

# Canberra

# Dante

July - August 2014

# Review

*"To preserve and disseminate Italian language and culture"*

ISSN 1441-8592 Periodico bimestrale del Comitato di Canberra della Società Dante Alighieri - 2nd Floor Notaras Multicultural Centre  
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## Regular Events

**Dante Musica Viva  
rehearsals every  
Thursday 5-7pm**

**Conversation groups  
7-9 pm Thursdays  
Until 31 July**

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## HOW IS ITALY PORTRAYED IN THE AUSTRALIAN MEDIA?

**Stereotypes can often tinge opinions,  
but interest on Italian issues in the  
Australian press is varied and extensive**

## FRANCO PAPANDREA

**Adjunct Professor at UC's  
News and Media Research Centre  
is a co-author of the 2013 report**

## Italy in the Australian News Media

**and will share its interesting  
findings with us**

**8pm**

**Thursday 17 July 2014**

**Function Room, Level 2, Notaras Multicultural Centre  
180 London Cct (entry via Civic Square)**

# News from the Office

## TO ALL MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

The Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra Inc. office hours are:

**from 10:30am to 2:00pm**

**Tuesday to Friday**

For enquiries please call the office on 6247 1884 or visit our website:

**[www.dantecanberra.org.au](http://www.dantecanberra.org.au)**

We are also on **Facebook**:  
click '**like**' to be up-to-date!

## LIBRARY

The Dante library is open during office hours. It includes the following sections: Reading, Education, Literature, Youth, Geography, History, Art, Music, Cinema.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### President

Professor Franco Papandrea

### Vice-Presidents

Yvette Devlin; Tamsin Hong

### Secretary

Davide Lucchetti

### Treasurer

Mario Rosi

### Committee members

Luigi Catizone, Orlando di Iulio,  
Francesca Foppoli, Alessia La Cavera,  
Nicola Patini, Bruno Santagostino

*Journal Editor:* Yvette Devlin

*Note:* The journal editor wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Alessia of the Dante office in compiling this issue.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 03 Jul | Conversation groups  |
| 10 Jul | Conversation groups  |
| 17 Jul | Conversation groups, then<br><b>Franco Papandrea on how<br/>Italy is portrayed in the<br/>Australian Media</b> (see p.1) |
| 24 Jul | Conversation groups  |
| 27 Jul | Antonio Carluccio at<br>Fyshwick Markets (see p. 3)  |
| 31 Jul | Conversation groups  |
| 30 Jul | Term 2 ends  |
| 29 Aug | <b>Enrolments for term 3 close</b>   |

## ITALIAN LANGUAGE COURSES IN ITALY

*Are you thinking about  
studying in Italy?  
Don't miss this opportunity!  
The Dante Alighieri Society  
of Camerino (Marche region)  
offers Australian students  
discounts of up to 46%  
on their 2014 course prices.*

*For only 922 Euros, you could have  
a four-week language and culture  
course, accommodation,  
cultural visits etc.*

*Excellent value!*

*If you intend to travel to Italy for  
an intensive course, contact  
the office for further details or visit  
[www.scuoladantealighieri.org](http://www.scuoladantealighieri.org)*

*The famous chef*  
**ANTONIO CARLUCCIO**  
*is coming to town!*

**Antonio Carluccio will be visiting the Fyshwick Markets on Sunday 27 July for an Italian Day as part of this year's Truffle Festival and in celebration of the history of the Markets and the Italian community.**

**There will be food and wine tastings around the markets and you can meet Antonio Carluccio whilst he is strolling through the markets.**

**There will be Italian music and truffle cooking demonstrations from Master chef finalist Mindy Woods.**

**Antonio will be conducting a cooking class with Andrew Haskins from 3Seeds cooking school, followed by a 3Seeds truffle lunch with Antonio (bookings only for both events).**

**You can buy fresh black truffles and truffle products and enjoy some great live music, truffle cooking demonstrations, wine, beer & food tastings or enjoy a Truffle pizza.**

***For more event information visit [fyshwickfreshfoodmarkets.com.au](http://fyshwickfreshfoodmarkets.com.au)***

**Spend one day  
with...**



**Antonio  
Carluccio**

# Modi di dire

## *Sayings*

by Francesca Foppoli

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Animals play a big role in our lives and our close relationship with them is reflected in the language and culture.

### *Mosche, mosconi e moscerini*

Che fortuna avere un marito come il tuo! È proprio una mosca bianca.

***What a stroke of luck having a husband like yours! He's really a white blackbird.***

Antonio è grande e grosso, ma non farebbe male a una mosca.

