

## **“Finally the Academies”: Networking communities of knowledge in Italy and beyond**

**Lisa Sampson**

**University College London**

[NOTE: This is a copy of the final version of the essay (27 Sept. 2019) accepted by Chicago University Press for publication in *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, issue Fall 2019. Any references should be made to the final printed/online formatted version.]

For Giambattista Vico in his *Principi di una scienza nuova*, academies represented the culmination of human civilization.<sup>1</sup> His view has not always been shared, but especially since the new millennium, academies have attracted growing international scholarly interest as cultural and socio-political hubs central to forming knowledge across all disciplines of the arts and sciences. Their study as a scholarly field in their own right was given new impetus around 1980 by Amedeo Quondam, Claudia Di Filippo Bareggi, Laetitia Boehm, Ezio Raimondi, and Gino Benzoni, and in the Anglosphere by Frances Yates and Eric Cochrane. This coincided with a growing socio-historical interest in associative and relational culture, setting aside Burckhardtian concerns for the individual. More recently, the field has diversified considerably to include interest in cultural mobilities and transnational networks, while the availability of digital resources offers new research possibilities.

The groundwork for studying these rather loosely defined institutions which proliferated in the Italian peninsula and beyond from around the turn of the sixteenth century,

was first laid out with Michele Maylender's multi-volume compendium *Storia delle accademie d'Italia* (published posthumously 1926-30). This documents over 2,000 academies of varying constitutions formed at various dates, but mostly between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Maylender's work was left incomplete at his death in 1911 and lacks an overarching scholarly synthesis and cross-referenced indexes. Yet, this remarkable catalogue has provided a key basis for documenting the centrality of the academies to early modern Italy. Only recently has Maylender's work been superseded in various ways by the *Italian Academies Database (IAD)*.<sup>2</sup> The database provides updated information on academies from twenty-two centers across the peninsula and allows users new ways of navigating data to visualize these "epistemological communities" and the broader intellectual and social networks they formed, which paved the way for the Republic of Letters.<sup>3</sup>

Academies have a complex history, and their historiography presents sharply fluctuating views that have been closely bound up with ideas of regional pride and national identity, as well as issues of intellectual status and civic engagement. Celebrated by early protagonists like Scipione Bargagli (1569) and Stefano Guazzo (1574) for the intellectual freedom they offered, then catalogued on a national scale and valued as key cultural institutions by the eighteenth-century encyclopedists Quadrio and Tiraboschi, more critical views were advanced by Muratori. Literary histories like that of De Sanctis, inspired by Risorgimento ideals, set out a longstanding negative view of academies as frivolous and self-regarding—symptomatic of intellectual decadence.<sup>4</sup>

From the first allusion to a "modern" *accademia* by Bracciolini in 1434 and the earliest handful of groups loosely designated as such later in the fifteenth-century (like those of Cardinal Bessarion and Pomponio Leto in Rome, Ficino's Platonic Academy in Florence, Pontano's in Naples, and those of Ermolao Barbaro and Aldo Manuzio in Venice) these institutions evoked the ancient Greek model established by Plato and Aristotle, and revived

by Cicero. They were spaces for collective antiquarian and humanist study, for developing and testing classical knowledge and canons against modern culture. They first flourished through oral discussion and informal lectures; later they produced editions, imitations, translations and transpositions, and other forms of culture. Groupings self-styling themselves “accademia” were rare before the Accademia degli Intronati of Siena established an important model in 1525, though similar activities were undertaken by groups like the Orti Rucellai which continued to pursue earlier and more informal traditions of learned sociability. After the Sack of Rome—which deeply affected cultural institutions like universities—academies became a widespread part of the changing cultural landscape, marked by the Counter-Reformation and growing princely absolutism together with foreign domination. By the end of the century nearly 400 academies had been founded across the entire peninsula, with a further 870 by 1700<sup>5</sup>—more than the the rest of the world together, as Jean le Rond d’Alembert noted critically in the *Encyclopédie* (1751).<sup>6</sup> Their appearance has therefore been considered by Richard S. Samuels and Simone Testa as a social movement. It can be linked with high levels of urbanization, political decentralization and polycentrism, which fostered sometimes intense cultural competition. The spread of academies beyond the peninsula further stoked transnational collaborations and rivalries, as well as distinctive local traditions.<sup>7</sup>

Given the now substantial scholarship on academies, this short essay makes no claims to comprehensiveness, but notes, rather, emerging lines of enquiry and some recent publications. These include important volumes arising from research collaborations like *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (1995), *Les Académies dans l’Europe Humaniste* (2008), *Le virtuose adunanze: La cultura accademica tra XVI e XVIII secolo* (2015), *The Italian Academies, 1525-1700: Networks of Culture, Innovation and Dissent* (2016), and *Intrecci virtuosi: Letterati, artisti e accademie tra Cinque e Seicento* (2017), as well as

