

The Capacity for Renaissance: the logic and force of the imagination

A Conference hosted by Gonzaga in Florence &
the College of Arts and Sciences, Gonzaga University

20-21-22 February 2014

Used initially to name the Italian cultural transformations that paved the way to modernity, the term 'renaissance' has gone beyond its historical references to denote within a particular domain a 'new direction,' 'a radical renewal,' 'an efflorescence' made possible by an extension through the imagination of the sphere of conceivability.

In recent years philosophers and other theorists in the continental tradition have argued that the place of the imagination in knowing and experiencing had been greatly underdeveloped. It is no longer to be regarded simply as image reproduction but the font of all thinking and a principle of creativity that is formative for the very opening upon things. As such it can be said that a force of imagination extends to all spheres of human life and to fields ranging from philosophy to physics. For instance, the logic and force of imagination in the domain of art history is manifest by Felix Burda in his book, *Andrea Pozzo and Video Art* (St. Joseph University Press, 2013). Here Burda exposes poignantly the improbable links between the famous 17th century Jesuit illusionist, Andrea Pozzo, and the modern video art of Bill Viola, Bruce Nauman, and Gary Hill. As an example of renaissance and the way imagination transforms the political sphere, Mayor Antanas Mockus brought about an efflorescence in Bogota, a city on the verge of chaos.

He achieved what to many observers was the unimaginable, the unthinkable, even contradictory. His unconventional policies and social norm-change strategies led to significantly lowering the number of homicides and traffic fatalities, dramatically increasing the water supply and extending the sewage system, making the streets safe at night for women and the elderly, and even inspiring many citizens to volunteer to pay more taxes.

With this new thinking it is possible to speak of a logic of imagination that rethinks the limits of the logic of contradiction, with its oppositional thinking, and which, by pursuing more progressively the deeper unity of persons and the world, can lay the foundation for a global renaissance.

schedule of events

Thursday, February 20

4:30 - 5:00PM **Welcome and Introduction to the Themes of the conference**

Elisabeth Merimann-Jozwiak, Dean of College of Arts and Sciences,
Gonzaga University, Spokane

Patrick Burke, Dean of Gonzaga in Florence

5:00 - 6:15PM **Keynote Address: The Humanities as the Arts of the Imagination**

James Risser, Seattle University

6:30 - 7:15PM **Wonder in the Renaissance**

Gabriela Dragnea Horvath, Gonzaga in Florence

7:30PM **Reception and No-host Dinner**

Friday, February 21

session one

9:00 - 10:15AM **The Unfolding of Non-Violent Imagination**

Giovanni Scotto, University of Florence

10:30 - 11:30AM **Building the New European Green Man: The EU's Attempts to Construct a European Environmental Citizen**

Joseph Jozwiak, Spokane Falls Community College

11:45 - 1:00PM **The Force of the Imagination as a Tool for Cultural Exchange: Jesuit Fathers and Far Eastern Culture**

Francesco Vossilla, Gonzaga in Florence

1:00 - 3:00PM **No-host Lunch**

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3:00 - 4:00PM **Beyond Representation: The Exorbitant Image in the work of Jean-Luc Nancy and John Sallis**

Walter Brogan, Villanova University

4:15 - 5:15PM **Representational Fiction and Graphic Reality: the Return of the Repressed and an Alternative History of Painting**

Rajiv Kaushkuk, Brock University

5:30 - 6:30PM **Cinematic Parables: Subverting and Reimagining the American Dream**

Matthew Rindge, Gonzaga, Spokane

7:00PM **Reception and No-host Dinner**

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9:30 - 10:30AM **Daring to be Different: The Impact of Positive Deviance on the Global Stage**

Georgie Ann Weatherby, Gonzaga, Spokane

10:45 - 11:45AM **Civil Disobedience in the Wiki World: Cosmopolitanism and Duty in the 21st Century**

Laura Brunell, Gonzaga, Spokane

11:45 - 1:00PM **Sumerian Connections: Ancient Imprints in our World Today**

Guido Gualandi, Gonzaga in Florence

1:00 - 3:00PM **No-host Lunch**

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3:00 - 4:00PM **Imagination, Arrogance, and Its Appearance: Apologizing for Socrates in the Academy**

Molly Flynn, Assumption College

4:15 - 5:15PM **Image and Original in Plato's Meno: on the Necessity of Imagination for Learning**

Burt Hopkins, Seattle University

5:30 - 6:30PM

The Unifying Ground of Phantasia in Nietzsche's Platonic and Post-Modern View of Dionysian Rhythmic Nature

MaryLou Sena, Seattle University

7:00PM

Reception and No-host Dinner

conference participants

Walter
Brogan

Walter Brogan is a Professor of Philosophy at Villanova University, and specializes in ancient Greek philosophy and contemporary continental philosophy. He is a member of the executive committee of the American Philosophical Association (Eastern). He is the past director of the Collegium Phaenomenologicum in Città di Castello, Italy, the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, and the Ancient Philosophy Society. Dr. Brogan is the author of [Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being](#), several edited volumes, and many articles focusing on ancient Greek philosophy and contemporary European thought.

