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Ludic emotions. Some introductory reflexions

Arcangeli Alessandro, Antonella Fenech

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Ludic Emotions

a cura di/edited by
Alessandro Arcangeli e/and Antonella Fenech

con saggi di/with studies by
Haohao Lu, Hervé Brunon, Martial Guédron



*Curſitat^{atq;} manusq; pedesq; iuuenta fatigat, Sanguinis eſt ea vis nempe in iuuenilibus annis.
Spheram percutiens atq; reprecutiens . Grator atq; iſthac fit ratione cibus .*

1
I. Crispjin de Passe the Elder
(workshop), *Ball games*, engraving,
in *Academia sive Speculum Vitae
Scolasticae*, Arnhem 1612.

Study of the ludic cultures of the past and the history of emotions offers many areas of potential overlapping and cross-fertilisation: from the passions that attract humans to all sorts of play and accompany their practice, to the role moralists and physicians, among others, may attribute to play as a factor in balancing or unbalancing the usually recommended affective stability, and to the devising of particular forms of entertainment (for oneself or others) almost entirely for the purpose of enhancing or taming people's emotions – as with the case of some genres of music and theatre, for instance.

However, the two fields do not seem, so far, to have fulfilled this potential to a significant and visible degree: with a few exceptions, the affective side of play is attributed a marginal role in ludic research; and play occupies a minor portion of the attention of historians of emotions.¹

In conceiving this monographic section of *Ludica*, our intention has been to build a bridge, that is, to draw attention to a now necessary interweaving between the history of play and games and the history of emotions. The chronological spectrum over which this reflection extends is that of early modernity in the broadest sense, a period which also witnessed a growing awareness of leisure, and which may therefore offer the possibility of identifying relevant sources for intellectual and cultural history in relation to the notions of games and emotions.

Roger Caillois' quadripartition of the categories of play – competition, chance, role-playing and vertigo – offers a structurally interesting starting point for exploring the affective palette evoked by the human activity of play. Thus, in order to reconsider these categories and the low permeability of one to the other, the integration of emotions in the study of games and play, keeping in mind Caillois' grid, could allow us to sketch an ever-changing but renewed definition of play.

Definitions

Needless to say, in order to discuss the nature and amount of interaction between two spheres of human experience we should state fairly clearly what we mean by each of them – even by acknowledging any difficulty in defining their respective shapes and borders, if that is the case. And, as you may guess, both play and affectivity are notions and imply vocabulary that has been the subject of lively intellectual debate, rather than uncontroversial agreement.

Let us start with 'play'. The regular reader of the present journal, entirely devoted to the matter, may take it for granted; however, it is perhaps appropriate in this introduction to recall some key theories that have proved most influential in defining what belongs to the world of play and what does not, and assess the areas of agreement and differentiation between such theories. In exploring the play element 'of' culture – as the author was eager to specify in his foreword, thus correcting the 'in' of the subtitle – Johan Huizinga's *Homo ludens* virtually set no limits to the range of human activities that may be considered from this perspective, as the titles of his chapters easily confirm. At the end of his listing of the defining characteristics of play he provided a summary: "Summing up the formal characteristics of play we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious,' but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means."²

1. DUNNING 2001, chap. 1, "On problems of emotions in sport and leisure;" ARCANGELI 2021.

2. HUIZINGA 1949, p. 13 (the issue with prepositions is in translation; the Dutch original, instead, reads *der cultuur*); valuable context and insights are offered by ANCHOR 1978.

In the following paragraph, he specified that “the function of play in the higher forms which concern us here can largely be derived from the two basic aspects under which we meet it: as a contest *for* something or a representation of some thing”.³ A later influential critic, Roger Caillois, found that Huizinga, by limiting his consideration of playful activities to those that took one of these two forms, had missed other significant ones (more on his analysis below).⁴

Among the most recent contributions to such theoretical reflection is a thought-provoking essay by Bret Rothstein, which meta-playfully ends by comparing the complex task of the scholar of play to the classically problematic carrying of a wolf, a goat and a cabbage across a river. Rothstein selects three play theorists and recommends that we cross the river by balancing them against one another, by making sure that we benefit from the advantage points, and avoid the pitfalls, of each. Huizinga is one of them. Rothstein appreciates his identification of the characteristics of play and the breadth of the human activities they encompass; however, he observes that they come at a cost, which he defines as the vagueness and inconsistency of play as a penumbral world opposed to seriousness. The other authors Rothstein selects are Bernard Suits and Eugen Fink. The former is the author of *The Grasshopper*, a text in which the standard relative importance and function of play and ordinary life are challenged. Games are defined much more narrowly, in terms of topics, practices, behaviours and objects; and yet, by doing so we grow in consistency but lose in coverage. Finally, Fink’s philosophy undermines further the secondary role usually attributed to play versus serious life, with refreshing analyses that may, however, be hard to put in use in historical research.⁵

Another original theoretical proposition, inspired by semiotics, came from John McClelland who, in order to provide an intellectual framework for the definition of sport, introduced play as the key contrasting, rather than neighbouring, concept. McClelland in fact constructs a square of oppositions in which the two are positioned in opposite corners, each sharing a side with work and war, whereas sport and play have nothing (of the chosen characteristics) in common: while sport is productive and competitive, play is wasteful and cooperative (there seems to be little room for Huizinga’s and Caillois’s competition in this specific conceptualisation of play).⁶

Where does all this speculation leave us, in terms of definition of a field? Perhaps, at least, with the acknowledgment that – as is true for many other categories – ludicity does not demarcate a given series of human activities; it rather marks a potentially infinite number of them in terms of the way (the disposition and the circumstances) in which they are performed.