Simone Testa's monograph *Italian Academies (1500-1700): From Local to Global* (2015), and an abundance of detailed studies on individual academies or specific regions.<sup>8</sup> These have significantly updated and expanded Maylender's findings, enabling more historically nuanced and fact-based analyses of academies, their members and activities. The corpus of academies has, for instance, been expanded by 80% for Florence,<sup>9</sup> suggesting similar possibilities elsewhere. Book history has considerably enhanced the understanding of printed works associated with academies, as has scholarship exploring the sociology of texts. Importantly, numerous manuscript and archival sources have also been uncovered, to which Maylender barely referred, which reveal very different, sometimes "secret" or heterodox kinds of activities and concerns. A prosopographical approach to studying people associated with academies has further broadened the field of enquiry, showing affiliates from across different classes and in a variety of roles beyond membership—for example, as contributors to works, dedicatees, patrons, and printers (see *IAD*). Gender studies perspectives have also expanded our understanding of the place and roles of women in academy culture, from founders to audiences, reflecting considerable geo-cultural variations depending on their closeness to courts and cultural "centers."<sup>10</sup>

Much larger-scale data is therefore becoming available for quantitative studies of academies and their networks. Even so, scholars still face methodological challenges in the study of the Italian academic movement due to the sheer number of academies spread over very diverse regions, each requiring contextual analysis; the differing typologies and make-up, fluid membership and often short-lived status; the range of activities; and the variable quantity and types of documentation now in existence, dispersed over numerous repositories, often not clearly identifiable in catalogues. Because of the complexity of the sources, published studies have hitherto tended to focus selectively on key places and periods, and on academies famous for particular figures, disciplines or activities, rather than looking more

broadly at the movement or the networks. Academies located in the “golden triangle” of Florence, Venice, and Rome feature in an extensive array of studies too numerous to cite, together with Siena, and the Veneto (especially Padua and Vicenza)—and continue to generate new discoveries.<sup>11</sup> However, a more articulated, Dionisottian “geography and history” of early modern academic culture is opening up, with recent studies now available, for example, on Bologna, Perugia, Genova, Parma, Naples and other centers of the South including Sicily, which is also well represented in the *Italian Academies Database*.<sup>12</sup>

Digital humanities resources and large book digitization and cataloguing projects (like Edit16) have enabled access to primary sources on a much larger scale and present important new possibilities for connecting data. Users of the *IAD* can currently trace links among 585 academies by way of over 7,000 people, based on a census of 905 related academy books held in the British Library. Visualization software like Mirador, as used for texts on other early modern digital projects could further aid scholars. Such resources potentially also allow for the re-assembling of academy sources on the model of the *Tudor State Papers Online* project. Various other searchable databases offer fine-grained detail on archival and other sources for single academies, like the excellent ones for the Accademia della Crusca; *The Early History of the Accademia di San Luca, c. 1590-1635*; and the Accademia Vitruviana, currently under construction.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, there is enormous potential for data-gathering from other resources like the *Medici Archive Project*, *I Gonzaga digitali*, *Archilet*, and recently *Petrarch Exegesis in Renaissance Italy Database (PERI)*.<sup>14</sup> The challenge going forward is to ensure the sustainability and interoperability of digital platforms—the *IAD* has already been integrated into the recently launched *Archivi del Rinascimento*, modelled on the *Connected Histories* search engine. Amassing cross-searchable, large-scale data will be central to mapping the academies movement, just as the longstanding *Cultures of Knowledge* and now *Networking Archives* project is doing for the Republic of Letters. Such

developments will enable a longer overview of the academies phenomenon that transcends traditional historiographical or disciplinary approaches, providing also European and even global perspectives.

Complementing this concern with data, the “archival turn” in scholarship presents new methodological suggestions for interrogating the formation of the academy archives and records themselves—considering what has been preserved or obliterated, and why? As Filippo de Vivo’s groundbreaking work on archives in late medieval and early modern Italy has shown, archives are historical constructions, intrinsically linked with the shaping and control of knowledge.<sup>15</sup> Critical as well as larger scale data-gathering therefore provides the essential backdrop for studies on academies to overcome a fragmented and partial vision of this phenomenon.

A perennial preoccupation underpinning the mapping of the academies movement is how to define what an academy was over the early modern period.<sup>16</sup> Besides *accademia*, one also finds terms like *compagnia*, *congrega*, *ridotto*, *conversazione* being used, sometimes even interchangeably, while the term “fare accademia” can simply imply gathering together.<sup>17</sup> Functioning within urban civic contexts, academies straddled the secular, religious, domestic and emerging public spheres, and had roots in medieval types of association. Though a number became more formalized by the seventeenth century, only a small percentage of academies are thought to have had laws or statutes. Clearly, then, researchers must set out parameters for how to define the field of research, which may be more or less inclusive or linked to specific disciplines, chronology, or geography.