***Antonio is a big man but would not hurt a fly.***

Avevano investito un capitale nell'attività, ma sono rimasti con un pugno di mosche.

***They had invested a lot of money in the business but were left empty-handed.***

Appena gliel'ho detto gli è saltata la mosca al naso.

***As soon as I told him, he lost his patience.***

La mia insegnante di matematica era molto severa. Appena entrava in classe, non si sentiva volare una mosca.

***My maths teacher was very strict. As she walked through the door, you could have heard a pin drop.***

Sua figlia ha un sacco di mosconi che le ronzano attorno.

***His daughter has lots of guys hovering around her.***

A causa del caldo torrido la gente moriva come mosche.

***The heat was overwhelming and people were dropping like flies.***

Accanto a lei, mi sento piccola e indifesa, come un moscerino.

***Next to her, I feel small and defenceless like a tiny insect.***

# L'angolo della lingua

## *Language corner*

by Yvette Devlin

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Continuing on from the last newsletter, here are a few more idiomatic expressions that use the verb *fare* (= to do/make/take/have).

Quest'estate faccio un viaggio in Italia = ***This year I'm taking a trip to Italy.***

Mi sono fatta male al ginocchio quando sono scivolata = ***I hurt my knee when I slipped.***

Avete delle domande da fare? = ***Do you want to ask any questions?*** [Literally: do you have any questions to ask?]

Abbiamo fatto visita ai residenti del villaggio per anziani = ***We paid a visit to the residents of the nursing home.***

Gli italiani ci tengono a fare bella figura = ***Italians are keen to make a good impression*** [the opposite would be *fare brutta figura* = ***to make a bad impression***].

More expressions using *fare* will be included in the next edition. Meanwhile, it always brings a smile to my face when I hear Anglicised Italian words used in Australia. One of the most common is 'buccare' to mean 'to book' however the word does not exist in Italian. We say *prenotare il biglietto* = ***to book the ticket***. Similarly, the word 'locare' does not exist. Instead of saying "hai locato la porta?" we have to say "hai chiuso la porta?" = ***have you locked the door?*** [to lock = chiudere].

### *Per ridere un po'!*

*Qual è la differenza tra  
un pugile e una lavatrice?*

*La lavatrice lava  
mentre il pugile... stende!*



# L'angolo della poesia

## *Poetry corner*

by Yvette Devlin

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**SERGIO CORAZZINI** was born in Rome in February 1886 and died there of tuberculosis in 1907. He lived a very unhappy short life marred by illness (his own mother and one brother died of TB) and poverty. His poetry is typical of the 'twilight' (crepuscolare) genre characterised by feelings of emptiness and melancholy. Corazzini also focuses on the simple things in life and uses simple, accessible language. Still young, he frequented a Roman café next to his father's tobacconist shop, Caffè Sartoris, where he met and mixed with other literary figures. He wrote his first sonnet in the Roman dialect – *Na bella idea* – at the age of 16. The sadness of his emotions is obvious in the following poem.

### *La liberazione*

Canterellando, senza  
tremare, la prigioniera  
dalle mani logore  
raccolse tutte le vecchie cose  
polverose, i suoi denari  
di un'altra epoca,  
riguardò nelli angoli ove la sera  
già tesseva le sue tele d'ombra  
e tentò la porta vigilata  
dai ragni centenari.

Seguivano con aria  
di danza  
un loro monotono giro le foglie  
davanti alla casa  
della Melanconia,  
dove la Speranza affamata  
fuggiva indisturbata.

The following translation is found in Michael Palma's *Sunday Evening – Selected Poems of Sergio Corazzini*:

### *The Liberation*

Singing softly, without / a tremor, the prisoner /  
with worn-out hands / gathered up all the dusty /

old things, her coins / from another era, / looked  
into the corners where evening / had already  
spun its webs of shadow / and tried the door  
guarded / by hundred-year-old spiders.

The leaves with an air / of dancing / ran through  
their monotonous round / before the house / of  
Melancholy, where / unchallenged, starving  
Hope / made her escape.



*Sergio Corazzini published several collections of verse between 1904 and his death. Corazzini's 'fanciullo triste' undoubtedly echoes Pascoli's 'fanciullino', but with a darker tonality of existential anguish and with no hint of the other's privileged status.*

# Cenno storico

## *A bit of history*

by Yvette Devlin

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**The Roman Inquisition** (also known as **The Congregation of the Inquisition** and **The Holy Office**) was established in July 1542 by Pope Paul III to fight heresy. The Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions had already been in existence, with the former commencing in 1478 and ending in 1834, and the latter commencing in 1536 and ending its practices in 1821.