Emotions have been the subject of a boom in academic – as well as general – interest over the past few decades. And still, their mapping and definition are no less controversial than in the case of play.⁷ The modern English term has been identified as the result of an 18th-19th-century psychological turn that secularised what previously had been a predominantly moral category – passions.⁸ Inevitably, the story is more complex than just that and the Western tradition, from Antiquity to the Renaissance, made use of a variety of only partially interchangeable terms (such as *affectus* or *perturbationes*), which operated at the interface between medicine and philosophy, the body and the soul or mind. Apart from any revisitation of the attitudes and recommendations the historical literature registered and encouraged, what may be of particular interest here is to try

3. HUIZINGA 1949, p. 13 (italics are by the author).

4. CAILLOIS 2001.

5. ROTHSTEIN 2018.

6. MCCLELLAND 2007, pp. 11-18; MCCLELLAND 2017.

7. Within a vast academic output, two synthetic and helpful illustrations of the most influential approaches are offered by ROSENWEIN-CRISTIANI 2018 and BARCLAY 2020.

8. DIXON 2003.

to map what varieties of human experience each of these categories included, what else they left out. Did appetites or feelings, for instance, belong to the same field, or is there only partial overlapping between all these families of words and concepts?

The available sources show how variable and miscellaneous in their content these mental boxes could prove. For instance, a prominent 16th-century thinker such as Girolamo Cardano could, on one side, provide ever-changing lists of basic emotions within his oeuvre; and, while assessing the meaning and circumstances of their appearing as experienced in dreams, offer a list that may now be somewhat surprising: “I call affections of the mind – he writes – all those that happen without outward change. They are: thinking, understanding, remembering, imagining, fearing, hoping, rejoicing, to grow sad, love, hate, envy, get angry, sympathise, desire, despise, suffer, take pleasure, feel cold, hot, hungry, thirsty, wanting to sleep, urinate, defecate, and similar”.⁹

If the net a Renaissance writer could cast was so wide, perhaps the modern scholar would also be wise and consider a great multiplicity of human experiences as relevant when addressing the affective life of the past.

Excitement

That Huizinga was also famously the author of *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, where passions play a prominent role and chivalry interpreted life as a “noble game,” may itself suggest a significant historiographical connection between our two themes and perspectives.¹⁰ More generally, contest is at the core of many games: contest provokes emotional and physical tensions due to the unpredictability of risk-taking, to the possibility of the excellence derived from winning... All these emotional responses, asserted Huizinga, constitute the real stake of games. Some of these psycho-physical reactions can integrate emotion of the excitement spectrum. The very title of a foundational volume for the (historical) sociology of sport offered the suggestion that an economy of feelings may be at stake in people’s choice of leisure activities, and in the way it changes over time. In *Quest for Excitement*, Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, consistently with the former’s theory of a process of civilisation progressively taming the human impulse to satisfy one’s appetites, paid particular attention to the control of violence (they were writing from the perspective and in a context strongly influenced by the spread of football hooliganism), and how through time regulated sports and games significantly contributed to achieving it.¹¹ Elias and Dunning suggest also that one of the main characteristics of sports and games is what they call the “leisure-*gemeinschaften*,” since a wide range of ludic activities authorises interactions between people that procure peculiar forms of emotionality which are profoundly different from ordinary, non-ludic ones. Moreover, some of these leisure practices also allow for risk-taking with ordinary social norms, because “approaching the border of what is socially permissible and sometimes transgressing it, in short a limited breaking of social taboos in the company of others, probably adds spice to these gatherings”.¹² The emotional result of this controlled and predictable risk-taking is excitement. Clarifying these reflections and considering specifically emotional problems in sports and leisure,¹³ more recently Dunning considers that in mimetic ludic contexts “pleasurable excitement can be shown with social approval and without offence to individual conscience as long as it does not overstep specific limits”.¹⁴ From another point of view, he recalls also that Mihály Csíkszentmihályi’s “flow activities”¹⁵ produce an

9. CARDANO 2008, pp. 230-231 (English translation by the authors). See GIGLIONI 2006, ARCANGELI 2018.

10. HUIZINGA 1996 (please note that this is the first complete English translation, which corrects omissions and manipulations of the previous one); see also ARNADE-HOWELL-VAN DER LEM 2019. Cf. ANCHOR 1978, p. 71: “On Huizinga’s theory, the chivalric code was able to survive the material conditions that gave rise to it precisely because it lent itself so well to play.”

11. ELIAS-DUNNING 1986; see also DUNNING-ROJEK 1992.

12. ELIAS-DUNNING 1986, pp. 121 ff.

13. DUNNING 2001.

14. The term ‘mimetic’ underlines, following Elias and Dunning, the idea that many leisure activities “arouse emotions of a specific type which are physiologically related to but experientially different from the emotions people experience in the ordinary course of their non-leisure lives and in seriously critical situations.” DUNNING 2001, p. 26.

15. CSÍKSZENTMIHÁLYI 1975.

individualised and internalised form of pleasure-providing tension: in activities such as dance and the wide spectrum of sport the source of satisfaction is a pleasure immediately taken through the movement. The polymorphic emotional results of practising sports and games, swing in a way between fear and elation, typically intertwined in excitement (felt individually as well as collectively). Ephemeral fear is alternately replaced by an exciting hope.

Foundational as they may be, these theoretical positions have found strong opponents. Suggesting that the civilisation process increases human discontent on a global scale, Chris Rojek's accuses Dunning and Elias of failing to take into consideration Freud's arguments about the repression of individual and collective instinctive gratification (*Civilisation and its Discontents*). If Dunning's argumentative reply is convincing, more recently and with a different perspective, a polemic address by Barbara Rosenwein became a landmark for the new history of emotions; she caricatured first of all Huizinga's then Elias's representation of medieval people dominated by boiling passions as a "hydraulic model," inconsistent with recent forms of understanding of the nature of emotions.¹⁶ The fact remains that such an aetiology and physiology of affective life was the conceptual framework that to some extent shaped the experience and self-knowledge of women and men at the time. In this respect, a striking key to understanding of this point is to consider some form of 'ludomaniac' behaviour in the early modern literature on excessive play. In a now relatively well-known publication, *Alea, sive de curandi pecuniam ludendi cupiditate* (1561) – the very first treatise on gambling and gaming addiction by the Flemish physician Pascasius Justus Turcq –, the interaction between hope and greed (apparently dichotomous and antagonistic emotions) is considered in the context of addiction to games of chance: "Alea is [...] an unbridled desire to play for money, which is fired by the ardour of a furious and credulous hope to win".¹⁷ For a gambler, greed as an unrequited desire for money could not be the very origin of the gambling addiction but rather the result of an unreasoned hope. In a sense, we are faced with both the alternating shift from one emotion to another, often contradictory, and the typical and baseless optimism of the pathological player who is driven to play over and over again in the hope of profiting from a very slim chance of victory or, if he continues to lose, in the nonsensical certitude that he will win again.¹⁸