The resonant designation “accademia” itself is significant, linked with self-mythologizing and “monumentalizing” aims. This term denotes continuity with prestigious ancient roots—whether meaningful in practice or not—and claims to *translatio studii*.<sup>18</sup>

Academies have been considered to function as a symbolic *repubblica letteraria*, associated by Marc Fumaroli with intellectual *ozio* and freedom, as a sort of Arcadia and Parnassus.<sup>19</sup> In this respect, the academies differ from organizations with predominantly professional, commercial, or religious concerns. Their collective use of complex symbolism, ritual, and iconography (in emblems), and the display of the title “accademico” (or rarely “accademica”) on printed publications—and even the fictional invention of some “academies”—indicates the honor, prestige, and necessity of *belonging*. Yet, underlying economic and social issues, which only occasionally surface in archival sources, suggest more conflicted realities and the intersecting pressures of patronage, social and political hierarchy, local patriotism, individual ambitions, and the demands of civility and courtesy.<sup>20</sup> In this respect, the rejection of the term “accademia” by some individuals or similar institutions could be further explored. This is epitomized in Siena by the much studied Congrega dei Rozzi, set up by artisans in opposition to the elite Accademia degli Intronati.<sup>21</sup> In England too, despite interest in founding an academy as of 1530, the term was barely used in the period apart from a few short-lived royal ones, with a preference for “clubs” or “societies”, while Sidney termed his para-academy *Aeropagus*.<sup>22</sup>

In trying to distinguish “academies” and their various configurations, further methodological issues arise due to these groups’ deep and tangled roots in other kinds of lay and religious associations as well as political and professional institutions. These varied considerably according to local political conditions, as has been extensively studied especially for Florence, notably by Michel Plaisance. In Italy, academies could intersect with civic groups like confraternities, corporations, guilds, and convivial sodalities, with groups formed round presses, or with gatherings in libraries, salons, and museums—sites associated by the eighteenth century with the emerging public sphere. As Arjan Van Dixhoorn and Susie Speakman Sutch’s *The Reach of The Republic of Letters* (2008) shows, academies should

also be set against a long-standing, Europe-wide tradition of forming sodalities for learned sociability, including the Dutch Chambers of Rhetoric. One productive way of exploring notoriously fuzzy institutional borders is through discipline-specific studies. For instance, art academies (excluded in Maylender's survey) have been studied in connection with guilds in studies on the Florentine Accademia del Disegno, and the abovementioned Accademia di San Luca. Similarly, other academies documented only, or chiefly, for performances and conviviality can trace their roots in festive groupings devoted to spectacle, like the aristocratic Venetian *compagnie della calza* and Florentine *compagnie*, as well as confraternities.<sup>23</sup>

The institutional status of academies was particularly defined by their dynamic relationship with the quintessentially medieval institution of knowledge, the university or *Studio*—which fifteenth-century humanists termed in Latin *academia* and came to be known in seventeenth-century Italy as *accademie pubbliche*, after reformed universities across humanist northern Europe like Oxford and Leiden had sought the title *Academia*.<sup>24</sup> This connection has recently been explored by Maria Teresa Guerrini with special focus on jurists at the University of Bologna, for which a useful database of students exists.<sup>25</sup> Academies often flourished privately at the margins of universities, drawing their members from professors and students among others, but offering greater freedom in terms of their range of studies and *modus operandi*. Academies engaged with disciplines normally excluded from university programs, including architecture, music, and geography, offering a more “universal” and potentially encyclopedic knowledge.<sup>26</sup> Copious studies show the centrality of academies to the development of increasingly hybrid, innovative literary, dramatic and musical forms, from lyric vernacular verse and the hybrid *romanzo* to opera (*melodramma*), as well as experimental science, stimulated by *virtuosi* including artists, musicians, artisans and even occasionally learned *comici*.



As non-vocational forums, they provided an alternative discursive realm to universities, based on dialogue, shared listening and speaking, and often with emphasis on the vernacular. On visiting Padua, Fynes Moryson praised academies formed by students “for private disputations and exercises of their particular Studdyes and Professions.”<sup>27</sup> These forums were important also for developing “softer” skills in “civil conversation,” in contrast to the often unruly university culture, as well as for promoting social networking and advancement. Within the changing educational field—marked by what Edward Muir has termed “culture wars” and religious shifts—the “academy” provided suitably flexible structures for implementing new kinds of “reforms.”<sup>28</sup> Some “academies” were in effect private colleges or boarding schools, run by humanists like Bernardino Partenio in Vicenza, or by religious orders like the Jesuits.

