ICS EVENTS

Social meetings start at 3:00 PM on the third Sunday of the month, September thru May, at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD (See map on back cover)

Sunday, May 19: Alison Luchs, Curator of Early European Sculpture will speak on “Michelangelo’s David-Apollo: An Offer He Couldn’t Refuse” (See page 5)
Saturday, June 15: Annual Scholarship Awards Dinner, 6 PM at Alfio’s Trattoria (See page 3)

Movie of the Month at 1:00 PM: “The Young Montalbano” (another episode)

Italian Lesson and Conversation on May 19 at 2:00 PM

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Our April meeting opened with elections to the ICS board. Current members Nick Monaco, Paolo Vidoli and Romeo Segnan were chosen for another three year stint. Newly elected board members are Francesca Casazza and Dennis Siracusa. Francesca comes to us with a wealth of teaching and business experience, and Dennis, a recently retired physician’s assistant and ILP student brings us new commitment and energy. We welcome these elected members and look forward to working with them.

The social meeting featured Davide Pirrera Rosso di Cerami, visiting from Sicily, whose presentation concerning the Greek cult of Demetra and Kore (Ceres and Persephone) made it clear that ancient rituals still resonate in current, syncretic traditions found in many places on the island.

Our upcoming meeting on Sunday, May 19 features Alison Luchs, curator of early European sculpture at the National Gallery of Art, who will tell us about the recently exhibited Davide/Apollo lent from Florence to celebrate the Year of Italian Culture in the United States. Her lecture is co-sponsored by the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society, the Lido Civic Club and the Italian Cultural Institute. Read more about it on p. 5 in this issue. Please join us for an interesting presentation by this distinguished guest.

Scholarship applications must be postmarked by May 17. Selections will be made by committee and awardees will join us at our annual Gala on Saturday, June 15. See p. 5 for details.

Ron Cappelletti, president

Francesca Casazza, new ICS board member

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ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM

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The second 5 week day-course session begins May 13. There are introductory, intermediate and advanced courses being offered. Please make your selection from http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/files/SPRING_2013.pdf

Watch the website for the schedule of summer classes.

www.italianculturalsociety.org 301-215-7885

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Italian Editors/Writers

Poche Parole is published each month from January through May and September through December. The deadline for the submission of all articles and ads for a newsletter issue is the 25th of the month preceding publication of the issue. Please send submissions via the Internet to e-mail address: icspoparole@verizon.net or on a computer diskette/CD to: Editor, Poche Parole, 4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301, Bethesda, MD 20814

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WELCOME TO NEW ICS MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that we welcome those Members who have joined us recently. As we welcome them we 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:

Joe Cassidy, Salvatore and Mary Rae Costabile, Jeffrey H Klenzing

Buonvenuti!

Ron Cappelletti

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The Italian Cultural Society

invites you to our annual

Gala Scholarship Awards Dinner

Saturday, June 15, 2013
6 PM

at Alfio’s Trattoria
4515 Willard Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

R.S.V.P
301-215-7885

Complimentary valet parking

Cut along this line

Please return this portion with your check and selections below to Italian Cultural Society, 4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301, Bethesda, MD 20814. Make out check to Italian Cultural Society. Payment and reservations due by Friday, May 24.

No. of persons ____ @$60/person       Payment for dinner $ _____        Additional donation to scholarship fund $ ____
Contact name and phone______________________________________________________________

Veal Piccata (lemon mushroom capers)       Veal Pizzaiola       Chicken Marsala       Broiled Flounder Filet       Eggplant Parmigiana

Name__________________________________________ □ □ □ □ □

Name__________________________________________ □ □ □ □ □

Name__________________________________________ □ □ □ □ □

All entrees come with hors d’oeuvres, a small serving of penne pasta, salad, red or white wine, coffee or tea and dessert.
**LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST**

**National Gallery of Art:**
Guided tours of the Italian Renaissance collection, West Building, main floor rotunda Mon., Fri. and Sat. 2:30, Sun. 1:30

Italian Language guided tours Tues. April 9 and Sat. April 13, West Building main floor rotunda at 12:00 and East Building, ground level info. desk at 2:00. RSVP 202-842-6247

**Italian Cultural Institute:**

**Imagining the Renaissance: Albrecht Dürer in Italy:** Lecture by Alice Jarrard with musical interludes by the German ensemble Capella de la Torre, in collaboration with the Goethe Institute. Tuesday, May 7, 7 PM, RSVP at the Embassy of Italy.

