It was very cold on Sunday January 20 and yet our event was very well attended. Professor Astarita’s excellent presentation on “Naples and the Italian South in the European Imagination” elicited a very lively discussion. Everyone also enjoyed the lasagna from the Ristorante “Famoso”. The next event on Sunday February 17 will see us showing off our Carnevale costumes and/or masks and dancing away in the full auditorium with contra-dance musicians and a caller who will lead us through dances for all ages together. We will be pleased to see you showing up in large numbers as we have made a considerable effort to make sure that everyone will have a good time. There will be a piñata for the children (Aldo Grossi in charge) which will be broken at the very beginning of the event, so as to put the kids in a good mood. So young and old alike come and enjoy yourselves: Prizes will be given for best costumes and best dancers. I am very pleased to announce that Dr. Paolo Vidoli was officially elected as a new member of the Board. Paolo is an engineer who has reached very high positions and has worked on several important projects for the Italian firm Fincantieri here in the US and in Italy. He and his family have been friends and members of our Society for a number of years and I am sure that he will be an excellent member of our Board. I welcome him wholeheartedly. The Board has also elected Prof. Aldo Bove to function as a Board liaison with the Italian side of our Italian language Program. Dr. Bove’s first teaching experience was as a Visiting Professor of Italian for two years, at the George Washington University (GWU), in Washington, D.C. In 1982, as a result of his US experience, he was asked to join the Italian Ministry of Education–International Affairs Office, where he worked as part of the senior staff, to help strengthen the educational exchange programs between Italian and American schools.

As you see we have lots of dedicated and very talented people on our Board and I am very proud of all our members.

I look forward to the Festa di Carnevale, and seeing you all there maybe even without recognizing you. All the best,

Luigi De Luca
The preceding two articles constitute a summary of the studies done up to this point. What solutions have been proposed for the future?

Project MOSE (Experimental Electromechanical Model)

As far back as 1966, successive governments and institutions have posed the preservation of Venice as a matter of “pre-eminent national interest”. And various ordinary and special laws were promulgated (special laws 171/73, 798/84, 139/92). In particular, special law 798/84 sets up a committee (Comitatone, or “Big Committee”) with responsibility to guide, coordinate, and monitor the objectives specified by the special legislation. The Comitatone is presided over by the Prime Minister and includes, among others, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Minister of the Environment, the President of the Veneto Region, and the Mayors of Venice and Chioggia.

The activities that are the responsibility of the Italian government are the physical preservation and hydro/geological rebalancing of the lagoon. Such activities are assigned to the Consorzio Venezia Nuova (CVN) that operates under the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Magistrate of Waters, Venice. The Consorzio consists of a group of large national enterprises, cooperatives, and local enterprises. The CVN has formulated a General Plan that contains conclusions from years of comparisons, studies, and projections. In the plan they make reference to various projects. In particular the project for protection of the city against especially damaging high water episodes (over 110 cm) provides for the construction of fixed barriers of limited dimension and of movable barriers to block the entrances to the harbor. When not deployed the planned movable barriers are full of water and housed on the sea floor.

When bad weather approaches and consistently high tides are predicted, whose characteristics are monitored in the sea in real time, compressed air is introduced in the
immersa aria compressa, che le vuota dell’acqua, e le fa sollevare, ruotando attorno all’asse delle cerniere, fino a emergere e a bloccare il flusso di marea. Il progetto di difesa in base alle paratie mobili è stato sperimentato con il MOSE (Modulo Sperimentale Elettromecanico).
Il MOSE è stato utilizzato per eseguire delle prove sul prototipo in scala reale di una parataio e il lavoro è stato completato ed approvato dal Comitatone.

**Soluzioni Alternative**

In concomitanza con l’abbattimento delle acque alte superiori ai 110 cm, viene progettato un innalzamento delle sponde, delle fondamenta e, in generale, della pavimentazione di alcune insulae cittadine, particolarmente soggette agli allagamenti. Sono, inoltre, allo stato di progetto, e, in alcuni casi, di attuazione, interventi che interessano circa 60 Km di litorale, dal fiume Piave al fiume Adige, volti ad opporsi alle mareggiate e quindi a contrastare i fenomeni che hanno indebolito le naturali e prime difese della Lagune.