Finally, in a recent essay, Alain Vaillant puts forward the hypothesis that humans have discovered their capacity to experience pleasure for its own sake, and that the development of human societies has only ever followed one logic, the intensification of this pleasure. Vaillant takes as a starting point the various definitions and classifications of play, from Huizinga to Caillois via Colas Duflo or Daniel Winnicott, and proposes to redefine play solely in terms of a "libidinal pleasure" these heterogeneous activities provide. Three are the reasons of this emotional result. The first is the player's enjoyment of observing the sound functioning of his natural capacities (muscular, cognitive, intellectual). Secondly, it is the pleasure of achieving the goal. However, since this emotional response is present prior to any ludic action, the pleasure is not based on the goal itself but on the excitement of mobilising the forces involved in the game: "This pleasure, unique and intense, is the full enjoyment of putting one's capacities (motor, cognitive, intellectual) into action: [...] what we have agreed to call the *libido cogitandi*".¹⁹ Finally, according to Vaillant, the third component of this pleasure is the certainty that the game is a "safe" activity. Despite the precautions taken by the author, this last aspect is questionable since games can sometimes include

16. ROSENWEIN 2002.

17. TURCQ 1561, p. 30
(English translation by the authors).

18. TURCQ 1561, p. 18.

19. VAILLANT 2021, p. 35.

real risk components with which the player can voluntarily or deliberately negotiate according to variable principles, drives and strategies.

“The mechanism of the game [...] fixing the limits of a clearly circumscribed regulated space, offers the human mind the possibility of experiencing the pleasure of setting a goal and striving for its success, without this pleasure being diminished or even annulled by the possibility of a major risk in the event of failure. [...] The game is this practice, which is very gratifying and liberating for the cognition, and which makes it possible to hope to win without fearing to lose – or, at least, without fearing failure.”²⁰

According to Vaillant’s analysis, the pleasure of playing and the will to renew this pleasure unceasingly place game within what he calls the human’s “cognitive addiction”.²¹

Ultimately, from the early modern medical point of view, *ludomania* depended not only on what Dunning describes as a critical alternation of contradictory emotions defining games, but also on physiological factors according to the theory of the temperaments: excess heat characterising the sanguine individual’s blood, making him impulsive and more inclined to take risks.

Play and the humoral body

In the light of the Hippocratic-Galenic Western tradition that was still dominant in the Renaissance, passions counted as one of the six ‘non-naturals,’ that is, external factors that affected human health and had to be properly governed in order to maintain wellbeing; so did physical exercise, a category under which a number of playful activities could be subsumed.²² From this perspective, the primary health function of recreation was to provoke joy and happiness, the medical agenda that underlay the recommendation to watch and listen to art performances or else, say, to gather together in time of plague to tell one another a hundred stories.²³

At the opposite end in terms of mood, as a virtually permanent condition of sadness, we find melancholy, a dense humoral category with a rich intellectual tradition. The melancholic was encouraged – by Robert Burton, among others – to find distraction and relief in a variety of activities that we would easily associate with play and leisure, including keeping pets and participating in, or watching, a variety of performances, with particular praise for the “*deambulatio per amoenaloca*, to make a petty progresse, a merry journey now and then with some good companions, to visit friends, see citties, castles, townes”²⁴ That the chapter where this passage occurs is dedicated to “Exercise rectified of body and mind” depends on the fact that people may suffer from either excessive or insufficient exercise, and rectification consists in opting for a moderate use. Girolamo Mercuriale’s *De Arte gymnastica* – and even the much earlier Ibn Butlan’s *Tacuini sanitatis* – contributed to shape positive (and also medicalised) discourses on the relevance of games to health, reactivating the imagery of play in Antiquity. This idea of physical exercise as important to the maintenance and recovery of humoral balance is, in early modern Europe, so deeply rooted in minds that it appears in visual culture, for example, in the engraving by Crispijn de Passe the Elder – *Ball games*, 1612, fig. 1, p. 46 – where an inscription specifies the link between exercise, vigour and nutrition in youth development. The interrelation between medical culture and pedagogy gives sense to the articulation of physiology and games in the construction of early modern body and mind: the healthy balance of humours

20. VAILLANT 2021, p. 45.

21. VAILLANT 2021.

22. CARRERA 2013, CAVALLO-STOREY 2013.

23. OLSON 1982.

24. BURTON 1990, p. 72 (the Latin phrase is quoted from Aretaeus). See ARCANGELI 2003, pp. 39-41.



2

2. Frontispiece of Pascasius Justus Turcq, *De alea libri duo*, Elzevirium, Amsterdam 1642 (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum). First edition *Alea, sive de curandi pecuniam ludendi cupiditate*, Oporinus, Basel 1561.

25. DEPAULIS 2009-2010; VAN HOUTDT 2010; FISCHER 2016, pp. 253-297; FISCHER 2017; COTTIER 2020.

26. TURCQ 1561, p. 33 (English translation by the authors).

27. CAILLOIS 2001, p. 23.

28. CAILLOIS 2001, p. 24.

29. CAILLOIS 2001, p. 25.

means a healthy harmony of the social body. This marks the entry of games into the new pedagogies inaugurated by Erasmus or Juan Luis Vives.