**European Union Open House:** "Sortcut to Europe" The Embassies of European Countries, including the Embassy of Italy, with performances by the Italian National Flag Throwing Team (Sbandieratori) open their doors to visitors and present various programs on Saturday May 11 from 10AM to 4 PM. To volunteer, see [http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/IIC_Washington/webform/SchedaEvento.aspx?id=466&citta=Washington](http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/IIC_Washington/webform/SchedaEvento.aspx?id=466&citta=Washington).


For more information, on the above three items also check: [http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/IIC_Washington/Menu/Gli_Eventi/Calendario/](http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/IIC_Washington/Menu/Gli_Eventi/Calendario/)

**Abruzzo & Molise Heritage Society:** Bus excursion and picnic to Keswick and Barboursville wineries, June 1, $50, ICS members welcome. Reserve by May 13, See [http://abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/](http://abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/) Click on flyer.

**Casa Italiana:** Performance by the Italian National Flag Throwing Team (Sbandieratori). Sunday, May 12, 11:15 AM and 1:00 PM

**Piazza Italia:** [http://www.meetup.com/DCitalian/] Italian Language meetup group. See website for details and an excellent calendar of Italy-related events
ICS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD APPLICATIONS
DUE FRIDAY, MAY 17
Applications are being sought for the following awards: Except for the Moriggi/Palumbo award, applicants should be no more than 25 years of age as of Friday, May 18, 2012, the postmarked date for receipt of applications.

1) The Maria Guarrera Wilmeth Awards: two awards of $500 each for outstanding high-school students of the Italian language.

2) The Elena and Antonio De Luca Award of $1000, to be given to an undergraduate or graduate student who has excelled in the study of Latin and/or Greek.

3) The Luciana Montanari-Mendola Awards: $1000 for an undergraduate or conservatory student showing promise in piano performance and $350 for a high school age pianist showing promise in piano performance. Examples of recordings must accompany your application and must include one piece for solo piano by Frederick Chopin.

4) The Ruggiero Moriggi/Vincenzo Palumbo Artisan Award of $500, to be given to a person who has excelled in the fine arts (exclusive of music), or to an artisan who has excelled in a traditional Italian craft (such as ceramics, jewelry, leather-working, furniture-making, musical instruments, lace work, fine fabrics, etc.). Written reviews and/or photographs, etc. of your work must be submitted to the Awards Committee. Age restriction does not apply.

5) The Anna Menapace Award of $300 to a high school student who has excelled in painting.

6) The Patricia Moore Segnan Award of $1000, to be given to an undergraduate or graduate student who has excelled in the study of Art or Art History.

Materials to be included in the applications are:
1. College transcripts when appropriate and High School transcripts for no. 1 (These are not required for award no. 4. That person should submit photographs or other examples of his or her work.)
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. An essay describing why the applicant is a valid contender for the award.
4. A short biographical presentation of the candidate (curriculum vitae).
5. Anything that would demonstrate the ability of the candidate, including publications by and/or about the candidate, photographs, CDs etc.

Selection will occur during the last week of May and awards will be presented at the ICS gala dinner, which will take place on June 10 at a location to be announced, as will be advertised in our newsletter Poche Parole and website. Attendance at the dinner is required and awards will be reassigned if the winner is unable to attend, except for exceptional circumstances as determined by the Awards Committee. Winners of the Luciana Montanari-Mendola award may be asked to perform at the gala dinner. Applications must be postmarked no later than Friday, May 17 and sent to: The Italian Cultural Society, Awards section, 4827 Rugby Ave., Suite #301 Bethesda, MD 20814.

CESARINA HORING AWARDS
In addition to these awards, each year the Italian Cultural Society provides awards to students of Italian at three universities in the Washington, DC area: Georgetown University, The University of Maryland, and George Washington University. The awardees are selected by the Italian language programs at these universities. The awards are funded by donations in honor of former ILP director, Cesarina Horing.

PROGRAM OF MAY 19
Our program of May 19 is cosponsored by ICS, the Italian Cultural Institute, the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society, and the Lido Civic Club. Our speaker will be Alison Luchs, who will talk to us about the statue of David-Apollo, until recently on display at the National Gallery of Art. The title of her talk is “Michelangelo’s David-Apollo: An Offer He Couldn't Refuse”.