The Spanish inquisition was particularly severe and, like the Portuguese version, extended to its colonies. They focussed mainly on testing the sincerity of converts to Catholicism. The Roman version focussed on orthodoxy: it aimed to maintain and defend the integrity of the faith and proscribe false doctrines. Its most famous trial took place in 1633 when Galileo's heliocentric theory was found heretical, as had a similar theory previously put forward by Copernicus.

The Roman Inquisition ended in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The office is now called Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and its staff continue to be chosen from the Dominican order.

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**L'Inquisizione romana** (conosciuta anche come la **Congregazione dell'Inquisizione** o il **Sant'Uffizio**) fu fondata nel luglio del 1542 da Papa Paolo III per combattere l'eresia. Le inquisizioni spagnola e portoghese esistevano già: quella spagnola ebbe inizio nel 1478 e finì nel 1834, e quella portoghese ebbe inizio nel 1536 e finì il suo operato nel 1821.

L'inquisizione spagnola era particolarmente severa e, come la versione portoghese, si era estesa anche nelle colonie. Queste inquisizioni s'incentravano sulle persone convertite al cristianesimo da altre fedi. L'inquisizione romana invece era focalizzata sull'ortodossia: il suo scopo era di mantenere e difendere l'integrità della fede e proscrivere false dottrine. Il suo più famoso processo si tenne nel 1633

quando Galileo fu accusato di eresia per sostenere la sua teoria eliocentrica. Copernico aveva subito lo stesso trattamento.

L'inquisizione romana finì a metà del XIX secolo. Il nome attuale di questo ufficio è 'La congregazione per la dottrina della fede', e il personale continua ad essere scelto dall'ordine religioso dei domenicani.



**Pope Paul III - Titian (1545-1546), Napoli**

### *Pope Paul III: who was he?*

**Pope Paul III** (1468 - 1549), born **Alessandro Farnese**, was Pope from 13 October 1534 to his death in 1549. He came to the papal throne in an era following the sack of Rome in 1527 and rife with uncertainties in the Catholic Church following the Protestant Reformation. During his pontificate, and in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, new Catholic religious orders and societies, such as the Jesuits, the Barnabites, and the Congregation of the Oratory, attracted a popular following. He convened the Council of Trent in 1545. He was a significant patron of the arts and employed nepotism to advance the power and fortunes of his family.

# Student feedback on our first term courses

## *L'opinione degli studenti sui corsi del primo trimestre*

by Yvette Devlin\*

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Our first-term formal courses have been very successful. We had 86 enrolments (the highest number since 2010) at four levels ranging from Beginners 1 to Advanced.

The most satisfactory feature of our Term 1, however, is the achievement of the highest retention rates ever recorded: 82% and 85% in the two B1 classes; 100% in B2; 88% in B3/4; and 100% in Advanced. The lowest retention rate is usually recorded for Beginners 1 – in the past, this has typically been around two-thirds.

I have read all end-of-course evaluation forms and find that student feedback has been extremely positive. Students volunteered comments such as: “Alessia [B1] has been an excellent teacher. Her enthusiasm for the language has made learning Italian enjoyable and easy”; “As a beginners course, it was excellently paced. I’ve undertaken a number of language courses and Stefania [B1] is one of the best teachers I’ve had”; “I really enjoyed Lucrezia’s [B2] teaching style. She is engaging and very informative”; “Pauline [B3/4] was able to make every lesson interesting and informative and cater to the needs of the entire group”; “A well-presented course with an enthusiastic teacher [Francesca - Advanced]”.

And so, on we go! Our enrolments in second term have been the highest in five years and we are running six classes at five different levels. All students can be assured of our constant commitment to quality and to make their experience of learning the beautiful Italian language an enjoyable and rewarding one.

*Ed's note: Yvette is our class coordinator and all teachers are grateful for all that she does to create a pleasant environment for students and teachers. Thank you Yvette!*

### Did you know that...?

*The following appeared in The Australian on 12 June 2014. The writer was Becky Arthur:*

*“Learning a new language is a great way to explore a foreign country and its culture, and it may help you feel young too.*

*Research conducted at the University of Edinburgh over a 50-year period suggests that people who speak two or more languages have significantly better cognitive function than their counterparts who only speak a native language. It's never too late to start either, with the study showing the same positive effects occur regardless of when the subjects learn their second language.*

*Bilingual participants benefited the most from increased general intelligence and reading abilities”.*

*Feeling good about yourselves now? You should! Learning Italian is great for your intellect!*



# Dante Musica Viva - Our Choir

## *Dante Musica Viva, il nostro coro*

by Yvette Devlin

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This is a new regular column on DMV to keep members informed of what the choir is doing and also feature some of its members.