A medicalisation of the passion for gambling – an occupation that was also condemned by Burton – is in particular the agenda of *Alea*, by Pascasius Justus Turcq (fig. 2).²⁵ A passage is quite enlightening on the question of games, gambling and emotions: “It is a real affection of the spirit and one that it is very strong, very acute, and dominant; no other can be harsher, more commanding or intense. This is shown not only by the gamblers’ gaping heart, tormented hope, worried fear, confusion, indecisive and uncertain face, frequent changes of colour, various movements of their whole body and soul, sweating even in the middle of winter, and even, in many, ejaculation and, between hope and fear, great confusion of contrary motions and of their entire complexion, even suffocation [...] And they always have the sweet and ever-renewed pleasure of thinking about the game, and they remain in a state of desire!”²⁶ Far from the moralising that dominates early modern discourse on play, the physician observes the phenomenon based on his own experience as well as on the medical theory of temperaments.

Caillois’s grid

The above-mentioned classic study by Caillois provides the most widely adopted taxonomy of the forms of play from the point of view of the type of stimulus it provides (or attraction they present) to practitioners and spectators (if appropriate) alike. This nature of his analysis is also what makes it the most ‘affective’ of all classifications of human play (with occasional glimpses into the animal world).

As well as providing many other helpful schemes – such as the polarisation between spontaneous and chaotic *paidia* and regulated *ludus* – Caillois cannily divides the play experience into four sections each governed by a distinct principle, a list that effectively exposes the limits of Huizinga’s concentration on competition and representation. If the latter are present, under the names of *agôn* and *mimicry*, respectively, the additional categories focus on *alea*, the dominion of chance, and *ilinx* (the Greek term for whirlpool), the world of vertigo. In what ways does each of the four principles imply and interact with some affective states of people, either as preconditions or as consequences of sorts of the act of play? Should we not therefore include the spectrum of emotions in Caillois’ categories in order to sketch a (still shifting but) renewed definition of play?

The case of vertigo appears as straightforward: by participating in one of such games people inflict “a kind of voluptuous panic upon an otherwise lucid mind. In all cases, it is a question of surrendering to a kind of spasm, seizure, or shock which destroys reality with sovereign brusqueness”.²⁷ The actions of the whirling dervishes and of the Mexican *voladores* are the first examples the author suggests to the reader. However, “various physical activities also provoke these sensations, such as the tightrope, falling or being projected into space, rapid rotation, sliding, speeding, and acceleration of vertilinear movement, separately or in combination with gyrating movement”.²⁸ Many children games and adults’ funfair activities clearly belong to this family, as do racing sports or many types of dance, from the Renaissance *volta* to “the common but insidious giddiness of the waltz”.²⁹ The effect is clearly sought after, a form of fear and of bodily and psychological disorientation and uneasiness that provides pleasure. It may be ordinarily obtained in a controlled environment, though it can also overstep the

foreseen limits. If the affective result of participation in (and/or watching) Caillois' *ilynx* games but also in the other games and sports involving competition is here clear, one may wonder what is the state of mind that leads one to choose to subject oneself to such ludic experiences.

Some kind of dizziness, intoxication even if not physically induced, may also count also among the drives towards gambling and games of chance, with the excitement that may accompany, say, the watching of a horse race on which you have bet. In this case the sports event is not simply appreciated for its own sake, as if it didn't matter who won, provided that the race was run fairly: it matters very much, and the excitement results from your emotional investment in the possibility of a win. Not to mention the "deep play," as argued by Clifford Geertz and for early modern games by Nicholas Scott Baker³⁰, which is a form of competition in which stakes are almost unsustainable for players who are overwhelmed by the play since the risk involves the loss of monetary goods but also of social status, prestige, character and face. The loser must face shame and infamy. In Geertz's opinion, this was the cause of "disquietfulness," an emotional status of anxiety that such a "deep play" can provoke, considering the unsureness and incertitude in society's structures.

Another special and liminal case is that of cheating, for example, in card games. Inextricably linked to each other, cheating can be thought as a game within the game: like the game, it often has its own rules, which can only be applied during the time-space of the game itself, but to which only some players choose to participate³¹. By cheating, the very rules of the card game are diverted to integrate others. More particularly, taken by a sort of giddy dizziness, by the passion for the challenge and the intoxication of cheating, players would not so much show their "bad nature," as often suggested by the literature since the end of the Middle Ages, but would experience a real pleasure of defiance and contention against the inconstancy of Chance.

Since, statistically, disillusion is likely to follow, predictable affective states come as a consequence, and Turcq and many others before and after him – preachers and confessors, among others – were well aware: anger and its variations dominate that scene.

Moreover, one must also think of the emotional responses (besides intellectual pleasure) of the strategic interactions that take place not only in cheating, as a game within a game, but in practically all competitive games. In his analysis of these strategies, considered in a wider spectrum than that of games, Ervin Goffman considers – among other things – that these interactions are structured around four factors: constraint to play, structuring of choices, commitment to moves made, intrinsic payoff. The sociologist refers to these factors in terms of an "enforcement system".³² By contract, Elias and Dunning adopt a sociological category of "de-routinising" activities that may perhaps help towards explanation. De-routinisation presupposes "a controlled decontrolling of restraints on emotions"³³ that may weigh on everyday life, particularly in the sphere of work and the social activities of "ordinary" life. In early modern as in modern societies, the variety of leisure activities served not simply to dissipate tensions generated by daily life, but also to provide pleasurable excitement. Now, if "de-routinisation" is a valuable criterion for deciding the purpose of sports and games, one may wonder if it is a factor that can explain the reason for practising all ludic activities. Let us consider, for instance, those forms of play that many people rehearse with a precise routine of consistency and regularity (sports as well

30. GEERTZ 1973, SCOTT BAKER 2016.

31. FENECH 2022.

32. GOFFMAN 1969.

33. ELIAS-DUNNING 1986, p. 96.

IL GONZAGA
 SECONDO,
 OVERO DEL GIOCO,
 DIALOGO
 DEL SIGNOR TORQUATO
 Tasso.



IN VENETIA,
 Appresso Bernardo Giunti, e fratelli.
 M D LXXXII.