Alison Luchs is curator of Early European Sculpture at the National Gallery of Art, where she has worked since 1980. At the National Gallery she participated in planning the West Building ground floor sculpture galleries (1999-2002); contributed to catalogues of the sculpture and decorative arts collections; served as co-curator on the exhibition Desiderio da Settignano: Sculptor of Renaissance Florence in 2007, and as curator of An Antiquity of Imagination: Tullio Lombardo and Venetian High Renaissance Sculpture in 2009. A graduate of Vassar College (1970) and the Johns Hopkins University (Ph.D. 1976), she has taught art history at Swarthmore College and Syracuse University, and published articles on Michelangelo, Raphael, Botticelli, stained glass in Italian Renaissance churches, historic sculpture in Prague, French royal garden sculpture, and portrait busts of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Her books include Cestello: A Cistercian Church of the Florentine Renaissance (1977); an English translation of Martin Wackernagel's World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist (1981); Tullio Lombardo and Ideal Portrait Sculpture in Renaissance Venice, 1490-1530 (1995) and The Mermaids of Venice: Fantastic Sea Creatures in Venetian Renaissance Art (2010). She has also written articles about historic buildings in her native city of Washington DC.
Questo è una storia di quattro città-stato: Era il migliore dei tempi. Era il peggiore dei tempi. La seconda metà del XV secolo era un tempo di grandi conflitti e rivalità tra le città-stato del nord Italia. Quando le famiglie nobili non erano impegnate in una guerra per mostrare che avevano la più grande potenza militare, erano impegnate in una competizione artistica per mostrare che avevano la corte più brillante. La passione che ha alimentato entrambe queste occupazioni ci ha dato il Rinascimento. Le famiglie principesche di Milano (Sforza), di Mantova (Gonzaga), di Ferrara (Este) e di Urbino (Montefeltro) hanno prodotto i condottieri feroci ed i mecenate illustri delle arti. I due sono stati sempre inestricabilmente legati.

La ricerca dei condottieri per il potere e la ricchezza ha fornito i fondi utilizzati per promuovere l’apprendimento e le arti. Famosi scrittori e pittori hanno spesso abitato nelle corti di queste quattro famiglie nobili. In ciascun caso una moglie di grande talento ha presieduto questa grande società di geni creativi. Erano le donne di alto rango che avevano ricevuto un’educazione classica con istruzione nella musica e nell’amministrazione domestica. Queste quattro “principesse” hanno formato una vera e propria sorellanza: Elisabetta Gonzaga (la sorella del marchese di Mantova) era la duchessa di Urbino. Isabella d’Este era la marchesa di Mantova e sua sorella, Beatrice d’Este, era la duchessa di Milano. La moglie del loro fratello (Alfonso I d’Este), la duchessa di Ferrara, era Lucrezia Borgia.

Elisabetta Gonzaga (Raphael)

Se questo ultimo cognome incarna intrighi, ripensateci. Ci sono abbastanza intrighi tra queste famiglie per riempire un libro… molti libri. Intrighi ed alleanze mutevoli, la convinzione che il fine giustifica i mezzi, fanno tutti parte della ricerca per il potere e la ricchezza. Il giudizio della storia è spesso ombreggiato per soddisfare uno scopo o un altro. È facile trovare la bellezza nelle opere d’arte che sono di fronte a noi. È molto più difficile trovare la verità nelle storie di congiure e di omicidi associati ai mecenate che hanno commissionato queste opere d’arte. Si ha bisogno di vedere queste persone come viventi nel proprio tempo. La loro vita era una combinazione della più vile ricerca del potere e della massima ricerca della bellezza. È la storia della dicotomia della natura umana… scritta sul grande schermo.

Il loro era un mondo costruito sul potere, e dipendente dal potere per la sua sopravvivenza. Per mantenere il loro potere, i “principi” delle città-stato sono entrati nell’azienda di famiglia: l’arte bellica. Conosciuti come “condottieri,” questi signori hanno finanziato le loro città-stato con l’espansione
del proprio territorio, con la domanda dei riscatti e con il pagamento di altri per i loro servizi. Solo i forti sono sopravvissuti.

Ludovico Sforza ha preso il controllo del ducato di Milano dal suo nipote inefficace, Gian Galeazzo Sforza. Dopo la sfortunata morte del nipote, Ludovico ha preso il titolo di duca di Milano. Veleno o cause naturali? Chi può dirlo? Per garantire la sua posizione di Duca di Ferrara, Alfonso I d’Este ha condannato suo fratello (Ferrante) e il suo fratellastro (Giulio) in prigione a vita. Ferrante è morto dopo 34 anni. Giulio è stato liberato dopo 53 anni, ed è morto due anni dopo. Giustizia o vendetta? Chi può dirlo?