The academies’ connections with confraternities, from which several originated, similarly presents important future research opportunities, building on a flourishing contiguous field, and coinciding with current reevaluation of the Counter-Reformation period in terms of innovation and reform. Academies are widely documented as observing religious and charitable practices and rituals, with the Virgin or patron saints as protectors, and co-opting secular and even regular clergy. Building on growing interest in philo-Protestantism in Italy, there is scope for further exploring institutional blurring, and for evaluating the extent of religious and political control over academies before and after Trent, especially given their involvement in some cases with the spread of reformist or heterodox ideas, such as the mysterious Sociniani of Vicenza, the Accademia Modenese, and the Addormentati of Rovigo (suppressed 1562).<sup>29</sup> Yet, they could also become central to the development of Counter-Reformation culture, such as the Roman Notti Vaticane and the Accademia Ambrosiana of Milan, a center whose academies have attracted recent interest in this regard.<sup>30</sup> As noted by Alison Brown and Déborah Blocker, academies could both develop counter-culture *and*

promote authority, sometimes at the same time through a kind of double-discourse. Evidence of religious heterodoxy is, however, minimal or coded, but it may sometimes be “read between the lines”.<sup>31</sup>

The distinctive concern in academies with communication, as sites of “l’antropologia della parola socializzata”,<sup>32</sup> has been of specific interest in connection with studies on orality or “semi-orality” (in combination with written culture), as explored in the pioneering research of Brian Richardson and his team.<sup>33</sup> Paolo Procaccioli has described academies as training grounds (*palestre*) for ideas, sometimes on polemical scientific subjects, and as socially legitimizing new knowledge.<sup>34</sup> They were useful for honing rhetorical skills through lectures and debates, as well as for testing literary ideas and for performing verse, music and drama following courtly practices. In this last connection, a “performative turn” may be identified in relation to the study of academy spectacle, which could sometimes involve elaborate and innovative creations like opera, or *tornei* including equestrian skills, as well as permanent theater constructions and interest in *commedia dell’arte* practices.<sup>35</sup> Such activities invite further consideration of academies’ use of spaces for performances and holdings of theatre props, alongside books and other items. Performances required connections with a large network of agents and contributors sometimes with (semi-)professional competences, which implied physical proximity in a way that book publication networks need not. This enabled cross-fertilization with current specialist techniques, although contacts with artisans and female *virtuosa* singers and actors could raise issues of propriety.<sup>36</sup> Consideration of the diverse audiences envisaged for academy performances, reaching across the social spectrum and gender divide, raises questions about the academies’ civic role and even the extent to which it was a “grassroots” social dimension.

Academies therefore imply complex positioning at a local and civic level, as well as within much wider “invisible” networks which could sometimes extend transnationally, to

Germany, France, Spain, England, the Netherlands, Croatia, and Crete; a global dimension has even been envisaged in relation to Jesuit missions. Paula Findlen suggested in her entry on “Academies” for the *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (1999) that the plethora of short-lived academies in Italy reflects their inability “to transcend their local concerns” in the way increasingly centralized nation states of France and England did by founding respectively the Académie Française (1634) and the Royal Society (1660) to meet cultural and scientific needs. Nonetheless, the Lincei of Rome planned, if they did not realize, colonies in Germany and New Spain. Yates has also described how Italian academies (including the Accademia Fiorentina) initially influenced early French models, such as in developing a prestigious vernacular.<sup>37</sup> Various academies attracted or celebrated distinguished foreigners like John Milton, Charles Patin, Francisco Quevedo, and Lope de Vega, as well as engaging in correspondence. Such exchanges can be further explored via the hypertext of the *Italian Academies Database*, and in travel accounts, translations and foreign editions of academy works. Political support was essential to securing the longevity of the few Italian academies which still exist today, including the Crusca and Disegno of Florence; the Ricovrati of Padua (now the Accademia Galileiana di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti); the Filarmonici of Verona, and the Olimpici of Vicenza.

The important function of academies in sustaining networks for generating and spreading news and ideas as well as for social purposes, explored in depth by Simone Testa with reference to Social Network Analysis (SNA), raises broader questions about their role in the knowledge economy of an increasingly globalized world, especially since the seventeenth century. In this regard, new perspectives are emerging from research on Italian scientific academies like the Lincei, the Investiganti and Oziosi of Naples, the Cimento of Florence and others in Bologna devoted to anatomy and medicine, as well as in the South and Sicily. These generated original experimental methods, testing Aristotelian and religious principles (more

or less openly), and later forming a part of information networks across Europe.<sup>38</sup> Such activities clearly contradict narratives of academies' provincialism and triviality. The role of academies or their members in diffusing scientific culture, alongside distinctly "Italian" cultural products (like opera), is therefore of special interest to determining their place in the broader sociology of culture and the expanding Republic of Letters.