3

3. Frontispiece of Torquato Tasso,
Il Gonzaga secondo, ovvero del giuoco,
 Giunti, Florence 1582.

as board games, imitation games, games of patience or chance...). What to think about the routinisation of these de-routinising activities? Now, in the act of playing – no matter to which of Caillois' subcategories the game belongs – the player is in search not only for dissipation of everyday life tensions, leisure and entertainment (mental or bodily) – *otium* after *negotium* – but also of emotional effects. In his dialogue *Il Gonzaga secondo, ovvero del giuoco* (1582, fig. 3), Torquato Tasso gives an interesting explanation of the delight procured by games: “the uncertainty of victory and the emotions that are felt in that uncertainty, not only by the players but also by the audience, [are] a great pleasure”.³⁴ These may include excitement, anxiety, tension, uncertainty, fear... In general, the family of feelings related to pleasure must preside over a variety of leisurely pursuits. This is precisely what the Italian poet explains about the *primiera*, “which is not mere delight, as this delight is with other affections mingled”.³⁵ Each of them affects people in different ways, and we seem to enjoy the challenge and inventiveness of experimenting with them in their specificity – otherwise, as Bret Rothstein puts it, “we would all play water polo”.³⁶ Besides this variety, sometimes ludic emotions – as well as their intensity – can also be unexpected, for affective outcomes can arise from unforeseen ludic interactions and events. Nonetheless, generally, they remain largely predictable and, above all, are sought after by players.

In the essays here collected here – for which the editors and contributors are grateful for the hospitality of the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche and of its journal *Ludica. Annali di storia e civiltà del gioco* – we have invited a group of scholars to explore, in the cultural context of early modern Europe, how play and affective life interacted to produce some interesting and unique forms of human experience. At the centre of Haohao Lu's contribution is a *Portrait of a couple playing backgammon* by Jan Sanders van Hemessen. The feigned conflict between the woman and the man instantiates flirtation – an intertwining of apparent discord and tacit understanding between two willing and in-tune people. From this perspective the painting playfully extends its depicted equivocation to the viewer, who must approach the work as a kind of cagey opponent. In the subsequent study, mannerist gardens are at once places of ludic experiences and activities generating peculiar emotional responses. Hervé Brunon explores how the complex spatial composition of gardens produces a physical and emotional disorientation, which involves the sensorial and psychological engagement of the visitor/walker. These emotional responses are eminently ludic in the sense that they are free and unproductive expressions of an entertainment that requires adherence to implicit rules. Finally, in his article, Martial Guédron proposes a reflexion on the ludic dimension(s) of the art of caricature: on the one hand, the satisfaction that the beholder takes from the game of identification, a game that underlines the association between this artistic genre and the joyful emotions of what Guédron calls the *animal ridens*. On the other, this emotional effect is also reflected in the style, in the manner of the ‘imitational game’ set up by the caricaturist's own practice.

34. TASSO 1582, c. IIr.

35. TASSO 1582, c. IIr.

36. ROTHSTEIN 2018, p. 1039.

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GEORGE BROCKLEHURST

Convivial Humanism:

Giovanni Pontano on scholarship as virtuous play

This article investigates two concepts of Giovanni Pontano's late philosophy, that of 'conviviality' (*conviventia*) detailed in his collection of treatises on the social virtues (1498) and that of graceful playfulness in personal relations (*factudo*) from the *De sermone* (1502). Both these virtues, which were coined by Pontano, capture the playful and informal character of his scholarly practice. For Pontano the good of being a scholar consists in enjoying recreation with other scholars. This article proposes to examine Pontano's late philosophical production as evidence for the socio-intellectual practices of his sodality. The concepts of conviviality and graceful playfulness, articulated within the framework of Pontano's Aristotelian training, reflect this humanist's conception of scholarship as a ludic practice.

Umanesimo conviviale:

Giovanni Pontano sull'erudizione come gioco virtuoso

Questo articolo indaga due concetti della tarda filosofia di Giovanni Pontano, quello di "convivialità" (*conviventia*) illustrato nella sua raccolta di trattati sulle virtù sociali (1498) e quello della leggiadra giocosità nelle relazioni personali (*factudo*) dal *De sermone* (1502). Entrambe queste virtù, che furono coniate da Pontano, colgono il carattere giocoso e informale della sua pratica accademica. Per Pontano il bene dell'essere uno studioso consiste nel divertirsi con altri studiosi. Questo articolo si propone di esaminare la tarda produzione filosofica di Pontano come prova delle pratiche socio-intellettuali del suo sodalizio. I concetti di convivialità e di leggiadra giocosità, articolati nell'ambito della formazione

aristotelica di Pontano, riflettono la concezione umanistica dell'erudizione come pratica ludica.

Geselliger Humanismus:

Giovanni Pontano über Gelehrsamkeit als virtuosos Spiel

Im Beitrag werden zwei Konzepte aus dem philosophischen Spätwerk Giovanni Pontanos untersucht, nämlich das in seiner Sammlung von Traktaten zu den gesellschaftlichen Tugenden (1498) erläuterte Konzept der „Geselligkeit“ (*conviventia*) und das der graziösen Verspieltheit (*factudo*) aus der Schrift *De sermone* (1502). Beide Tugenden, für die Pontano die Begriffe prägte, reflektieren das Spielerische und Informelle seiner Gelehrtenaktivität. Das Gute am Gelehrtentandem ist für Pontano die Freude an der Erholung zusammen mit anderen Gelehrten. Der Beitrag untersucht Pontanos philosophisches Spätwerk als Quelle für die sozio-intellektuellen Praktiken seines Kreises. Die im Rahmen der aristotelischen Ausbildung Pontanos dargestellten Konzepte der Geselligkeit und graziösen Verspieltheit reflektieren seine Auffassung der humanistischen Gelehrsamkeit als ludische Praxis.

