

# *Cosmology and Physics, Memory and Emotions: Research on the History of Science*

**Paolo Rossi Monti †**

**2009 Balzan Prize for History of Science**

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**Project Directors and Researchers:** Michele Ciliberto, Bernardino Fantini (Supervisors); Matteo Borri, Olivia Catanorchi, Francesca Dell’Omodarme, Natacha Fabbri, Marco Matteoli, Yamina Oudai Celso, Chiara Petrolini (Research Fellows)

**Affiliated Institution:** Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, Florence

**Period:** 2009-2013

Paolo Rossi Monti was Emeritus Professor at the University of Florence and Fellow of the Accademia dei Lincei. He set aside half of the Balzan Prize for research that involved seven outstanding young scholars. Paolo Rossi Monti personally followed their research in detail, with support from Michele Ciliberto, corresponding member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei and regular Professor of Modern Philosophy at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, to supervise the research on cosmology and physics, while Bernardino Fantini, Director of the Institut d’Histoire de la Médecine et de la Santé at the Université de Genève, followed the research on the subject of memory and emotions.

The subject *Cosmology and Physics in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* was investigated in detail with five pre-established themes. For the first, Cosmology and Medicine in the High and Late Renaissance, Olivia Catanorchi studied the interrelations between astronomy, cosmology and medicine, and dedicated special attention to the work of Cornelio Gemma, who was known by Campanella and Kepler. Aspects of Aristotelian Physics in the Paduan Lessons of Pietro Pomponazzi, the second theme, was investigated by Francesca Dell’Omodarme, who studied Pomponazzi’s comments and observations on the argumentation on Physics and Cosmology in Aristotle’s works. The third theme, On the Mathematical Foundation of Giordano Bruno’s Natural Atomism, was taken up by Marco Matteoli, who translated the *Articuli centum*

*et sexaginta adversus mathematicos et philosophos* for the first time into Italian (including an extensive introduction and analytical commentary), starting with his in-depth study on Bruno's writings dedicated to mathematics and geometry. For the fourth theme, Science, Philosophy and Politics in the Venice of Paolo Sarpi, Chiara Petrolini studied the intense intellectual exchange between Venice and England at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and in particular, the physiognomy of the so-called Sarpi circle. This theme of research is related to the cultural background of *De la Pirotechnia* by Vannuccio Biringuccio. Finally, in *The Moon in Fabula, Istoria and Utopia*, Natacha Fabbri identified the main pre-Galileo sources defining the Moon as another Earth (Proclus, Macrobius, Simplicius, Plutarch), and delineated the ways it was articulated by Bruno, Patrizi, Kepler and Wilkins.

Concerning the subject *Memory and Emotions*, two research projects dealt with pre-established themes. In *Arts of Memory in the Age of the Neurosciences*, Matteo Borri followed an investigation on the historical developments of experimental research and on the theoretical contributions to the theme of memory and neurobiology, as well as techniques for increasing mnemonic power and maintaining mnemonic functions in the presence of pathologies, thus highlighting the connections between these techniques and the *artes reminiscendi* that enjoyed widespread popularity in Europe between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. In the second project, *Psychiatry, Anthropology, and Scientific Psychology from Descartes to the French Enlightenment: Textual Heritage and Theoretical Influx on Freud's Theory of Emotions*, Yamina Oudai Celso investigated the background to Freud's Theory of Emotions.

## **Publications**

The following articles can be added to the extensive bibliography in the previous editions of the *Overview*, which can be consulted at: <http://www.balzan.org/en/prizewinners/paolo-rossi-monti/research-project-monti>.

Fabbri, N. "Telesio's conservation of the universe: Moderatio of opposites and permanent struggle." In *Sense, Affect and Self-preservation*, edited by G. Giglioni and J. Krayer. International Archives of the History of Ideas. Dordrecht: Springer, forthcoming.

Matteoli, M. *Giordano Bruno. Parole, concetti, immagini*. Pisa: Edizioni Della Normale, 2014. [s.v. immagini concetti: atomo, continuo, dimensione, Euclide, geometria, limite, linea, matematica, mathesis, minimo, misura, mole, Pitagora,

- punto and termine, and also scheduled the works: *Ars deformationum*, *De mordentii circino*, *De somnii interpretatione*, *De triplici minimo et mensura*, *Idiota triumphans*, *Mordentius* and *Praelectiones geometricae*.]
- Petrolini, C. “Religione e potestà dei principi: Gentili e Sarpi.” In *Responsibility to protect: nuovi orientamenti su intervento umanitario e ordine internazionale. Atti del convegno della XV Giornata Gentiliana, San Ginesio, 14-15 settembre 2012*, 215-242. Macerata: EUM, 2012.
- Petrolini, C. “L’offensiva dell’Inquisizione romana contro fra Fulgenzio Micanzio (1609 e 1624) sulla base di alcuni documenti conservati all’Archivio per la Congregazione della Fede.” *Studi storici dell’Ordine dei Servi di Maria* (2016): 547-594.
- Petrolini, C. “Anglo-Venetian Networks: Paolo Sarpi in Early Modern England.” In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Anglo-Italian Renaissance Literature and Culture*, edited by M. Marrapodi. London: Routledge, 2019.
- Petrolini, C. “I carteggi politici di Giovan Francesco Biondi, tra Venezia e Londra, Sarpi e Giacomo I.” In *Atti del Seminario internazionale di studi Archilet – Reti Epistolari, Bergamo, 11-14 dicembre 2014*, edited by Clizia Carminati and Emilio Russo. <http://www.archilet.it/Pubblicazione.aspx?IdPubblicazione=8>.