DMV was formed ten years ago by members of the society attending conversation evenings. We are extremely proud of our choir: it is the public face of the society as it widely promotes Italian culture through music and song and also entertains the Italian community.

Since the beginning of the year, DMV has given four major performances: on 9 February at the National Multicultural Festival; on 16 March in the foyer of the High Court of Australia; on 18 May at the Italo-Australian Club where it held its second annual concert, lasting over two hours; and on 1 June at the celebrations for Italy's national day at the Italian Cultural Centre. On 1 June DMV sang the two national anthems in the morning at the official opening of festivities by Ambassador Pier Francesco Zazo and then again in the afternoon when it sang nine pieces to a very receptive audience. Its next big

project is to record its second CD with entirely new pieces which include opera arias such as *Libiam* and *Noi siamo zingarelle* from *La Traviata* and *Il coro degli zingari* from *Il trovatore*.

\*

We open our feature column with **Louise Ibbotson**. Born in Perth, Louise initially worked as a portrait photographer and joined a drama school to study and perform drama and modern ballet. That's where she met Phil, then a trainee teacher. They married in 1949 and had three children. The Ibbotsons subsequently lived in country towns where he was a teacher, and both performed or produced musicals – Louise sang or danced, or both. In Bunbury she ran a School of Modern Ballet. The Ibbotsons moved to Canberra in 1977.

Louise's father had been a soldier in WW2, had been taken prisoner and was held in N. Italy but he had run away after 18 months. The villagers who sheltered him appreciated his musical skills and gave him a mandolin to play for them – and



DMV after performance at High Court on 16 March 2014



# **Dante Musica Viva - Our Choir**

## ***Dante Musica Viva, il nostro coro - cont'd***

**by Yvette Devlin**

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**Louise Ibbotson at Grevillea Park - 2014**

later for keeps. Louise learnt to play this very mandolin from her father and it is the mandolin she still plays for DMV.

Before joining DMV (to which she was recruited by Francesco Sofo) Louise was playing with the Canberra Mandolin Orchestra. She maintains her playing commitments with the CMO and we are delighted she still maintains her involvement with us. "I am proud to say now we have a very good choir who look good and sing beautifully. My father, if he had lived, would have been very proud to know that as a thank-you to Italian people, I play that same mandolin for the choir" said Louise.

On a more practical note, Louise 'designed' the DMV uniform (white top, black skirt/trousers and a green-red scarf/neck tie to create the colours of the Italian flag) and made all the neck ties for us. Thank you Louise: you are a fantastic member of the choir!

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## **2014 CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES**

### **FORMAL COURSES (6-8 pm Italo-Aust Club in Forrest or Dante Library, NMC, Civic)**

- Term 1    Tues 11/Wed 12 Feb to Tues 15/Wed 16 Apr (10 wks then a 5-wk break to 20/21 May incl)  
Term 2    Tues 27/Wed 28 May to Tues 29/Wed 30 Jul (10 wks then a 5-wk break to 2-3 Sept incl)  
Term 3    Tues 9/Wed 10 Sept to Tues 11/Wed 12 Nov (10 wks)

### **THURSDAY CONVERSATION GROUPS (7-9 pm Function Room NMC, Civic)**

- Term 1    13 Feb to 17 Apr (10 wks then 5-wk break - 24 Apr; 1, 8, 15, 22 May)  
Term 2    29 May to 31 July (10 wks then 5-wk break - 7, 14, 21, 28 Aug; 4 Sept)  
Term 3    11 Sept to 13 Nov (10 wks)

*Total: 30 weeks*

### **CULTURAL ACTIVITIES (8-9 pm Function Room, NMC, Civic)**

- 6 March    Jeff Brownrigg: *Australian Legend - Dale Trendall and Ancient Pottery of Southern Italy*  
3 April    Gordon Bull: *Bernini - genius of Baroque Rome*  
19 June    Gino Moliterno: *Fellini*  
17 July    Franco Papandrea: *Italy as portrayed in the Aust media - findings of a 2013 survey report*  
9 Oct    Lyndall Heddle: *Siena*  
20 Nov    End-of year function: *Dante Musica Viva and other entertainment; cooking competition; refreshments*

### **AGM: 17 April (8-9 pm Function Room, NMC, Civic)**

### **CHOIR REHEARSALS (5-7pm Function Room, NMC) Every Thursday from 30 Jan to 11 Dec**

Notes: NMC = Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic.