One might then conclude that scholarship has only scratched the surface of the complex phenomenon of academies, which appears as one of the most characteristic features of early modern Italian society and culture. The field invites further quantitative and qualitative analysis, employing an interdisciplinary and especially a collaborative approach. This will open alternative perspectives on social transformations and cultural production, adding to the existing studies of literature and fine arts, the "master authors", and traditional institutions of culture and political centres to enable insights into larger-scale, collective knowledge production, also from the peripheries, sometimes with a bottom up focus. Evaluating this social and intellectual movement will demand both a "distant" approach, drawing on expanding corpora of data, and fine-grained case studies. Closer studies of academy networks will undoubtedly continue to throw new light on significant cultural agents—including ones who acted as nodal points like Girolamo Ruscelli—as well as hitherto neglected figures. It will be opportune to explore further how far academies functioned as closed circles or as the "open networks" that David S. Lux and Harold J. Cook have identified as underpinning the Republic of Letters. The young Vico said it took an academy meeting to shake him from his mental inertia.<sup>39</sup> Today the study of academies similarly stirs us to re-envision early modernity itself.

---

Acknowledgements

---

I am grateful to Jane Everson and Simone Testa for their valuable comments on this essay while in preparation.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico: Revised Translation of the Third Edition (1744)* (Ithaca NY, 1968), Book 1, 2, LXV, §239, p. 78: “This was the order of human institutions: first the forests, after that the huts, then the villages, next the cities, and finally the academies.”

<sup>2</sup> The Italian Academies Database <<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/ItalianAcademies/>>; an open access database hosted by the British Library compiled for the project Italian Academies, 1525-1700: The First Intellectual Networks of Early Modern Europe, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council UK (AH/H023631/1), by Simone Testa and Lorenza Gianfrancesco, directed by Jane Everson, Denis Reidy and Lisa Sampson with the assistance of Tom Denman. The raw data are accessible: <https://data.bl.uk/iad/>.

<sup>3</sup> For “epistemological communities,” see Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot* (Cambridge, 2000), 8.

<sup>4</sup> See on the historiography of academies Simone Testa, *Italian Academies and Their Networks, 1525-1700: From Local to Global* (Basingstoke, 2015), 17-76.

<sup>5</sup> Amedeo Quondam, “L’Accademia,” in *Letteratura italiana, I, Il letterato e le istituzioni* (Turin, 1982), 823-898, 870–72; statistics based on Maylender’s survey.

<sup>6</sup> “L’Italie l’emporte sur toutes les autres [Nations] au moins par le nombre des siennes.” *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751–72), ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, s.v. “Académie,” <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu>.

---

<sup>7</sup> Massimo Rinaldi, “Le Accademie del Cinquecento,” in *Il Rinascimento italiano e l’Europa*, ed. Giovanni Luigi Fontana and Luca Molà, 6 vols (Vicenza, 2005-2010), 2 (2007):

*Umanesimo ed educazione*, ed. Gino Belloni and Riccardo Drusi, 337-59, 339, 349n53.

<sup>8</sup> *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. D. S. Chambers and F. Quiviger (London, 1995); *Les Académies dans l’Europe Humaniste: Idéaux et pratiques*, texts ed. Marc Deramaix, Perrine Galand-Hallyn, Ginette Vagenheim and Jean Vignes, pref. Marc Fumaroli (Geneva, 2008); *Le virtuose adunanze: la cultura accademica tra XVI e XVIII secolo*, ed. Ilaria Bianchi and Clizia Gurreri (Avellino, 2015); *The Italian Academies 1525-1700: Networks of culture, innovation and dissent*, ed. by Jane E. Everson, Denis V. Reidy and Lisa Sampson (Oxford, 2016); *Intrecci virtuosi: Letterati, artisti e accademie tra Cinque e Seicento*, ed. Carla Chiummo, Antonio Geremicca, Patrizia Tosini (Rome, 2017); Testa, *Italian Academies (1500-1700)*. See also Simone Testa, “Academies,” in *Oxford Bibliographies in Renaissance and Reformation*, ed. Margaret King, New York, forthcoming.

<sup>9</sup> Jean Boutier and Maria Pia Paoli, “Letterati cittadini e principi filosofi: I milieux intellettuali fiorentini tra Cinque e Settecento,” in *Naples, Rome, Florence: Une histoire comparée des milieux intellectuels italiens (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles)*, ed. Jean Boutier, Brigitte Marin and Antonella Romano (Rome, 2005), 331-403 and 684-88, 370, 682-86.