Avendo dei dubbi sull’efficacia del progetto di salvaguardia proposto dal Consorzio Venezia Nuova, il Comune di Venezia nel 1995 richiese che il progetto venga sottoposto alla valutazione di Impatto ambientale e chiede anche il parere di un Collegio di esperti internazionali. Nel luglio del 1998 il collegio dei cinque esperti internazionali esprime parere positivo. Qualche mese dopo, in un decreto congiunto il Ministero dell’Ambiente ed il Ministero per i Beni Culturali respingono il progetto subordinandolo ad altri interventi giudicati prioritari. Quali sono questi interventi?

I cosiddetti interventi diffusi, proposti anche da un gruppo di esperti reclutati dal Consiglio Comunale di Venezia, consistono nell’apertura delle valle da pesca, aumentando così la superficie lagunare; riduzione della sezione delle bocche di porto e modifica della parte finale dei moli foranei, riducendo la profondità alla bocca di Chioggia a 8 m, a 12 m alla bocca di Malamocco e a 10 m alla bocca di Lido; chiusura del Canale dei Petroli che unisce Malamocco a Marghera e permette le grosse petroliere di accedere in laguna. Trasferimento del porto turistico, e specialmente le grosse navi da crociera, fuori dalla bocca di porto del Lido. Per maree rapide, il livello di alta marea a Venezia potrebbe essere ridotto di 12 cm.

**La Battaglia per il MOSE**

Il MOSE è l’ultima difesa per salvare Venezia dalle acque alte o il peggior disastro ambientale degli ultimi 100 anni? Quando si parla del MOSE non ci sono vie di mezzo. Le polemiche non si limitano ai politici di opposte fazioni o agli interventi delle associazioni ambientaliste, ma si estendono al campo scientifico. A colpi di centimetri, 23, 50,88 lo scontro ha visto schierati in favore, tra gli altri, tre ricercatori del MIT, Rafael Bras, Donald Harleman e Paola Rizzoli e fra i contrari Paolo Pirazzoli del CNRS francese, l’archeologo Albert Ammerman e il geologo Charles McClennen tutti e due della Colgate University. Secondo Ammerman, tenendo conto del riscaldamento

**Alternative Solutions**

Simultaneously with the mitigation of high tides of over 110 cm, a raising of the banks, of the foundations, and, in general of the paved surface of several “insulae” (islands within the city) that are especially subject to flooding is planned. In addition, there are under design and, in some cases, construction, projects affecting some 60 Km of shoreline of the rivers Piave and Adige, that are intended to reduce tidal flooding, and therefore to counteract the phenomena that have weakened the natural and first lines of defense of the lagoon.

Having doubts about the efficacy of the preservation plan proposed by the CVN, the City Government of Venice in 1995 asked that the project be subjected to an environmental impact evaluation and also asked for the opinion of an international group of experts. In July of 1998 the group of five experts gave a positive opinion. About a month later, in a joint decree, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Cultural Resources turned down the project, subordinating it to other actions judged to be of higher priority. What are these other actions?

The so-called diffuse actions, also proposed by a group of experts recruited by the Venice City Council, consist of opening up some fish farms connected to the lagoon, thereby increasing the surface of the lagoon, reducing the cross section of the outlets of the port and modification of the far ends of the outlying breakwaters, reducing the depth of the Chioggia outlet to 8 m, the Malamocco outlet to 12 m, and the Lido outlet to 10 m, closing of the petroleum canal that connects Malamocco and Marghera and permits the big tankers to access the lagoon, and transferring the tourist port and especially the large cruise boats to outside the Lido port outlet. For rapid tides, the level of high tides could be reduced by 12 cm.