Laura
Brunell

Laura Brunell is Associate Professor of Political Science, International Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies at Gonzaga University. She received her undergraduate degree in Communications, Legal Institutions, Economics and Government from The American University, in Washington, DC, and her Master's and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Colorado at Boulder. She has taught at Gonzaga University in Spokane since 2002. She is the author of [Institutional Capital](#), on the dynamics of state-civil society relations in post-Communist Poland, and several articles on domestic violence movements and reforms in post-Communist countries. She has also written about 3rd Wave feminism for *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Her current research and teaching interests center on how political identities, citizenship, and sovereignty are being redefined by globalization, digital technologies and neo-liberalism.

Molly Brigid
Flynn

Molly Brigid Flynn (Assumption College, Mass.) is an associate professor of philosophy at Assumption College. Before earning her Ph.D. at The Catholic University of America (2007), writing on Husserl and Searle, she received her B.A. in political economy and philosophy from Mount St. Mary's College (Md.) and then her M.A. in philosophy from The Catholic University of America, writing on Aristotle. Her current interests focus on Husserlian phenomenology, social ontology, political philosophy, and the tradition of liberal education. Her articles have appeared, e.g., in *Husserl Studies*, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, and *Studia Phaenomenologica*. She serves as the book review editor for *The New Yearbook*.

**Guido
Gualandi**

conference participants

Guido Gualandi is an archaeologist, teacher, farmer, and winemaker. He has a degree in Lettere e Filosofia, indirizzo Scienze dell'Antichità from the University of Florence. He has a Masters in Social Sciences and a Ph.D. in History of Civilisation from EHESS, Paris. For five years he was a member of the French Archaeological mission on the Middle Euphrates directed by O.Rouault, College de France. He was responsible for the new arrangement of the Glyptic collection, Department des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre, Paris. He has worked for the Italian Academy of Advanced studies at Columbia University and is currently teaching at Gonzaga in Florence. He has written many archaeological articles on history and glyptic in the Middle Euphrates and has worked as a journalist and consultant for 20 years in the field of new technology and economics. He started an agricultural company eleven years ago.

**Burt
Hopkins**

Burt Hopkins' main research interest is the philosophical foundation of the transformation of knowledge that began in the 16th century with the philosophical advent of modernity. He has written three books, most recently [The Origin of the Logic of Symbolic Mathematics: Jacob Klein and Edmund Husserl](#) (2011) and [The Philosophy of Husserl](#) (2010), and edited two others. He has published over fifty articles and given over seventy lectures on contemporary European philosophy (especially the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Jacob Klein), Plato, early modern philosophy, and philosophy and depth psychology. He is founding co-editor of *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*.

**Gabriela Dragnea
Horvath**

Gabriela Dragnea Horvath earned her Ph.D. in philosophy at the Free University, Berlin. She currently teaches for Gonzaga in Florence and for New York University in Florence and is general editor of the Gonzaga-in-Florence journal: *Voyages: Rethinking Nature and Its Expressions*. She has published essays, book reviews, poetry translations and short stories in Italy, Romania, USA, and Australia. She has authored a book in Italian, [Shakespeare ermetismo. mistica, magia](#) (Rome, 2003); has co-translated with Stuart Friebert and Adriana Varga the volume [Hands Behind My Back](#), by Marin Sorescu (Oberlin Translation Series, 1991) and has published her doctoral thesis [Theatre and Magic in the Elizabethan Renaissance](#) (Berlin, 2012) online. She is preparing the final version of an interdisciplinary study on Platonic philosophy, theatre and magic in the Italian and the Elizabethan Renaissance due to be published by Ashgate in 2014.

**Joseph
Jozwiak**

Joseph Jozwiak is currently the Assistant Dean of Social Sciences, Accounting and Economics, and Human Services at Spokane Falls Community College. Prior to this he was a Professor of Political Science at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. His research areas include environmental policy, environmental justice, European politics, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Dr. Jozwiak has published articles related to this research to include *Journal of Borderland Studies*, *Journal of Public Management and Social Policy*, *Journal of Popular*

Rajiv
Kaushik

Culture, Urbana: Analysis and Methods and European Political Studies as well as several chapters in edited volumes.

Rajiv Kaushik is an associate professor at Brock University in Canada. He has written on artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat and Cy Twombly. He has two monograph volumes, Art and Institution: Aesthetics in the Late Works of Merleau-Ponty (2011), and Art, Language and Figure in Merleau-Ponty: Excursions in Hyper-Dialectic (2013).