We have ten full weeks of conversation in Term 3, with final event a week later. We have two cultural events per term.

# Italy's National Day Celebrations

## *La Festa della Repubblica*

by Yvette Devlin

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Italy's national day – la Festa della Repubblica – was celebrated in Canberra over three days.

On Sunday 1 June there was a community event at the Italian Cultural Centre in Forrest. Those attending could admire Ferraris in the courtyard, eat Italian food, buy Italian biscuits and pastries, eat roast chestnuts, drink Italian coffee and be entertained in the hall of the Centre. Entertainment included a tarantella dance by children of Calabrian origin; a *commedia dell'arte* performance organised by the bilingual school; and a concert by our choir Dante Musica Viva. The community event was opened by the Italian ambassador. Another speaker was Giulia Jones of the Legislative Assembly. You'll be interested to know that Giulia has Italian grandparents and gave her speech in Italian and English.

On Monday 2 June the ambassador held an official reception at his residence. Some 400 people attended – from the diplomatic community (there were at least 20 ambassadors), from the Federal Government, from the Italian community, from scientific and cultural institutions and from Italian companies. A very pleasant surprise at the reception was the performance of three arias by a young Italian tenor – Rocco Speranza – who is in Australia with sponsorship from Pacific Australia. Rocco has a powerful voice and sings with great sensitivity.

For Tuesday 3 June the embassy and Sydney's Italian Institute of Culture had organised a piano recital, at the School of Music, by world-renowned Italian pianist Roberto Prosseda. Roberto is a musicologist and an excellent com-

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**Ambassador Pier Francesco Zazo with Paola Cerrato and Giulia Jones of the Legislative Assembly at the opening of the Italian community day**



# Italy's National Day Celebrations

## *La Festa della Repubblica - cont'd*

by Yvette Devlin

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**The Italian tenor Rocco Speranza between Svetlana Zazo and the Argentinean ambassador Pedro Villagra Delgado**

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municator. His explanation of the various pieces helped enormously in the appreciation of the works. Displaying high technical skills, he performed compositions by Listz, Verdi and Caetani, a pupil of Listz. The Listz pieces were inspired by Italian literature including Dante's Divine Comedy. Caetani was inspired by Chopin.

It could be said that over these three days we celebrated Italian 'culture' in multi-faceted ways: from cuisine, luxury sport cars and Italian popular songs and dances, to opera arias and a piano concert. Something for everyone!



**Roberto Prosseda\* during his performance**

*Roberto Prosseda was born in Latina in 1975. He began composing for the piano at the age of 4, and took his first private piano lessons at 6. In 1985 he entered the Conservatorio Respighi in Latina, where he graduated in 1994. Prosseda has won major prizes in several important piano competitions, and his recent engagements have included performing at venues such as the Berlin Philharmonie, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Wigmore Hall, Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro alla Scala and Sala Verdi in Milano, Settembre Musica in Torino, Ravenna Festival, Triennale Köln, Biennale di Venezia.*



# Federico Fellini

## *A presentation by Gino Moliterno*

by Yvette Devlin

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What a pleasure it was to welcome back Dr Gino Moliterno for the fifth year in a row to expand our minds on the subject of Italian cinema of which he is an authority – he teaches the Film Studies Program at the ANU and has published a *Historical Dictionary of Italian Cinema*.

We were equally delighted to welcome a few special guests to our cultural evening: the new Italian ambassador to Australia Pier Francesco Zazo and his wife Svetlana; the principal architect of Parliament House Aldo Giurgola; and the Legislative Assembly politician Giulia Jones.

Gino gave us a rather unorthodox presentation. He could have chronologically described Fellini's career by illustrating the various stages

and influences through excerpts from his most famous Oscar-winning films. He chose, instead, to focus on Fellini's drawing and cartooning skills because of their influence on the films he was to direct before talking about his themes.

Thus we learnt that instead of attending university when he moved to Rome, Fellini spent his time drawing and selling his drawings. In Rome he collaborated with the magazine *Marc'Aurelio* and drew cartoon books for the Funny Faces Shop; married Giulietta Masina in 1943 (remaining married to her for 50 years until his death, with Giulietta dying six months later) and met the Roman actor Aldo Fabrizi. That's when he wrote the script for Rossellini's film *Rome Open City* (1945), with Fabrizi as the main char-

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**Gino Moliterno (centre) with Franco Papandrea, Giulia Jones, ambassador Pier Francesco Zazo, Aldo Giurgola and Svetlana Zazo**





# Federico Fellini

## *A presentation by Gino Moliterno - cont'd*

by Yvette Devlin

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acter. He subsequently worked with other great actors such as Alberto Sordi (for ex. In *The White Sheik* - 1952) and Marcello Mastroianni (in *La dolce vita* (1960) which, in Gino's words put Fellini "in the stratosphere", and *8½* (1963)). His own wife acted with Anthony Quinn in the beautiful *La strada* (1954).