<sup>10</sup> Virginia Cox, “Members, Muses, Mascots: Women and Italian Academies,” in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700: Networks of Culture, Innovation and Dissent*, ed. Jane E. Everson, Denis V. Reidy and Lisa Sampson (Oxford, 2016), 132-69; also see studies cited here by Conor Fahy, Alexandra Coller, George McClure, Lisa Sampson.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance: Franco Tomasi, “Le origini dell’Accademia degli Intronati e un componimento inedito di Marcantonio Piccolomini,” in *Chivalry, Academy, and Cultural Dialogues: The Italian Contribution to European Culture*, ed. Stefano Jossa and Giuliana Pieri (Cambridge, 2016), 93-106; Valeria Guarna, *L’accademia veneziana della fama: Storia*,

---

*cultura, editoria; Con l'edizione della Somma delle opere (1558) e altri documenti inediti* (Manziana, 2018); and the conference: *Le accademie a Roma nel Seicento* (June 13-14, Rome), organized by Maurizio Campanelli, Pietro Petteruti Pellegrino and Emilio Russo.

<sup>12</sup> For Bolognese academies, see e.g. Bianchi and Gurreri, *Le virtuose adunanze*, and Clizia Gurreri, “‘Nec longum tempus’: l’Accademia dei gelati tra xvi e xvii secolo (1588–1614),” in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700*, 186-96; on Perugia, see Lorenzo Sacchini, “Da Francesco Petrarca a Giovan Battista Marino: l’Accademia degli Insensati di Perugia (1561–1608),” in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700*, and ID., *Identità, lettere e virtù: Le lezioni accademiche degli Insensati di Perugia (1561-1608)* (Bologna, 2016); on Genoa, Luca Beltrami, ed., *Leggi e ordini dell’Accademia degli Addormentati di Genova (1587)* (Manziana, 2016); on Parma, see Lisa Sampson, “Reforming Theatre in Farnese Parma: The Case of the Accademia degli Innominati (1574–1608),” in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700*, 62-76; and Lucia Denarosi, *L’Accademia degli Innominati di Parma: teorie letterarie e progetti di scrittura (1574-1608)* (Florence, 2003); among the rich studies on Naples, see Girolamo de Miranda, *Una quiete operosa: Forma e pratiche dell’Accademia Napoletana degli Oziosi 1611-1645* (Naples, 2000); ID., “‘À de vagues desseins l’home est toujours en proie’: L’accademia degli Oziosi e i suoi antagonisti tra riti fondativi e costruzione d’identità,” in Boutier and Paoli, *Naples, Rome Florence*, 89-104; and in the same volume, Elvira Chiosi, “Istituzioni accademiche a Napoli nel Settecento: continuità a mutamenti,” 105-122; Anna Maria Rao, “Gli ambienti intellettuali napoletani,” 35-88, esp. 63-69. See also Lorenza Gianfrancesco, “Accademie, scienza e celebrazioni a Napoli nel primo Seicento,” *Quaderni di Symbolon*, 5 (2010), 177-213; EAD., “From Propaganda to Science: Looking at the World of Academies in Early Seventeenth-century Naples,” *California Italian Studies*, 3:1 (2012), 1-31. On Sicily, see in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700*: Salvatore Bottari, “The Accademia della Fucina: Culture and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Messina,” 77-85; Irene Bagni, “L’Accademia

---

Palermitana degli Accessi: un esempio di petrarchismo nel tardo Cinquecento,” 233-44;

Delphine Montoliu, “Accademie siciliane 1400–1701’: Una nuova banca dati bibliografica,” 306-15.

<sup>13</sup> See the Archive (director Nicoletta Maraschio) of the Accademia della Crusca:

<http://www.accademiadellacrusca.it/en/pagina-d-entrata>; The Early History of the Accademia di San Luca, c. 1590–1635 (directed by Peter M. Lukehart)

<https://www.nga.gov/research/casva/research-projects/early-history-of-the-accademia-di-san-luca.html>;

Accademia dello Studio dell’Architettura / Accademia dello Sedgno / Accademia della Virtù / Accademia Vitruviana / Accademia Romana (directed by Bernd Kulawik):

<http://www.accademia-vitruviana.net/front-page>.

<sup>14</sup> Doctoral theses may also produce research databases; see the open access database

“Accademie siciliane 1400-1701,” created by Delphine Montoliu for her doctoral thesis,

published by Line@editoriale: [http://revues.univ-](http://revues.univ-tlse2.fr/pum/lineaeditoriale/index.php?id=83)

[tlse2.fr/pum/lineaeditoriale/index.php?id=83](http://revues.univ-tlse2.fr/pum/lineaeditoriale/index.php?id=83).

<sup>15</sup> Filippo de Vivo et al., *Fonti per la storia degli archivi degli antichi Stati italiani* (Rome,

2016); and “Archival turns in early modern Italy,” (lecture at the symposium Archiving the

Academies of Early Modern Italy: Critical Methodologies and Digital Tools University

College London, June 28, 2018: <[https://www.ucl.ac.uk/early-modern/news-events/past-](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/early-modern/news-events/past-events/archiving-academies-early-modern-italy-critical-methodologies-digital-tools)

[events/archiving-academies-early-modern-italy-critical-methodologies-digital-tools](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/early-modern/news-events/past-events/archiving-academies-early-modern-italy-critical-methodologies-digital-tools)>.