**The Battle for the MOSE**

Is the MOSE the last line of defense for protecting Venice from the high tides or is it the worst environmental disaster of the last 100 years? When one speaks of the MOSE there are no halfway measures. The controversies are not limited to politicians of opposite factions or to the interventions of environmentalist organizations, but they reach the field of science. The argument over the increase in sea level (23, 50 or 88 cm, see previous article) has seen lined up in favor of the MOSE, among others, three researchers from MIT – Rafael Bras, Donald Harleman, and Paola Rizzoli, and those against – Paolo Piazzoli of the CNRS of France, the archeologist Albert Ammerman, and the geologist Charles McClennen, both from Colgate University. According to Ammerman, taking into account
della terra e un innalzamento di 88 cm (ipotesi più pessimistica), le paratoie mobili dovrebbero essere chiuse per tempi troppo lunghi, sino a 150 giorni all’anno nel 2100. Ammerman propone invece che Venezia sollevi i le strade e gli edifici, come nel passato. "Sollevare la città è impossibile", dice Bras. Una tale soluzione costerebbe migliardi di euro e le fondamenta degli edifici continuerebbero a sgretolarsi.

Il 22 novembre 2006, si è riunito a Roma, a Palazzo Chigi, il Comitato di indirizzo, coordinamento e controllo per la salvaguardia di Venezia e della sua laguna (Comitatone), **ex art. 4 L. 798/84**, presieduto dal Presidente del Consiglio, Romano Prodi. In merito al sistema per la difesa di Venezia dalle acque alte (Mose) in corso di realizzazione da oltre tre anni alle bocche di porto lagunari, il Comitato ha deliberato di procedere al completamento delle opere del Sistema Mose e degli interventi morfologici connessi, assicurando la disponibilità dei finanziamenti nel rispetto degli impegni e del cronoprogramma definiti nel contratto in essere tra lo Stato e il concessionario Consorzio Venezia Nuova.

L’obiettivo principale della legge 798/84 è il restauro dell’equilibrio idro-geologico nella laguna, l’arresto e magari l’invertimento del processo di deterioramento del bacino lagunare e persino l’eliminazione delle sue cause. Il sistema Mose si propone di ridurre l’altezza delle maree nella laguna e di proteggere i centri abitati da acque alte eccezionali con la costruzione di barriere mobili alle bocche di porto.

In collaborazione con Insula SpA, costituita dal Comune di Venezia nel 1997, è prevista una strategia di difesa dall’acqua alta di altezza minore di 110 cm. La difesa consiste nell’innalzamento del perimetro di ogni singola isola (ce ne sono 118 di insulae a Venezia, circondate da canali e ri e congiunte da circa 400 ponti). È prevista inoltre l’impermeabilizzazione della parte interna, coadiuvata da sistemi di pompaggio e valvole. Tutto ciò significa non soltanto il restauro e la protezione del sistema ecologico, ma anche il controllo e la gestione della sua evoluzione nel futuro. Le difese locali, "insulae", sono costituite da: elevazione delle superfici lastricate all’esterno degli edifici e se necessario all’interno (includendo le vasche di contenimento); aumento dell’altezza dei muri di protezione attorno alle isole; elevazione diretta degli edifici. Insula SpA e il Consorzio Venezia Nuova hanno realizzato il sollevamento della pavimentazione delle fondamenta in diversi settori della città, fino a 100 cm. Il gruppo di esperti del Comune suggerisce un innalzamento sino a 120 cm. Secondo il CVN, il sollevamento degli edifici potrebbe essere realizzato in casi particolari, ma una protezione totale fino a 120 cm sarà estremamente costosa e richiederà un tempo molto lungo, 60 o più anni.

On November 22, 2006, in Rome, at Palazzo Chigi, the Committee to guide, coordinate, and monitor the preservation of Venice and her lagoon (Comitatone), by article 4 L. 798/84, presided over by the Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, had a meeting. With regard to the protection of Venice from the high tides (MOSE) under construction for over three years at the inlets to the lagoon, the Comitatone decided to proceed to completion of the works in the MOSE system and of the related morphological activities, insuring availability of the financial arrangements to support the commitments and the timetable set forth in the existing contract between the State and the concession Consortorio Venezia Nuova.

The principal objective of law 798/84 is the restoration of hydro/archeological equilibrium in the lagoon, the halting and possibly the reversal of the process of deterioration of the lagoon basin and even the elimination of its causes. The MOSE system is proposed to reduce the height of the tides in the lagoon and to protect the populated centers from exceptionally high waters through the construction of movable barriers.