Gino took us through the cinematic career of Fellini (born in 1920, died in 1993) from the neo-realism genre of the forties to the autobiographical art-house films from the sixties. Fellini scripted and directed 24 films over a period of forty years - "all brilliant" according to Gino. Eight of these films received 11 Oscar nominations; five of them were awarded the Oscar (including *La strada*, *Le notti di Cabiria*, *8½* and *Amarcord* for best foreign film). And in 1993 just before his death Fellini was awarded an Oscar 'For Lifetime Achievement'.

We learnt that Fellini's body of work is largely autobiographical and is often about memory, a theme he reflects on in the film *L'intervista* (1987). "There is a great deal of depth in his philosophy. [...] In his films we move around in space as well as time (past and present are mixed) [...] We are always recreating memories". Indeed in one of his documentaries titled *Sono un gran bugiardo* (=I'm a great liar) you wonder whether events "recalled" really happened or have been invented.

We were shown two excerpts from *Roma* (1972). In the first we get the impression we are following works to extend the Rome underground, with relentless drilling and exploration of the dark tunnels until some frescoes of a 2000-year-old Roman house are discovered but as soon as light is shone on them, they lose their colour and are lost forever - perhaps an allegory of memories lost. Gino explained that the film was actually filmed at Cinecittà and not at all in the bowels of Rome.

The second excerpt dealt with a fashion parade held in the Roman palazzo of a 'principessa', with the models being priests, bishops and nuns. The amazing scenes range from the deeply spiritual to baroque theatricality, from lightweight and entertaining to downright grotesque. Fellini was particularly critical of the church for its repression (especially of human sexuality) while also appreciating its ability to "put on a good show". Interestingly, the Vatican did not request the banning of any of Fellini's films, possibly because Fellini "had good connections everywhere including inside the Vatican".

Gino also reminded us that we owe two words to Fellini: "Fellinesque" to describe any kind of extravagant, fanciful even baroque image in cinema and art in general; and "paparazzo" from the name of a character in *La dolce vita* who pursues celebrities or society figures to photograph them in a sensational way. Fellini also provided inspiration to a great number of film directors.

At the end of his presentation, Gino took some questions and comments from the floor including one from Aldo Giurgola. To another questioner, Gino explained that Fellini films are unlike Hollywood ones – they focus on the process and not the point of arrival. One either enjoys this experience or finds it too slow, boring or confronting - and walks out.

At the start of Gino's presentation there were about 50 members and guests present but the session went beyond the expected time (and we could have stayed another hour at least) so many had to leave before the end of the presentation. Many of those who stayed to the very end had the opportunity to talk to Gino personally to share their views or be further enlightened. The ambassador and his wife, Aldo Giurgola, Gino Moliterno and our president Franco Papandrea were the last ones to leave.

# Don Milani, un prete scomodo e profetico

## *An inconvenient and prophetic priest*

di Luigi Catizone\*

Don Lorenzo Milani (1923-1967) è stato un prete scomodo e profetico. Chi è stato adolescente o giovane in Italia negli anni '60 probabilmente lo conosce.

Di origine ebraica, si avvicina al Cristianesimo a vent'anni, quando abbandona il mondo borghese, raffinato e colto della sua famiglia ed entra in seminario. A 24 anni fu ordinato sacerdote. Don Lorenzo, per le sue scelte nette e coerenti, le sue prese di posizione, il linguaggio tagliente e preciso, la sua stringente logica, suscitava grandi consensi o grandi dissensi.



Su Don Lorenzo molto si è scritto; sono state fatte opere teatrali e quattro film, ma fondamentale resta il suo aspetto religioso. Certamente è difficile poter dare in poche righe un quadro completo di questa personalità molto complessa, ma spero di suscitare la curiosità di chi non lo conosce, che può essere soddisfatta visitando il sito della Fondazione sostenuta soprattutto dai suoi ex allievi <http://www.donlorenzomilani.it>.