<sup>16</sup> Jane E. Everson and Lisa Sampson, “Introduction,” in *Italian Academies, 1525-1700*, 1-20,

3. This concern underpinned the conference: “What is an Academy? Early Modern Learned

Societies in a Transcultural Perspective,” organized by “Episteme in Motion” and the Berlin-

Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and the Humanities, Berlin, 22-23 May, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, 5 edn, 11 vols (Florence, 1863-1920), I

(1863), s.v. "Accademia".



---

<sup>18</sup> James Hankins, “The Myth of the Platonic Academy of Florence,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44 (1991), 429-75.

<sup>19</sup> Marc Fumaroli, “Academia, Arcadia, Parnassus: trois lieux allégoriques de l'éloge du loisir lettré,” in Chambers and Quiviger, *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century*, 15-36.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Bolzoni, “Making Knowledge Visible: The Accademia Veneziana,” in *Gallery of Memory*, 3-22; D. J. Gordon, “Academicians build a theatre and give a play: The Accademia Olimpica, 1579-1585,” in *Friendship's garland: Essays presented to Mario Praz*, ed. V. Gabrieli (Rome, 1966), I:105-38; and Alison A. Smith, “Women and the Accademia Filarmonica of Verona,” paper given at the conference *The Italian Academies: The first intellectual networks of Early Modern Europe*, London, British Library, 2012: <https://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2012/09/the-italian-academies-the-first-intellectual-networks-of-early-modern-europe/>.

<sup>21</sup> Giuliano Catoni and Mario De Gregorio, eds., *I Rozzi di Siena 1531–2001* (Siena, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> Richard Cust, “Charles I's Noble Academy,” *The Seventeenth Century*, 29.4 (2014): 1-21; Michelle O'Callaghan, *The English Wits: Literature and Sociability in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> On the *compagnie della calza*, see Peter Jordan, *The Venetian Origins of the Commedia dell'arte* (Abingdon (UK), 2014); for Florence, see e.g. Alison Brown, “Defining the Place of Academies in Florentine Culture and Politics,” in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700*, ed. Everson, Reidy, Sampson, 22-37; Tommaso Mozzati, *Giovanfrancesco Rustici: Le Compagnie del paiuolo e della cazzuola; arte, letteratura, festa nell'età della maniera* (Florence, 2008), esp. ch. 2; Paola Ventrone, *Gli araldi della commedia: Teatro a Firenze nel Rinascimento* (Ospedaletto, 1993); Nerida Newbigin, “Serio Ludere: Confraternities and Drama in Central Italy, 1400–1600,” in *A companion to medieval and early modern confraternities*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Leiden, 2019), 345–364.

---

<sup>24</sup> Marc Fumaroli, *The Republic of Letters*, transl. Lara Vergnaud (New Haven, 2018), 100; Hankins, “Myth of the Platonic Academy”, 434.

<sup>25</sup> See the Amore scientiae facti sunt exules database, University of Bologna, <http://asfe.unibo.it/it>. Maria Teresa Guerrini, “Université et académies à Bologne: quelques réflexions sur une relation pluriséculaire,” *Diciottesimo Secolo*, 3 (2018), 1-22.

<sup>26</sup> Cesare Vasoli, ‘Le Accademie fra Cinquecento e Seicento e il loro ruolo nella storia della tradizione enciclopedica’, in Laetitia Boehm and Ezio Raimondi, eds., *Università, accademie e società scientifiche in Italia e in Germania dal '500 al '600* (Bologna, 1981), 81-116; and in the same volume, Lina Bolzoni, “L’Accademia Veneziana: splendore e decadenza di una utopia enciclopedica”, 117-67.

<sup>27</sup> Moryson, Fynes, *Shakespeare’s Europe: The Fourth Part of Fynes Moryson’s Itinerary* [in Padua 1593], intro. Charles Hughes (Manchester, 1902), 436.

<sup>28</sup> See e.g. Maurizi Sangalli, “Between Church, University and Academies: Paolo Beni in Padua, 1599–1623,” in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700*, eds. Everson, Reidy, Sampson, 118-129; and Edward Muir, *The Culture Wars of the Late Renaissance: Skeptics, Libertines and Opera* (Cambridge MA, 2007).

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. Salvatore Caponetto, *The Protestant Reformation in sixteenth-century Italy*, transl. Anne C. Tedeschi and John Tedeschi [*La riforma protestante nell'Italia del Cinquecento*, 1992] (Kirksville, Mo., 1999); Jane K. Wickersham, *Rituals of prosecution: the Roman inquisition and the prosecution of philo-Protestants in sixteenth-century Italy* (Toronto, 2012); and Adriano Prosperi’s studies in *Eresie e devozioni: La religione italiana in età moderna*, 3 vols (Rome, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> See e.g. Roberta Carpani and Roberta Ferro, “Mapping the Academies of Milan in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Sources and research methodologies,” papers delivered

---

at the University College London Symposium, Archiving The Academies of Early Modern Italy, June 28, 2018, see n. 15 above.