Non solo i condottieri dovevano essere aggressivi per mantenere il loro potere, ma dovevano anche essere preparati per un cambiamento nelle loro alleanze in qualsiasi momento. Pochi anni dopo che il duca di Urbino (Guidobaldo da Montefeltro) aveva condotto il suo esercito a sostegno di Papa Alessandro VI, il papa ha inviato il suo esercito per prendere il ducato di Urbino per suo figlio Cesare. Si deve ricordare che il papa era anche il principe degli stati papali; e ha anche cercato di aumentare e mantenere il suo potere. Dopo nove anni nella posizione lucrativa di capitano della Repubblica di Venezia, il marchese di Mantova (Francesco II Gonzaga) ha combattuto in una battaglia contro Venezia. Sfortunatamente è stato catturato dai veneziani ed è stato tenuto in ostaggio per tre anni. Questi uomini giocavano un gioco di scacchi molto pericoloso.

Beatrice d’Este (Leonardo).


Non estranea all’avversità, Lucrezia ben presto ha mostrato le sue qualità superiori come la padrona del suo duca di Ferrara. Aveva letto le opere di Dante e Petrarcha. Parlavano correntemente in italiano, catalano, francese e latino; e lei eccelleva nella danza e nella composizione poetica. Come le altre signore, Lucrezia non era solo una patrona delle arti, ma (durante le frequenti assenze del suo condottiero-marito) era un’abile amministratrice del suo regno. Le sorelle di suo marito (Alfonso) erano famose per la loro abilità di negoziare. Beatrice d’Este è andata a Venezia nel 1492 a fare pressioni per il riconoscimento di suo marito (Ludovico) come il duca ransoms, and the payment from others for their services. Only the strong survived. Ludovico Sforza seized control of the Duchy of Milan from his ineffective nephew, Gian Galeazzo Sforza. After the unfortunate death of the nephew, Ludovico took the title of Duke of Milan. Poison or natural causes? Who can say? To guarantee his position as Duke of Ferrara, Alfonso I d’Este condemned his brother (Ferrante) and his half-brother (Giulio) to life in prison. Ferrante died after 34 years. Giulio was freed after 53 years, and died two years later. Justice or vendetta? Who can say?

Not only did the condottieri have to be aggressive in order to maintain their power, but they had to be prepared for a change in their alliances at any moment. A few years after the Duke of Urbino (Guidobaldo da Montefeltro) led his army in support of Pope Alexander VI, the pope dispatched his army to seize the Duchy of Urbino for his son Cesare. One must remember that the pope was also the prince of the Papal States; and he too sought to increase and maintain his power. After nine years in the lucrative position of Captain of the Republic of Venice, the Marquis of Mantua (Francesco II Gonzaga) fought in a battle against Venice. Unfortunately he was captured by the Venetians and was held in captivity for three years. These men played a very dangerous game of chess.

Lucrezia Borgia (Titian)

The first appearance of the women on the chessboard was as pawns. Isabella d’Este was betrothed at the age of six, and was given in marriage to Francesco II Gonzaga when she was sixteen. Her sister Beatrice was fifteen when she was given in marriage to Ludovico Sforza (who was nearly forty). Elisabeth Gonzaga was eighteen when she was given in marriage to Guidobaldo da Montefeltro. And then there was the ultimate pawn: Lucrezia Borgia. As part of the political maneuvering of her father (Pope Alexander VI) Lucrezia was given in marriage at the age of thirteen, divorced at seventeen and was widowed at twenty. Two years later, in another political maneuver, Alexander VI arranged a marriage between Lucrezia and Alfonso I d’Este. The “sisters” were not anxious to take Lucrezia into their midst, as a result of the odious rumors spread by the enemies of the Borgias.

No stranger to adversity, Lucrezia soon demonstrated her superior qualities as mistress of her Duchy of Ferrara. She had read the works of Dante and Petrarch. She spoke fluent Italian, Catalan, French and Latin; she excelled in dance and in the composition of poetry. Like the other gentlewomen, Lucrezia was not only a patron of the arts, but (during the frequent absences of her warrior-husband) she was an able administrator of her realm. The sisters of her husband (Alfonso) were famous for their negotiating skill. Beatrice d’Este went to Venice in 1492 to lobby for the recognition of her husband (Ludovico) as the legitimate Duke of Milan; and later she participated in the Peace Conference of Vercelli after the Battle of Fornovo (1495) between the French and the Italian princes. During the three years that her husband
legittimo di Milano; e più tardi lei ha partecipato alla conferenza di pace di Vercelli dopo la battaglia di Fornovo (1495) tra la Francia ed i principi italiani. Durante i tre anni che suo marito (Francesco) era prigioniero a Venezia, Isabella d’Este ha preso il controllo dell’esercito per la protezione di Mantova, mentre lei ha negoziato il rilascio di suo marito.