HERVÉ BRUNON

Allégresse, rire et effroi :

les émotions ludiques dans la poétique des jardins italiens de la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle

À la Renaissance, les émotions ont été un terrain privilégié pour des discours théoriques que nous rattacherions aujourd'hui à deux grandes sphères : ce qui touchait à l'"esthétique", à une pensée de la représentation littéraire et artistique et du plaisir qu'elles provoquent, telle que la construisaient la poétique, la rhétorique et la théorie de l'art, n'était pas forcément séparé – comme l'atteste le cas de Lorenzo Giacomini – d'une "psychologie" qui demeurerait

intégrée dans le champ plus vaste de la médecine et, d'une manière générale, de ce que l'on appelait alors la "philosophie naturelle". Les modèles poétiques du rapport affectif au paysage (*locus amoenus* et *locus horridus*) se révèlent en fait conditionner la portée émotionnelle du jardin, les *affetti* ou états mentaux qu'il doit favoriser, sur lesquels insistent volontiers les témoignages contemporains. L'allégresse se double du rire, plus ou moins ambigu, dans le cas des représentations prosaïques et parodiques de scènes de genre et de l'immersion parfois violente que provoquent les *scherzi d'acqua*. Toutefois, dans la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle, l'atmosphère du jardin oscille désormais entre *diletto* et *terrore*, accordant le plaisir de l'effroi comme à la Grotta Grande de Boboli. Si les émotions contrastées que doit susciter le jardin sont "ludiques", c'est qu'elles reposent sur ce que la théorie littéraire nomme la « suspension volontaire de l'incrédulité » : le plaisir de l'illusion consentie, comme au théâtre, ainsi que le montrent les fêtes de cour et les célèbres intermèdes florentins orchestrés par Bernardo Buontalenti, le génial concepteur de Pratolino.

Joy, laughter and horror:

playful emotions in the poetry of Italian gardens of the second half of the 16th century

During the Renaissance era, emotions were a favoured territory for the theoretical discussions that we would today link to two main spheres: one related to 'aesthetics', to a concept of literary and artistic representation and the pleasure that they arouse, as created by poetry, rhetoric and the theory of art, which was not necessarily separate – as shown by the case of Lorenzo Giacomini – from a 'psychology' which remained an integral part of the wider field of medicine; and the other, generally speaking, to what was then called 'natural philosophy'. The poetic

models of a sentimental bond with the landscape (*locus amoenus* and *locus horridus*) in effect influence the emotional impact of the garden, the affections (*affetti*) or states of mind that it should encourage, on which the contemporary testimonies eagerly insist. Joy is accompanied by more or less equivocal laughter in the case of prosaic and parodic representations of genre scenes and of the sometimes violent drenching brought about by the water features (*scherzi d'acqua*). By the second half of the 16th century, however, the atmosphere of the garden fluctuated between delight (*diletto*) and terror (*terrore*), giving the pleasure of horror as in the Grotta Grande in the Boboli gardens. While the contrasting emotions that the garden should arouse are 'playful', they are based on what literary theory calls the 'voluntary suspension of incredulity': the pleasure of a permitted illusion, as in the theatre, as shown in court festivities and the famous Florentine interludes orchestrated by Bernardo Buontalenti, the brilliant designer of Pratolino.

Freude, Scherz und Schrecken: spielerische Emotionen in der Poetik italienischer Gärten aus der zweiten Hälfte des XVI. Jahrhunderts

In der Renaissance waren Emotionen ein beliebtes Spielfeld für theoretische Diskurse, die wir heute zwei großen Sphären zurechnen würden. Das, was mit „Ästhetik“ zu tun hatte, einem Sinn für die literarische und künstlerische Darstellung und den daraus resultierenden Genuss in der Form, wie Ästhetik sich aus Poetik, Rhetorik und Kunsttheorie aufbaut, war, wie der Fall von Lorenzo Giacomini zeigt, nicht notwendigerweise getrennt von einer „Psychologie“, die auf dem weiteren Gebiet der Medizin und ganz allgemein von dem, was man damals als Naturphilosophie bezeichnete, angesiedelt war. Die poetischen Modelle der affektiven Beziehung

zur Landschaft (*locus amoenus* und *locus horridus*) sind der Rahmen für die emotionale Dimension des Gartens, die zu erreichenden *affetti* bzw. Geisteszustände, über die sich Zeitgenossen nur allzu gern ausließen. Zur Freude gesellt sich mehr oder minder zweideutig der Scherz im Falle der prosaischen und parodistischen Darstellungen von Genrebildern und der gelegentlich heftigen Effekte der *scherzi d'acqua*. In der zweiten Hälfte des XVI. Jahrhunderts schwankt die Atmosphäre von Gärten allerdings zwischen *diletto* und *terrore* und bereitet dem Besucher Vergnügen und Schrecken wie in der Grotta Grande im Boboli-Garten. Wenn nun die entgegengesetzten Gefühle, die Gärten erregen sollen, „ludisch“ sind, dann beruht dies auf der literarischen Theorie der „willentlichen Aussetzung der Ungläubigkeit“, dem Genuss der als solche akzeptierten Illusion wie im Theater, so wie dies auch die Hoffeste und die berühmten Florentiner Intermedien zeigen, die von Bernardo Buontalenti, dem genialen Schöpfer von Pratolino, orchestriert wurden.

ELEONORA GAMBA

Il compleanno di un patrizio veneziano alla fine del secolo XV fra divertimento ed erudizione: la testimonianza del De ludo talaro di Leonico Tomeo

Il contributo propone una lettura analitica del dialogo *Samnutus, sive de ludo talaro* dell'umanista Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, pubblicato nel 1524 nella raccolta dei *Dialogi*, ma redatto negli ultimi anni del Quattrocento. Ambientato nella dimora del patrizio Marco Sanudo, di cui si festeggia il compleanno, esso descrive i passatempi di alcuni membri dell'élite veneziana della fine del secolo XV: dopo il banchetto, c'è chi si intrattiene con una partita a scacchi, chi gioca ai dadi (?), chi s'immerge nella lettura e chi approfitta del momento di *otium* per approfondire alcune curiosità

sui giochi in epoca classica. Attraverso le voci erudite di Leonico e del fratello Fusco, il dialogo indaga l'origine dei giochi nel mondo greco-romano, per poi soffermarsi sugli astragali e in particolare sulla denominazione delle loro facce e sui relativi punteggi. L'autore prende così le distanze da alcuni commentatori in voga a quei tempi, come Teodoro Gaza, Domizio Calderini e Giorgio Merula, e propone alcune originali emendazioni filologiche a un passo aristotelico che tratta l'argomento, ma che risulta corrotto. Fornisce inoltre interessanti notizie sulla pratica del gioco a Venezia ancora nella seconda metà del secolo XV, tornato di moda, ma considerato puerile. Non mancano giudizi di valore sulla ludicità e sull'opportunità di farne oggetto di studio, pratiche ben tollerate se servono per impiegare in modo proficuo il tempo libero.

