The dissemination of spiritual poetry in mid sixteenth--century Italy

The origins of a truly autonomous form of spiritual poetry date back to the edition of the *Petrarca spirituale* by G. Malipiero (1536), which can be considered as the starting point of a new official canon, opposite to that of secular Petrarchan poetry, and conforming to Catholic orthodoxy. In the same period, Vittoria Colonna (who had previously composed traditional Petrarchan lyric poetry) elaborates a new spiritual poetic, which is deeply compromised by heretical messages. Unlike in the case of Malipiero, the early dissemination of Colonna's religious poems was not by means of printed editions, but mainly through scribal publishing (the *editio princeps* will come only in 1546). I offer some considerations on Colonna's manuscripts.

In the following period, spiritual poetry becomes a profitable publishing trade, but nevertheless some important poets and writers prefer to keep their exercise within the limits of a private experience. This is the case of a virtually unknown collection of rhymes by Antonio Brucioli (handed down in two manuscripts), and also of the poetic correspondence between Michelangelo and Lodovico Beccadelli. I present an analysis of Beccadelli's manuscripts.

A further important example is that of Luca Contile, who will, in around 1560, prepare his new spiritual collection but (as in the previous cases) will never print it. Each of these cases provoke scholarly interest, and invite us to investigate in detail these semi-clandestine practices, and the developments that will follow during the last part of the sixteenth century. In the final part of my paper, I discuss some of my research on this area.

Chrysa Damianaki [chrysa.damianaki@ateneo.unile.it]

Pontormo's lost frescoes in San Lorenzo reconsidered

My paper focuses on Pontormo's lost frescoes in San Lorenzo, Florence (documented (c.1546-1557) and locates them within the political and religious context of Cosimo

I's Florence. My interpretation of the religious scenes is based on the Lutheran manual, *Il Beneficio di Cristo* written by the monk Benedetto da Mantova, and Juan de Valdés's *Il Catechismo*, both of which were extremely influential in Lutheran, Calvinist and Valdesian circles during Reformation in Italy, especially after the failed Assembly of Regensburg (1541). The study throws new light on the religious and symbolic meaning of Pontormo's frescoes and associates them with his contemporary Florentine academics, namely Benedetto Varchi and Vincenzo Borghini, as well as with Cosimo I's secretary Pierfrancesco Riccio, whose influence on the iconographic program of S. Lorenzo is further strengthened here. For the first time I link Francesco Doni's *Disegno* (1549) to Pontormo's S. Lorenzo frescoes, providing further information about the political and religious contexts of Cosimo I's Florence and revealing both Doni's and the duke's aims concerning the commission of the S. Lorenzo frescoes. Furthermore, the examination of the stylistic and iconographic relations between Pontormo's biblical scenes and Lucas Cranach the Elder's Lutheran paintings and engravings, executed for reasons of faith but also of religious propaganda, posited here for the first time (at least as far the Italian bibliography on the subject is concerned), further strengthens the argument that the S. Lorenzo frescoes were meant to interpret the story of Christ's salvation of mankind according to Luther's and Valdès's theological ideas.

Iain Fenlon [iaf1000@cam.ac.uk]

Varieties of experience: music and reform in Renaissance Italy

Abstract tbc.

Harald Hendrix [harald.hendrix@let.uu.nl]

Representation of Suffering and Religious Change in the Early Cinquecento

As of the early decades of the Cinquecento, the representation of torment and agony became one of the most cherished fields of stylistic experimentation in both literature and the arts. Although certainly related to the affirmation in Italy during the 1520s and 1530s, especially in circles of collaborating literati and artists, of new religious ideas largely analogous to those of Northern European reform movements, this new interest in the expression of suffering and of emotions arguably can only partially be explained as the result of a change in religious mood. Other elements, particularly related to the reception of Antiquity, need to be taken into account: the debate on the Laocoon, for instance, and the rediscovery of poetical treatises like Aristotle's *Poetics* and Longinus' *On the Sublime*. While critically examining recent debates on this issue (Puttfarken 2005, D'Elia 2005), this paper intends to discuss the interrelation of these various elements in a presentation centered on the stylistic experimentation during the late 1520s and early 1530s of Titian on the one hand and Aretino and Folengo on the other.

Alexander Nagel [alexander.nagel@utoronto.ca]

Soft iconoclasm: Some forms of the image debate in Italy in the 1530s

The recently restored high altar of Vicenza Cathedral, produced between 1534 and 1541, is exceptional among Italian Renaissance altarpieces for its almost complete lack of figural representation. Instead of a central figure there is a container for the Eucharist, flanked by angels. Instead of ranks of Saints, there is a stunning array of marbles and semi-precious stones inlaid in symmetrical patterns. I believe this altar offered a considered alternative to mimetic figuration, and that it is best understood in light of the debate over the sacraments, the uses of images, and Christian ritual practice sparked by the Protestant Reformation. It thus can stand as a pole around which to organize some of the material related to the topic of art and the Reformation in Italy.