Isabella ha anche aiutato sua cognata (Elisabetta Gonzaga) per negoziare il ritorno del ducato di Urbino a suo marito (Guidobaldo) dopo l’invasione di Cesare Borgia. Urbino era considerata come una delle corti più raffinate d’Italia; e Elisabetta (collivata ed educata) era la padrona ideale per presiedere alcuni dei più grandi scrittori ed artisti del Rinascimento. Baldassare Castiglione ha basato il suo famoso libro (Il Cortegiano) sulle discussioni con Elisabetta e con altri nobili ed eruditi della sua corte; e ha dedicato il libro a lei. Il personaggio nel libro che parla di amore platonico è in realtà il poeta Pietro Bembo, che era alla corte di Ferrara quando Lucrezia Borgia è arrivata. Le ha dedicato la sua opera sulla natura dell’amore, Gli Asolani. Come un esercizio intellettuale, Bembo e Lucrezia hanno spesso discusso sulla contemplazione dell’ideale nelle cose terrene. Hanno condiviso queste espressioni di amore platonico in centinaia di lettere per molti anni.

Questo rapporto personale con alcuni dei più grandi scrittori ed artisti del mondo era un luogo comune in queste quattro corti. A Milano, i dettagli del matrimonio di Beatrice d’Este e Ludovico Sforza sono stati curati da Leonardo da Vinci e Donato Bramante. Anche se era un bel regalo di nozze, questi artisti hanno dato a tutti noi un regalo più duraturo. Sotto la direzione di Ludovico, Bramante ha ricostruito Santa Maria delle Grazie e Leonardo ha dipinto “il Cenacolo” nel suo refettorio. Leonardo ha raffigurato le immagini di Beatrice (“Ritratto di una giovane donna”) e di un’amante del suo marito (“Dama con l’ermallino”). Raffaello ha dipinto i ritratti di Guidobaldo da Montefeltro e sua moglie (Elisabetta Gonzaga), mentre Tiziano ha dipinto i ritratti di Francesco II Gonzaga e della sua moglie (Isabella d’Este) Tiziano ha anche dipinto un ritratto di Alfonso d’Este con i suoi canoni amati e un altro del suo moglie (Lucrezia Borgia) nel suo “Amor sacro e amor profane.” Il tema del sacro contro il profano ha fornito l’ispirazione per molte splendide opere d’arte negli studioli dei signori di Mantova e di Ferrara. Lo studio era un luogo privato di contemplazione per sfuggire alla brutalità del mondo esterno. Isabella d’Este ha scelto Andrea Mantegna e Correggio per creare i dipinti sul tema del trionfo della virtù sul viso. Suo fratello, Alfonso, ha preferito un tema bacchannale per cui Tiziano ha dipinto tre famose pitture mitologiche.

Tiziano, Correggio, Mantegna, Raffaello, Bramante e Leonardo hanno vissuto e hanno lavorato nelle corti di Milano, Mantova, Ferrara e Urbino. Eruditi come Castiglione e Bembo hanno discusso di filosofia con i nobili di queste corti e hanno dedicato le loro opere a loro mecenate. L’arte e la letteratura che è venuta a noi a causa del loro patrocino è incredibile. La brutalità delle guerre che hanno finanziato questi progetti elevati era tutta in un giorno di lavoro per i condottieri. Era il tempo in cui vivevano. Le donne erano, a modo loro, una grande forza come gli uomini. Colte ed educate, hanno aiutato con l’amministrazione della loro città e le negoziati con altre città. Hanno patrocinato alcuni dei (Francesco) was imprisoned in Venice, Isabella d’Este took control of the army for the protection of Mantua, while she negotiated the release of her husband.

Isabella also aided her sister-in-law (Elisabeth Gonzaga) in negotiating the return of the Duchy of Urbino to her husband (Guidobaldo) after the invasion of Cesare Borgia. Urbino Was considered one of the most refined courts in Italy; and Elisabeth (cultured and educated) was the ideal mistress to preside over some of the greatest writers and artists of the Renaissance. Baldassare Castiglione based his famous book (The Courtier) on his discussions with Elisabeth and other nobles and scholars at her court; and he dedicated the book to her. The character in the book who speaks of platonic love is in reality the poet Pietro Bembo, who was at the court of Ferrara when Lucrezia Borgia arrived. He dedicated his book on the nature of love (Gli Asolani) to her. As an intellectual exercise, Bembo and Lucrezia often discussed the contemplation of the ideal in earthly things. They shared these expressions of platonic love in hundreds of letters over many years.