Cappellano dall'ottobre del 1947 nel centro operaio di San Donato di Calenzano (Provincia di Firenze), vi fonda una scuola popolare serale per i giovani operai e contadini della sua parrocchia. Nata da quella esperienza, nel

maggio del 1958 dette alle stampe *Esperienze pastorali*, ma nel dicembre dello stesso anno il libro fu ritirato dal commercio per disposizione del Sant'Uffizio, che riteneva "inopportuna" la sua lettura. Di recente è stata presentata a Papa Francesco la domanda di revoca di tale disposizione.

Il 7 dicembre 1954 don Lorenzo fu nominato priore di Barbiana, una piccola parrocchia di montagna sperduta nel Mugello, che oggi è possibile visitare, avendola i suoi ex-alunni mantenuta quasi come era in origine. A Barbiana, subito aprì una scuola serale, ma nel 1956 organizzò per i primi sei ragazzi che avevano finito le elementari una scuola di avviamento industriale.



Alla scuola di Barbiana non c'erano vacanze e ricreazione, nemmeno la domenica. Nessuno dei ragazzi si lamentava. Ma coloro che andavano a visitare la scuola dissentivano su questo punto. Un giorno, Lucio, che a casa aveva trentasei mucche nella stalla da pulire ogni mattina, disse: "La scuola sarà sempre meglio della merda". E forse questa fu la risposta migliore a tutte le critiche.

La sua scuola accoglieva solo operai e contadini perché voleva eliminare la differenza culturale che esisteva tra questi e altri strati sociali. Don

# Don Milani, un prete scomodo e profetico

## *An inconvenient and prophetic priest - cont'd*

di Luigi Catizone\*

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Lorenzo la definiva scuola classista, nel senso cioè di scelta dei poveri, sempre alla luce del Vangelo. Un giorno un ragazzo in visita alla scuola gli disse: “Ma lei insegna anche a lui che è comunista e dichiarato nemico della Chiesa?” Don Lorenzo rispose: “Io gli insegno il bene e a essere un uomo migliore e se poi continua a rimanere comunista, sarà un comunista migliore”.

L'11 febbraio 1965 un gruppo di cappellani militari toscani in un loro comunicato ufficiale avevano definito l'obiezione di coscienza “estranea al Comandamento cristiano dell'amore e espressione di viltà”. Nei giorni successivi



Don Lorenzo e i ragazzi della scuola scrissero in risposta una lettera aperta che fu incriminata e don Lorenzo rinviato a giudizio per apologia di reato. Il processo si svolse a Roma, ma Don Lorenzo non poté essere presente a causa della sua grave malattia. Inviò ai giudici un'autodifesa scritta che, tra l'altro, contiene il famoso concetto “l'ubbidienza non è più una virtù, ma la più subdola delle tentazioni...”. Il 15 febbraio 1966 il processo in prima istanza si concluse con l'assoluzione, ma su ricorso del pubblico ministero, la Corte d'Appello, quando don Lorenzo era già morto, modificava la sentenza di primo grado e condannava lo scritto.

Nel luglio 1966 iniziò la stesura, come sempre

assieme ai ragazzi della scuola, di *Lettera a una professoressa*, pubblicata nel maggio del 1967. La lettera, tradotta in tutto il mondo, è indirizzata a una insegnante che aveva bocciato alcuni ragazzi della scuola di Barbiana. In essa, arricchita in appendice da tavole statistiche e documenti a prova di quanto contenuto nel testo, i ragazzi descrivono la selezione che avviene nella scuola dell'obbligo e che colpisce per lo più i figli degli operai e dei contadini. Questi, non avendo a disposizione il patrimonio culturale dei ricchi, subiscono umiliazioni anche a scuola, dove le differenze sociali e culturali sono messe maggiormente in evidenza. La lettera è letta in tutto il mondo ed è considerata ancora un testo fondamentale per capire i limiti della scuola italiana, e non solo, ed ha fortemente influenzato il dibattito su di essa.

Don Lorenzo morì a Firenze il 26 giugno 1967, a 44 anni, di linfoma di Hodgkin da cui era affetto da anni.

Senza pregiudizi ideologici, ma per la forza del suo pensiero e del suo esempio, Don Lorenzo Milani è un altro italiano di cui andare orgogliosi.