Matthew
Rindge

Matthew S. Rindge (Ph.D., Emory University) is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Gonzaga University where he he teaches "Bible and Film," "Bible and Ethics," and "Life and Teachings of Jesus." He previously taught at Emory University, Columbia Theological Seminary, and has also taught courses in six Asian, Latin American, and European countries. He is the author of Jesus' Parable of the Rich Fool: Luke 12:13-34 among Ancient Conversations on Death and Possessions (SBL, 2011). He has published articles on diverse topics ("Lament and Divine Abandonment in Mark," "Jewish Identity under Foreign Empires," "Mark's Gospel and Social Outcasts," "Teaching the Bible and Film," "Death and Money in Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes"), and has contributed several essays and chapters to edited collections (such as Bible and Cinema). He writes about Religion and Culture for outlets such as *The Huffington Post*. He is currently writing Cinematic Parables: Subverting the Religion of the American Dream (Baylor University Press) and co-writing A History of Biblical Interpretation to 1835 (Westminster John Knox Pres). In the Society of Biblical Literature, he chairs the Scripture and Film section and serves on the steering committee for the Bible and Popular Culture section. In 2011, Dr. Rindge received the Paul J. Achtemeier Award in New Testament Scholarship, and in 2012 he was honored with a Gonzaga University Exemplary Faculty Award.

James
Risser

James Risser is Professor of Philosophy at Seattle University. He is a past Executive Co-Director of the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Collegium Phaenomenologicum and for the North American Society for Philosophical Hermeneutics. His published works include Hermeneutics and the Voice of the Other: Re-reading Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics (1997), and The Life of Understanding: A Contemporary Hermeneutics (2012). He is the editor of Heidegger Toward the Turn: Essays on the Work of the 1930s (1999), coeditor of *American Continental Philosophy* (2000), and Associate Editor of the *Journal Research in Phenomenology*.

MaryLou
Sena

MaryLou Sena received her doctorate from DePaul University in 1988 and joined the Seattle University faculty in 1989. Her areas of specialization and publication are in Pre-Platonic/ Platonic thought and in 19th- and 20th-century Continental philosophy. She is the recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Award for excellence in teaching (1992). She presently is completing a manuscript on Nietzsche's critique of modernity from the perspective of his pre-Platonic, postmodern view of the world.

**Giovanni
Scotto**

conference participants

Giovanni Scotto is currently Professor of Mediation and Conflict Theories and Sociology at the University of Florence. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the Freie Universität Berlin (Germany). Among his main areas of expertise are: peacebuilding, conflict resolution and transformation, mediation sociology of education. He is founder of Laboratorio Forma Mentis, an action-research laboratory for constructive conflict transformation based in Prato (Italy), and collaborates with the Interagency Network of Education in Emergencies. Former positions: Professor in International Organization, Syracuse University, Florence (2010-11); Lecturer in Conflict Resolution - Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford (2009-2010); Associate Visiting Professor at the University of Florence (2004-2009); Associate Researcher at the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin (1997-2003). His main publications include: Scotto G., "Mediare conflitti – uno sguardo trasformativo" [Mediating conflicts: A transformative view], in Lucarelli, P. (ed.), Mediazione e progresso, Torino: UTET 2013; Scotto G., Rivers R. / Scotto G., eds. Peace Training, Cluj-Napoca (RO): PATRIR 2007). Friedensbildung in Mostar, Hamburg: LIT 2004). Wwith Emanuele Arielli: La guerra del Kosovo [The Kosovo war], Roma: Editori Riuniti 1999.

**Francesco
Vossilla**

Francesco Vossilla is an art historian born and educated in Florence. For family reasons he has worked and lived in the United States and Taiwan. His studies have focused on Renaissance Culture from philosophy to the visual arts. Dr. Vossilla has published mostly on Renaissance sculpture and ceramics as well as on the history of Italian museums. His most recent publications have focused on Michelangelo and his contribution to the birth of modern aesthetics. He is teaching classes on Renaissance Philosophy of Art, Museum Studies, Renaissance Architecture, and Renaissance Art History for Italian and American institutions.

**Georgie Ann
Weatherby**

Georgie Ann Weatherby joined the faculty at Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA in 1996, and is a Professor of Sociology & Criminal Justice. She earned her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Washington in 1990. She is widely published in the areas of crime, gender, religion, deviant behavior, and the law. These are her teaching specialties as well. Her Mock Trial program, which she founded in 1997, is nationally ranked, and she serves on the National Board of Directors for the American Mock Trial Association. Dr. Weatherby arrived at Gonzaga with several teaching awards, including installment into Phi Beta Kappa (Gamma Chapter). In 2006, her GU students selected her as an Honorary Inductee into Alpha Sigma Nu (Gonzaga Chapter).