Amusement and erudition in the birthday celebrations of a Venetian nobleman in the late 15th century, as seen in De ludo talaro by Leonico Tomeo

The contribution offers an analytical reading of the dialogue *Samnutus, sive de ludo talaro* by the humanist Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, published in the collection of *Dialogi* in 1524, but actually written in the final years of the 1400s. Set in the home of the patrician Marco Sanudo, who is celebrating his birthday, the work describes the pastimes of members of the Venetian elite in the late 15th century: after the banquet, some guests engage in a game of chess, others play dice (?), some spend the time reading and others take advantage of the opportunity for *otium* to explore curious aspects of game-playing in the classical age. The dialogue, played out through the erudite voices of Leonico and his brother Fusco, delves into the origins of games in the Greco-Roman world and then concentrates

on knucklebones and how their faces were named and scored. The author thus distances himself from certain commentators who were in vogue at the time, such as Teodoro Gaza, Domizio Calderini and Giorgio Merula, and proposes a number of original, philological amendments to a corrupted passage on the subject by Aristotle. He also provides interesting information about the practice of the game in the second half of 15th century Venice, where it was popular but considered childish. The dialogue also offers appreciative judgements on the value of ludicity in general and of studying the phenomenon, especially inasmuch as it ensures that leisure time is put to good use.

L'anniversaire d'un patricien vénitien à la fin du XV^e siècle entre divertissement et erudition : le témoignage du De ludo talaro de Leonico Tomeo

La contribution propose une lecture analytique du dialogue *Samnutus, sive de ludo talaro* de l'humaniste Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, publié en 1524 dans le recueil des *Dialogi* mais rédigé durant les dernières années du XV^e siècle. Se déroulant dans la demeure du patricien Marco Sanudo, dont on fête l'anniversaire, il décrit les passe-temps de certains membres de l'élite vénitienne de la fin du XV^e siècle : après le banquet certains se divertissent en jouant aux échecs, d'autres aux dés (?), il y a ceux qui s'immergent dans la lecture et ceux qui profitent du moment de *otium* pour approfondir quelque curiosité sur les jeux de l'époque classique. Grâce aux voix érudites de Leonico et de son frère Fusco, le dialogue enquête sur l'origine des jeux dans le monde gréco-romain, pour ensuite s'attarder sur les osselets et en particulier sur la dénomination de leurs faces et sur les scores relatifs. L'auteur prend ainsi les distances de certains commentateurs à la mode à cette époque, comme Teodoro Gaza, Domizio Calderini

et Giorgio Merula, et propose quelques corrections philologiques originales à un passage aristotélicien qui affronte l'argument mais qui résulte corrompu. Il fournit en outre des informations intéressantes sur la pratique du jeu à Venise encore durant la seconde moitié du XV^e siècle, revenu à la mode, mais considéré puéril. Ne manquent pas les jugements de valeur sur l'aspect ludique et sur l'opportunité d'en faire un objet d'étude, pratiques bien tolérées si elles servent à employer de manière fructueuse le temps libre.

MARTIAL GUÉDRON

La caricature : plaisir et discrédit d'un petit jeu d'imitation

Apparue en Italie à la fin de la Renaissance, souvent présentée comme un délassement d'atelier qui se pratiquait dans les moments de détente entre des occupations autrement plus sérieuses, la caricature n'en nourrit pas moins des liens étonnants et féconds avec la tradition académique, plus particulièrement avec la théorie de l'imitation de la nature telle qu'elle s'est développée avec l'âge classique sous l'impulsion de Giovan Pietro Bellori. En altérant, par dérision ludique, l'aspect physique et les proportions de leurs modèles, en traçant des effigies d'une ressemblance singulière parce que reposant sur l'ellipse autant que sur l'hyperbole, les premiers caricaturistes s'amusaient, avec plus ou moins d'efficacité, à retourner le principe souverain du beau idéal, à savoir n'imiter que les éléments les plus parfaits de la nature en les choisissant suivant des normes bien précises de goût, de convenance, de bienséance et de perfection. Ce n'est pas le moindre paradoxe que les plus habiles représentants de ce petit jeu graphique furent des artistes savants qui, à en croire la tradition historiographique, s'étaient mis en quête de la raison, de la beauté et de la vérité.

The caricature: pleasure and disrepute of a small imitation game

Appearing in Italy at the end of the Renaissance and often presented as a workshop recreation which flourished in the idle moments between far more serious occupations, the caricature nevertheless drew strength from the amazing and prolific links with academic tradition, more specifically with the theory of the imitation of nature, to the extent that it thrived with the classical age spearheaded by Giovan Pietro Bellori. By mockingly playful alteration of the physical appearance and proportions of their models, drawing images of a singular likeness because based as much on omission as on hyperbole, the first caricaturists had fun, with varying degrees of success, in turning around the sovereign principal of ideal beauty, in knowing how to imitate only the most perfect elements of nature, choosing them by following very precise standards of taste, propriety, seamliness and perfection. It is by no means paradoxical that the most skilful representatives of this little graphic game were savant artists who, if historiographical tradition is to be believed, were looking for reason, beauty and truth.