\* *Ed's note: Luigi Catizone is a Dante member. In this article Luigi is highlighting the achievements of an inspirational albeit controversial Italian priest who died in 1967 aged 44. During his short life Don Lorenzo antagonised the church and part of the establishment for his desire to educate and train, through evening classes, boys from poor background to give them opportunities for a better life. The church hierarchy proscribed one of his booklets (Pastoral Experiences) and he was dragged through the courts for an open letter in which he defended conscientious objection. In his defence he wrote, inter alia, “obedience is no longer a virtue but a most deceitful temptation”. His former pupils maintain a website dedicated to him - [www.donlorenzomilani.it](http://www.donlorenzomilani.it).*



# Ferragosto in Italia

## *The 15th of August in Italy*

di Lucrezia Samory

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**Gaio Giulio Cesare Ottaviano Augusto, meglio conosciuto come Ottaviano o Augusto: a lui si deve l'istituzione delle *Feriae Augusti***

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La parola Ferragosto deriva dal latino *Feriae Augusti* (vacanze di Augusto) ed è una festa antichissima che, come nel caso di molte altre feste divenute in seguito cristiane, ha origini pagane. Nel 18 a.C. l'imperatore romano Ottaviano, proclamato Augusto (ossia venerabile e sacro), dichiarò che tutto il mese di agosto sarebbe stato festivo e dedicato alle *Feriae Augusti* (in onore del suo nome), una serie di celebrazioni solenni, la più importante delle quali cadeva il 13 agosto ed era dedicata a Diana, dea patrona della maternità, del legno e delle fasi lunari. La festa si celebrava nel tempio dedicato alla dea, sull'Aventino, ed era una delle poche occasioni in cui i romani di ogni classe si mescolavano liberamente.

Le *Feriae* erano anche l'occasione per celebrare Vertumno, dio delle stagioni e della maturazione dei raccolti; Conso, dio dei campi e Opi, dea della fertilità, la cui festa, *Opiconsiva*, cadeva il 25 del mese. In breve, le *Feriae* erano una celebrazione della fertilità e della maternità, ma avevano anche lo scopo di fornire un adeguato periodo di riposo, anche detto *Augustali*, necessario dopo le grandi fatiche nei campi durante i mesi precedenti. Nel corso dei festeggiamenti si organizzavano in tutto l'impero corse di cavalli e banchetti; gli animali da tiro, asini e muli, venivano abbelliti con dei fiori.

Nel giorno di Ferragosto (15 agosto) i lavoratori ricevevano una mancia dal padrone, gratifica che nel Rinascimento venne resa obbligatoria per decreto pontificio e chissà che l'attuale tredicesima [literally: 13th month ie an additional month's pay that public servants and pensioners receive at Christmas time] non ne sia la moderna derivazione!

Queste festività, che raggiungevano il loro picco il 15 del mese, erano così radicate nella tradizione popolare che la Chiesa decise di cristianizzarle piuttosto che provare a sradicarle. Così, nel VI secolo, le *Feriae Augusti* vennero trasformate nella celebrazione dell'Assunzione in cielo di Maria Vergine che, terminata la sua vita terrena, fu elevata alla gloria celeste. A questo proposito erano e sono celebrate tutt'oggi, in varie località italiane, imponenti processioni religiose.

Oggi Ferragosto è festeggiato il 15 agosto e tra le manifestazioni religiose più importanti c'è quella che si svolge per le vie di Messina, dove la *Vara*, ovvero un carro di forma piramidale, alto circa 14 metri, dal peso di circa 8 tonnellate, viene fatto slittare sull'asfalto bagnato. Il traino avviene ad opera di centinaia di devoti a Maria, uomini e donne giovani ed anziani, che tirano attaccati alle due gomene, lunghe ciascuna oltre



# Ferragosto in Italia

## *The 15th of August in Italy - cont'd*

di Lucrezia Samory

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110 metri.

Ferragosto non perde il suo carattere fortemente popolare tanto che conserva l'uso delle scampagnate e delle gite fuori porta [fuori città – outside your town], in compagnia degli amici o della famiglia.

Su tutti i litorali, dal Tirreno all'Adriatico, si organizzano per Ferragosto feste in riva al mare dove non mancano falò, chitarre, fuochi d'artificio, mercatini, concerti ed eventi sotto le stelle. In particolare, sulle spiagge della **Riviera Romagnola**, tutti i locali e le discoteche organizzano feste e serate a tema.

A Ferragosto non mancano i piatti tipici che variano di regione in regione: dal **piccione arrosto** dell'Umbria al **gelo di melone** della Sicilia, dal pollo coi peperoni del Lazio alle **orillettas (origliette)** della Sardegna, ovvero rombi di pasta fritta bagnati in uno sciroppo bollente di miele ed acqua.

In ogni caso, la tradizione di agosto come mese delle *Feriae* è rimasta e questa è la ragione per cui fabbriche e negozi restano “chiusi per ferie” fino alla fine di agosto, anche se nessuno si ricorda più dell'imperatore che le istituì.

Buon Ferragosto a tutti, ovunque voi siate!

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Un'immagine de la Vara di Messina





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