These personal relationships with some of the greatest writers and artists of the world were commonplace in these four courts. In Milan the wedding details for Beatrice d’Este and Ludovico Sforza were handled by Leonardo da Vinci and Donato Bramante. While this was a lovely wedding gift, these artists gave us a much more lasting gift. Under the direction of Ludovico, Bramante rebuilt Santa Maria delle Grazie and Leonardo painted the “Last Supper” in its refectory. Leonardo portrayed the images of Beatrice (“Portrait of a Young Woman”) and one of her husband’s lovers (“Lady with an Ermine”). Raphael painted the portraits of Guidobaldo da Montefeltro and his wife (Elisabeth Gonzaga), while Titian painted the portraits of Francesco II Gonzaga and his wife (Isabella d’Este). Titian also painted a portrait of Alfonso d’Este with his beloved canons and another of his wife (Lucrezia Borgia) in “Sacred and Profane Love.” The theme of the sacred versus the profane provided the inspiration for many splendid works of art in the studios of the lords of Mantua and Ferrara. The studio was a private place for contemplation in order to escape the brutality of the outside world. Isabella d’Este chose Andrea Mantegna and Correggio to create paintings on the theme of the triumph of virtue over vice. Her brother, Alfonso, preferred a bacchannalian theme for which Titian created three famous mythological paintings.

Titian, Correggio, Mantegna, Raphael, Bramante and Leonardo lived and worked in the courts of Milan, Mantua, Ferrara and Urbino. Scholars like Castiglione and Bembo discussed philosophy with the nobles of these courts and they dedicated their works to their patrons. The art and literature that has come to us as a result of their patronage is incredible. The brutality of the wars that financed these lofty projects was all in a day’s work for the condottieri. It was the time in which they lived. The women were, in their own way, as great a force as the men. Cultured and educated, they helped with the administration of their city and negotiations with other cities. They sponsored some of the greatest writers and artists of the Renaissance. The beauty of art and the brutality of war were two sides of the same coin. The life of these persons was a mirror of the human condition: a reflection of good and bad. History is divided in its
più grandi scrittori ed artisti del Rinascimento. La bellezza dell’arte e la brutalità della guerra erano due facce della stessa medaglia. La vita di queste persone era uno specchio della condizione umana: un riflesso dei buoni e dei cattivi. La storia è divisa nella sua rappresentazione del lato brutto di questi individui. Ciò su cui siamo tutti d’accordo è la bellezza dell’arte che questi individui hanno reso possibile.

HISTORY OF SICILY (PART FOUR)
The Sicily of the Elymians and the other ancient civilizations by Riccardo R.G. Cannavò

According to tradition the Elymians were a population that came from the East. Many old scholars (Thucydides, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Timeo from Taormina, Hellanicus from Militene, Strabo, Virgil, Cicero and others) speak about a group of Trojans who had fled from the destruction of the city by the Greeks in 1184 BCE. According to tradition two different expeditions left Anatolia toward Sicily, the first one leaded by Elimo (in Greek Ελυμος who gave the name to the Elymian people) and Acest; the second led by Aeneas in person, with his father Anchises. The two expeditions landed in Sicily in two areas close to each other. In fact Elimo and Acestes landed in Erice while Aeneas and Anchises landed in Trapani, the two Trojan groups met again in Sicily. Elimo and Acestes decided to stay in Sicily while Aeneas after burying his elderly father Anchises on Mount Eryx (today Erice) sailed to Rome. In fact, his father Anchises died in Drepanon (nowadays Trapani). On the beach where he died is still visible a monument known as Stele of Anchises in the Pizzolungo area, today in the town of Erice.

Legends aside, the eastern origin of this people seems confirmed both by the language they spoke and by archaeological findings. The Elymians arrived in Sicily between the 10th and the 12th century BCE, about four/five centuries after the Siculi and about nine/ten centuries after the Sicanis. They landed in the western part of the island and it seems they succeeded in acquiring the land peacefully from the Sicanis, as reported by several scholars, especially Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Some authors also speak of a possible fusion between the Elymians and Sicanis who lived in the western coastal areas.

After the arrival of the Elymians Sicily was divided in three parts and the borders were set on the western part along the Halykos river (today Platani) between Elymians and Sicanis and on the eastern part along the Himera river (today Salso) between Sicanis and Sicanis. So after about ten centuries after the arrival of the Sicanis, the first inhabitants of the island, the size of the Sikanis (meaning the area under the control of the Sicanis) was considerably reduced, because of the arrival of the Sicanis and the Elymians. The two new peoples forced the earliest population to migrate toward the center of the island.