<sup>31</sup> See the essays by Alison Brown, Déborah Blocker, Marco Faini and Ambra Moroncini in *Italian Academies, 1525-1700*; on the Venetian Accademia della Fama, Lina Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press*, transl. Jeremy Parzen (Toronto, 2010), 5, 8, 12, 20-22.

<sup>32</sup> Quondam, “L’Accademia,” 835.

<sup>33</sup> From Brian Richardson’s European Research Council funded project, “Italian Voices: Oral Culture, Manuscript and Print in Early Modern Italy 1450-1700,” see: *Interactions between Orality and Writing in Early Modern Italian Culture*, ed. Luca Degl’Innocenti, Brian Richardson, and Chiara Sbordoni (New York, 2016); *Voices and Texts in Early Modern Italian Society*, ed. Stefano Dall’Aglia, Brian Richardson, and Massimo Rospocher (New York, 2017); and studies by Francesca Bortoletti.

<sup>34</sup> Paolo Procaccioli, “Accademia come palestra e come tribuna: Girolamo Ruscelli sdegnato, ardente, dubbioso, fratteggiano,” in *The Italian Academies, 1525-1700*, ed. Everson, Reidy, Sampson, 214-32.

<sup>35</sup> See among the extensive studies on Sieneese academy theatre, e.g. Jane Tylus, “The Work of Italian Theater”, *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 40: What is Renaissance Drama? (2012), 171-184; Marzia Pieri, “Il made in Italy sul teatro rinascimentale: Una nuova frontiera culturale,” *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 16 1/2 (2013), 27-36; Laura Riccò, *La miniera accademica: pedagogia, editoria, palcoscenico nella Siena del Cinquecento* (Rome, 2002). On other centres, see e.g. Stefano Mazzoni, ‘Lo spettacolo delle accademie’, in *Storia del teatro moderno e contemporaneo*, ed. Roberto Alonge and Guido Davico Bonino (Turin, 2000), 869-903; Sara Mamone, *Dèi, semidei, uomini: Lo spettacolo a Firenze tra neoplatonismo e realtà borghese; 15.-17. Secolo* (Rome, 2003); Paola Cosentino, “Artisti,

---

autori, attori. Su alcune accademie seicentesche a Firenze,” in *Intrecci virtuosi*, ed. Chiummo, Geremicca, Tosini (Rome, 2017), 51-64; Lisa Sampson, “Amateurs meet professionals: Theatrical Activities in late sixteenth-century Italian Academies,” in *The Reinvention of Theatre in Sixteenth-Century Europe: Traditions, Texts and Performance*, ed. T. F. Earle and Catarina Fouto (Oxford, 2015), 187-218; and Luciano Mariti, *Commedia ridicolosa: Comici di professione, dilettanti, editoria teatrale nel Seicento. Storia e testi* (Roma, 1979).

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. Elena Tamburini, “Comici, cantanti e letterati nell’Accademia Romana degli Umoristi,” *Studi Secenteschi*, 50 (2009), 89-112; Martha Feldman, “The Academy of Domenico Venier: Music's Literary Muse in Mid-Cinquecento Venice,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44:3 (1991), 476-512.

<sup>37</sup> Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* [1st edn London, 1947] (Nendeln Lichtenstein, 1968), esp. Ch. 1 “Italian Academies and French Academies”.

<sup>38</sup> See recently, e.g. Paula Findlen, “Introduction – Early Modern Scientific Networks: Knowledge and Community in a Globalizing world, 1500-1800,” in Findlen, ed., *Empires of Knowledge: Scientific Networks in the Early Modern World* (Abingdon, 2019), 1-22; Jane E. Everson, “The melting pot of science and belief: studying Vesuvius in seventeenth-century Naples,” *Renaissance Studies*, 26 (2012), 691-727; Andrea Battistini, Gilberto De Angelis, Giuseppe Olmi, eds. *Alle origini della scienza moderna: Federico Cesi e l’Accademia dei Lincei*, Bologna, 2007. Also Antonio Clericuzio and Silvia De Renzi, “Medicine, Alchemy, and Natural Philosophy in the Early Accademia dei Lincei,” in *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Chambers and Quiviger, 175–94; and Eric W. Cochrane, *Tradition and Enlightenment in Tuscan Academies 1690-1800* (Chicago, 1961) and see n. 12 above.

<sup>39</sup> Gino Benzoni, *Gli affanni della cultura: Intellettuali e potere nell’Italia della Controriforma e Barocca* (Milan, 1978), 177.