In collaboration with Insula SpA, organized by the City of Venice in 1997, a strategy of protection is planned against waters of less than 110 cm in height. The protection consists of the elevation of the perimeter of each insula, (there are 118 insulae in Venice, each surrounded by canals and rios and connected by about 400 bridges). Also planned is the waterproofing of the internal sections of the insulae, aided by systems of pumps and valves. All that means not just the restoration and protection of the ecological system, but also the monitoring and management of its evolution in the future. The local protections of the insulae, consist of: elevation of the paved surfaces outside of the buildings and, if necessary, of the inside (including the containment basins); raising the elevation of the protective walls around the insulae; and directly raising the elevation of the buildings. Insula SpA and the Consorzio Venezia Nuova have raised the elevation of foundations in various sectors of the city up to 100 cm. The city government’s group of experts suggests an elevation up to 120 cm. According to the CVN, the elevation of buildings could be accomplished in particular cases but a total protection up to 120 cm will be extremely expensive and will require a very long time, 60 or more years.
ANSA December 31, 2007

SOTTSASS DIES, THE ARCHITECT WHO LOVED TO DESIGN EVERYTHING (translation)

ROME – His Valentine, the legendary portable typewriter designed for Olivetti in 1970 is an icon of design, famous throughout the world, loved and used by journalists and famous writers, on display at MOMA in New York. But in his long and successful career as an architect, “son of an architect”, as he liked to say, Ettore Sottsass, having reached the age of 90 last September 14, has moved about in so many fields, from industrial design to photography, even jewelry. A restless and voraciously curious intellectual, an artist, but first of all still an architect, a protagonist of absolute prominence with his projects of the Italian 20th century. Lucid and in good shape, he worked up until the end, even participating in setting up the exhibit “I would like to know why” that celebrates hid genius until March 2 in Trieste, in the auction hall of the former fish market,

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(recensione di Francesco Isgrò nella Voce Italiana)


area are covered in the book’s two dozen chapters. Each chapter is devoted to a detailed examination of Italy’s presence in, for example, the U.S. Capitol, the Watergate complex, Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello estate, the new Italian Chancery, Holy Rosary Church, and numerous other sites.

The book is a visual feast of historic drawings and sketches, as well as stunning photographs by Max Mackenzie, a Washington, D.C.-based photographer who specializes in the photography of architectural subjects.

Edited by Luca Molinari and Andrea Canipari, and published by Skira, the book is expected to be available in February 2008; it can be pre-ordered at Amazon.com.

PAOLO VIDOLI, UN PROFILO


LOCAL EVENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Italian Cultural Institute and SMATCH: “Etruscan Treasures of the Vatican Museum” a presentation by Dr. Maurizio Sannibale, curator of the Vatican’s Gregorian Etruscan Museum and Dr. Carlo Arriscochio of the Italian National Research Council. Reception to follow. Wednesday, February 20, 6:30 pm at the ICI, 3000 Whitehaven St. NW Washington, DC. RSVP and ID required, call 202-518-0998, ext. 1. For more info, check www.smatch-international.orq or www.icwashington.esteri.it

Holy Rosary Church and Lucchesi nel Mondo: another Carnevale event, Sunday, Feb. 10, 3 - 7 PM dinner, dancing, prizes for the best costumes, games and prizes for kids, $45 members, $50 non-members, $20 kids 6 to 14, children under 6 gratis. Go to http://www.lucchesitoscani.org/

Holy Rosary Church: CALCETTO! Register your kids for indoor soccer school in Casa Italiana Fridays 6 – 9 PM in February. http://www.italiansoccer.us/
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Professor Astarita on January 20

WELCOME TO NEW ICS MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that I introduce those Members who have joined us in the last two months. As I welcome them I hope that they will take advantage of all that the Society has to offer and that they will contribute with their knowledge and expertise to the success of the Society’s mission.

John Quagliato, Connie Dijohnson & Scott Rehring
Marlene & Harold Palmer, Jennifer Legge, John Quackenboss, Elisabeth DiGregorio, Kveta Schosberg & Lubomir Hromadka, Maria & David Stefkovich, Susan Absher, Sharon Krhon, Carol Palmer, Franke Celina, David Hankins, Hilary Boardman, William Quinn, Paul Wilson, Caroline LeFevre, Linda Frey, Lisa Hysek & Jason LaVeglia

Benvenuti! Cesarina Horing ICS Membership Chair

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