The Elymians practiced agriculture, livestock, hunting and fishing. As for their language we know that they spoke a special language, something in between the Greek and the Phoenician, using the Greek alphabet with some variations. Regarding the Elymian language we have several texts on potteries and bronze tablets found mostly in Segesta, Castellazzo di Poggioreale, Contessa Entellina and other sites in the Trapani province. We know for sure that they did not consider themselves as Greeks and this support the hypothesis of their origin from Asia Minor.

The Elymians had their own religion. They worshiped the goddess Aphrodite and they had the cult of the dog, both elements that refer to the Oriental civilizations. The picture of the dog is already present on the coins issued in Segesta (the most important city in the Elymian world) in the 5th century BCE. Recently the writer Andrea Camilleri, well-known author of the novels of Commissioner Moltalbano, referred to this ancient cult in the novel The Terracotta Dog.

representation of the ugly side of these individuals. What we all agree on is the beauty of the art that these individuals made possible.

STORIA DELLA SICILIA (QUARTA PARTE)
La Sicilia Elyma e gli altri antichi popoli della Sicilia
di Riccardo R. G. Cannavò


Leggende a parte sembra confermata l’origine orientale di questo popolo, sia dalla lingua parlata sia dai ritrovamenti archeologici. Gli Elimi arrivarono in Sicilia tra i secoli X e XII a.C., circa quattro/cinque secoli dopo i Siculi e circa nove/dieci secoli dopo i Sicanis. Sbarcarono nella parte occidentale dell’isola e sembra che riuscirono ad avere la terra pacificamente dai Sicanis, come riportano diversi autori e specialmente Dionigi di Alicarnasso. Alcuni autori parlano anche di una possibile fusione tra gli Elimi e i Sicanis che abitavano le zone costiere occidentali.

Dopo l’arrivo degli Elimi la Sicilia venne divisa in tre parti e i confini vennero fissati ad occidente sul corso del fiume Halykos (oggi Platani) tra Elimi e Sicanis e ad oriente sul corso del fiume Himera (oggi Salso) tra Sicani e Sicanis. Pertanto dopo circa dieci secoli dall’arrivo dei Sicanis, primi abitatori dell’isola, le dimensioni della Sikanis (intesa come area sotto il controllo dei Sicanis) si erano molto ridotte a causa dell’arrivo in Sicilia dei Sicanis e degli Elimi. Le due nuove popolazioni hanno infatti costretto la popolazione più antica a migrare verso il centro dell’isola.

Gli Elimi praticavano l’agricoltura, l’allevamento, la caccia e la pesca. Per quanto riguarda la loro lingua sappiamo che parlavano una lingua particolare, una sorta di via di mezzo tra il greco e il fenicio, utilizzando l’alfabeto greco con alcune varianti. Della lingua elima abbiamo diversi testi riportati su ceramiche e tavolettine di bronzo ritrovate per lo più a Segesta, Castellazzo di Poggioreale, Contessa Entellina e in altri siti in provincia di Trapani. Sappiamo per certo che non si consideravano greci e questo avvalorava l’ipotesi di una origine dell’Asia minore.

Gli Elimi avevano una loro propria religione, veneravano la dea Afrodis e avevano il culto del cane, entrambi elementi che rimandano alle civiltà orientali, l’immagine del cane è già presente sulle monete emesse di Segesta (la città più importante del mondo elimo) nel V secolo a.C. Da recente lo scrittore Andrea Camilleri, noto autore dei romanzi del commissario Moltalbano, ha fatto riferimento a questo antico culto nel romanzo Il Cane di Terracotta.

Il centro religioso più importante era la città di Erice (in latino Eryx, attualmente nel comune di Erice in provincia di Trapani) dove gli Elimi avevano costruito il grande tempio di Afrodis e dove veniva praticata la prostituzione sacra da
The most important religious center was the city of Erice (in Elymian Iruka, in Greek Ερυξ, in Latin Eryx, nowadays in the town of Erice in the province of Trapani) where the Elymians built the huge temple of Aphrodite and where sacred prostitution was practiced by a caste of priestesses of the goddess.

The center of political power was the city of Segesta (Aegesta according to the old scholars, today in the town of Calatafimi Segesta, Trapani province); we know that Segesta was the administrative center, sort of capital, of the Elymian world and that it was considered a rich and important town. Still today it is possible to admire the huge Elymian temple in Segesta and the theater (still used nowadays) both symbols of the power of this people. The city’s port was probably located in Castellammare del Golfo, in Trapani.

Segesta temple

The most important cities other than Segesta and Erice were Entella (today near Contessa Entellina, in Palermo province) where in 1970 the famous bronze tablets known as Nakone Decrees were discovered; Elima (today near mount Castellazzo in the municipality of Poggioreale, province of Trapani), which took its name from the founder Elimo; Halyciae (today Salemi in the province of Trapani); and Iaitas (today San Giuseppe Iato in the province of Palermo).