Tom Nichols [t.nichols@abdn.ac.uk]

'Recalled from the infernal regions': Venetian mythological painting in an age of religious reform

The saints, Antonius Possevinus proclaimed in his *De Poesi et Pictura* (1595) were appalled to see 'Jupiters, Venuses, and other unclean beings recalled from the infernal regions' in sixteenth century mythological art. Yet the established Renaissance taste for such erotic works did not diminish or die out in later sixteenth century Venice, perhaps even gaining in aesthetic prestige and expressive range as the Counter-Reformation advanced. This paper will examine developments in Venetian art featuring the so-called 'false gods' (as Possevinus described them) between 1550 and 1600, noting how potentially iconoclastic reformist perspectives were acknowledged, but also mediated and resisted. One very significant way in which the cultural status of mythological art was secured was with reference to literary categories derived from Aristotle's newly fashionable text on aesthetics (the *Poetics*) in mythological paintings. If Titian, as Thomas Puttfarcken has recently argued, deepened the meaning of his erotic mythologies for Philip II with reference to the poetic values of Aristotelian tragedy, other Venetian painters (such as Jacopo Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese) sought to protect the genre with reference to Aristotle's alternative dramatic category of the comic. Reference to authentically classical aesthetic categories offered a learned justification for the genre of mythological art. But if such references separated mythological from religious art, they also 'humanised' it, establishing it as a potent carrier for a range of sensual experiences not catered for by more doctrinal or spiritualised Christian art. It resulted in the creation of mythological paintings which greatly expanded the psychological and emotional reach of the genre, and in an important sense established it as more authentically 'classical'.

Noel O'Regan [n.o'regan@ed.ac.uk]

Church reform and devotional music in 16th-century Rome: the influence of lay confraternities

Historically discussion about the effect of reform on 16th-century church music has focussed on liturgical music and on mass-settings in particular. The rather general instructions which emanated from the Council of Trent about music for the mass did indeed result in some fundamental changes to the way in which liturgical texts were set to polyphony. However, there was an important parallel area in which musical change was also promoted: devotional music sponsored by confraternities and other analogous lay organisations. From the beginning of the century these bodies needed simple music in both the vernacular and Latin for their devotional services: laude, lamentations, litanies, Marian antiphons, music for *sacre rappresentazioni*, spiritual madrigals etc. This paper will look at Roman lay confraternities and at the extent to which their devotional needs shaped musical developments in the city both before and after the Council of Trent.

Letizia Panizza [l.panizza@rhul.ac.uk]

Paradoxes in Cinquecento Italy: Friends or Enemies of Religion? The case of Ortensio Lando

Like Janus, paradoxes face two opposing directions; like Silenus, they pack a double meaning. Their popularity in the Cinquecento lay precisely in this ambivalence. This paper will explore their use (and abuse?) by the master of paradox, Ortensio Lando, who composed not only *Paradossi* (1543), but a year later the *Confutazione del libro de' Paradossi*.

Matthew Treherne [M.Treherne@leeds.ac.uk]

The Tridentine liturgy as theological discourse in Tasso's late works

Although the interest and importance of the religious turn in Torquato Tasso's later work is beginning to be acknowledged in scholarship, his use of liturgy has tended to be something of a conversation stopper. Students of Tasso have tended to see the poet's references to liturgy simply as evidence of a desire to indicate his orthodoxy. In this tendency, however, we lag behind recent developments in theological studies, which have argued that liturgy as a mode of discourse has distinctive theological possibilities, particularly with regard to key questions of temporality and subjectivity.

In this paper, I argue that Tasso's late works, in particular *Il mondo creato* and the *Gerusalemme conquistata*, exploit such possibilities by developing a liturgical tenor. For instance, in the case of *Il mondo creato*, sustained reference to liturgy, and the presentation of the biblical creation narrative, enable Tasso to engage with the

fundamental problem of the relationship between creation and time. *Il mondo creato* is not only a narrative of the creation of the world, but it also explores the world's *condition* of createdness, through a distinctly liturgical treatment of time. In the *Gerusalemme conquistata*, the liturgy also emerges as a rich mode of discourse. For instance, through an allegorical scheme running throughout the text, Tasso links liturgical ritual with the notion of the individual subject's relationship to her creator. In these ways, the liturgical tenor of these late works can be seen as not simply decorative, but as integral to the theological poetic developed by Tasso in his last years.

Raymond Waddington [rbwaddington@ucdavis.edu]
Aretino, Titian, and 'la umanità di Cristo'

This presentation will explore further the likelihood that both Aretino and Titian were sympathetic to religious reform and possibly themselves Nicodemists. I begin with the imprisonment of their confessor as a suspected Lutheran (1549), an episode that will be considered in the larger context of Venetian heresy and the Roman Inquisition. Aretino's correspondence provides substantial evidence of his religious attitudes and connections with reformers. For Titian, however, we have only visual evidence. Examining his representation of the humanity of Jesus, a touchstone of Venetian reformist belief, affords suggestive insights to his own position. The *Ecce Homo* (1543), in which he depicts Aretino as Pontius Pilate, is particularly interesting in this respect.