Makella probably located in the Montagnola area, in the municipality of Marineo, province of Palermo, where recently have been found some tiles with the inscription MAKEΛΛA is also clearly mentioned in the elegy to Caio Duilio, the first Roman commander who won a naval battle (the battle of Milazzo against the Carthaginians in 260 BCE). The elegy is an inscription at the base of the beaked column, a monument built to commemorate the battle that was present in the Roman Forum, the base was found in 1565 (now shown at the New Capitoline Museum in Rome), while the column has been lost. The inscription speaks of Makella (MACELLAM) as a city of particular strategic importance.

Kyattara is a city of which the site has not yet been identified, but we know that after the conquest of Palermo in 254 BC by the Romans, the city voluntarily delivered itself to Rome after driving out the Carthaginian troops (as reported by Diodorus Siculus, Pliny the Elder and Cicero). Nakone, Petra and Schera have not yet been identified with certainty, but mentioned many times by historians. Coins from these cities have also been found. Almost all Elymian cities are reported by Pliny the Elder in his Naturalis Historia and by other ancient scholars such as Livy, Polybius and others.

Riccardo R. G. Cannavò is a member of the board of directors of the Italian Cultural Society.

The history of the Elymians and the other ancient civilizations of Sicily will be continued in a future issue of Poche Parole.
MOVIE OF THE MONTH

Last month we showed an episode from the TV series “The Young Montalbano”. By popular demand, we are now screening a second episode.

The Italian Cultural Society Movie of the month for May is “New Year’s Eve” (2012). Salvo Montalbano (Michele Riondino) is exhausted! New Year’s Eve has come to Vigata so it seems no one will let him sleep. His girlfriend Milena (Alessandra Murtelliti) really wants him to join her on a bus ride to her mother’s house. Fazio (Andrea Tidona), Catarella (Fabrizio Pizzuto) and fellow carabinieri demand he attend the annual dinner party. Having to think fast, Salvo tells each he has accepted the other’s offer and sneaks into Hotel Reginella for a peaceful night’s sleep. The plan backfires when bleary eyed Montalbano is awakened at the crack of dawn after a maid finds import export sales representative Sig. Lo Castro murdered down the hall.

Please join us for the investigation in Italian with English subtitles.

PROFILE OF CARLO ELENA
This is the first in a series of profiles of the teachers in the Italian Language Program of the Italian Cultural Society

Carlo Ellena was born in Savona, Italy, in the beautiful Riviera delle Palme. He studied computer linguistics at the University of Pisa and he got a Master Degree with a thesis on Expert Systems in Artificial Intelligence. In particular, his thesis was focused on the use of the computer for Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning.

After graduation, he worked for the American company KTI both in Italy, in Rome and in California at Irvine. During this time, he studied Machine Learning at the University of California at Irvine.

During his job experience, he worked for many companies in both US and Europe and Latin America.

In particular, he was consultant with the European Union for matters regarding ecommerce and eLearning systems. He published many articles on Artificial Intelligence and Natural Processing Systems.

He speaks Italian, English, Spanish and French and has a basic knowledge of Portuguese.

He’s been collaborating with ICS since 2007.

FILM DEL MESE

Il mese scorso abbiamo presentato un episodio della serie “Il giovane Montalbano”. A grande richiesta e’ stato deciso di presentare un secondo episodio.

Il film del mese dell’Italian Cultural Society a maggio sara’ “Capodanno” (2012). Salvo Montalbano (Michele Riondino) e’ stanco morto! Capodanno e’ arrivato a Vigata e sembra che nessuno voglia lasciar riposare Montalbano. Michela, (Alessandra Murtelliti) la sua ragazza, vuole assolutamente che prenda la corriera con lei per andare da sua madre. Fazio (Andrea Tidona), Catarella (Fabrizio Pizzuto) e gli altri poliziotti insistono che partecipi all’annuale cenone di Capodanno. Dovendo pensare velocemente, Salvo dice a ciascuno che ha accettato l’invito dell’altro e se la svigna all’Hotel Reginella per una notte di sonno tranquillo. Il suo piano fallisce quando l’assonnato Montalbano viene svegliato all’alba da una cameriera che trova il cadavere di Lo Castro, un rappresentante di vendite internazionali, ucciso nel corridoio dell’albergo.

Unitevi a noi per seguire l’inchiesta. In italiano con sottotitoli in inglese.

TWO PICTURES FROM THE APRIL MEETING

Davide Pirrera Rosso di Cerami

Davide e Ron
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