Die Karikatur: Vergnügen und Verruf eines kleinen Spiels mit der Nachahmung

Ogleich sie sich zum Ende der Renaissance in Italien wohl als der Entspannung dienender Zeitvertreib zur Erholung von weit ernsthafteren Beschäftigungen entwickelte, profitierte die Karikatur von erstaunlichen, fruchtbaren Beziehungen mit der akademischen Welt und insbesondere mit der Theorie der Natur-Nachahmung, wie sie in der klassizistischen Tradition unter dem Einfluss Giovan Pietro Belloris entwickelt wurde. Durch die auf spielerische Weise verhöhnende

Veränderung des physischen Erscheinungsbildes und der Proportionen ihrer Modelle, basierend auf dem Wechselspiel zwischen Übertreibung und Weglassen, hatten die frühen Karikaturisten – mit wechselndem Erfolg – ihren Spaß daran, den obersten Grundsatz der idealen Schönheit auf den Kopf zu stellen, wozu sie nur die vollkommensten Elemente der Natur nachahmten und ihre Auswahl anhand klarer Regeln von Geschmack, Schicklichkeit, Anstand und Vollkommenheit trafen. Dabei ist es keineswegs paradox, dass die fähigsten Vertreter dieses kleinen zeichnerischen Spiels bewanderte Künstler waren, die, wenn man der Überlieferung Glauben schenken möchte, nach Vernunft, Schönheit und Wahrheit strebten.

HAOHAO LU

Games, Flirtation, and the Use of Interpretive Risk. Jan Sanders van Hemessen's Portrait of Husband and Wife Playing Tables

This study addresses the notion of interpretive risk in the early 16th-century Netherlands, taking as its focus Jan Sanders van Hemessen's curiously equivocal portrait of a couple playing backgammon. The author suggests that the couple's feigned conflict instantiates flirtation – an intertwining of apparent discord and tacit understanding between two willing and in-tune people. The painting does more than depict flirtation, though; it also enacts such a peculiar exchange between the sitters. Pitting their ambiguous moods against the late, arbitrary stage of their game, thus casting further doubt on the origins of their dispute, it playfully extends the depicted equivocation to the viewer, who must approach the work as a kind of cagey opponent. The result is a reflexive circuit of beneficial falsehood and suspicion. As Hemessen's portrait contends, the withdrawal of certainty, far from preventing understanding,

makes the taking of interpretive risk a form of spectatorial productivity.

Giochi, schermaglie amorose e uso del rischio interpretativo. Ritratto di marito e moglie che giocano a tavola reale, di Jan Sanders van Hemessen

Questo saggio affronta il concetto di rischio interpretativo nei Paesi Bassi dell'inizio del secolo XVI, prendendo come fulcro il ritratto curiosamente equivoco di una coppia che gioca a tavola reale realizzato da Jan Sanders van Hemessen. L'autore suggerisce che la rivalità simulata dalla coppia mostra una schermaglia amorosa, un intreccio di apparente discordia e tacita intesa tra due persone disponibili e in sintonia. Tuttavia, il dipinto fa molto più che rappresentare una schermaglia amorosa: mette in atto uno scambio caratteristico tra i modelli. Contrapponendo i loro stati d'animo ambigui alla fase finale e arbitraria del gioco, gettando così ulteriori dubbi sull'origine della loro rivalità, estende giocosamente l'equivoco raffigurato allo spettatore, che deve avvicinarsi all'opera come a una sorta di avversario circospetto. Il risultato è un circuito riflessivo di falsità e sospetto proficui. Come suggerisce il ritratto di Hemessen, la revoca della certezza, lungi dall'impedire la comprensione, fa dell'assunzione del rischio interpretativo una forma di produttività da parte dello spettatore.

Spiele, Flirten und die Nutzung des interpretatorischen Risikos. Jan Sanders van Hemessens Porträt von Mann und Frau beim Backgammon-Spiel

Im Beitrag, in dessen Mittelpunkt Jan Sanders van Hemessens eigenartig zweideutiges Porträt eines Paares beim Backgammon-Spiel steht, geht es um das Konzept des interpretatorischen Risikos in den Niederlanden des

frühen XVI. Jahrhunderts. Es wird argumentiert, dass der vorgetäuschte Konflikt des Paares Ausdruck des Flirtens ist – eine Verflechtung von scheinbarer Zwietracht und stillschweigendem Sichverstehen zwischen zwei willigen und eingestimmten Menschen. Dennoch stellt das Bild mehr als nur Flirten dar. Es setzt auch einen besonderen Austausch zwischen den Figuren in Szene. Der Kontrast zwischen ihren mehrdeutigen Stimmungen und dem späten Spielstatus nährt weiteren Zweifel am Ursprung ihres Streits und überträgt die gemalte Mehrdeutigkeit auf den Betrachter, der sich dem Werk wie eine Art zurückhaltender Widersacher nähern muss. Im Ergebnis steht ein rückbezüglicher Kreislauf von wohlthuender Unaufrichtigkeit und Verdacht. Wie van Hemessens Porträt zeigt, verhindert die Verweigerung von Gewissheit zwar keineswegs das Verstehen, doch macht sie das interpretatorische Risiko zu einer Form von Produktivität seitens des Betrachters.

GHERARDO ORTALLI

Messico e lotterie

L'esperienza del Messico nel campo della ludicità e in specifico in quello delle lotterie è esemplare rispetto ai rapporti che potevano istituirsi tra una lontana capitale europea e le sue colonie. In particolare, nell'ambito del grande impero coloniale spagnolo, quello della Nuova Spagna fu non soltanto il primo vicereame a essere istituito da Madrid, ma anche quello della massima estensione, con il suo cuore in Città del Messico. I percorsi della colonizzazione seguivano le vie più diverse e in parallelo si muovevano le pratiche ludiche e legate al gioco. In questa prospettiva le lotterie sono un esempio evidentissimo dei legami tra la società e la cultura spagnole e quelle d'oltreoceano, con percorsi in larga misura destinati a durare

nel tempo e fra loro intrecciati. Peraltro, seguire le vicende delle lotterie messicane significa anche recuperare (sia pure in estrema sintesi) la loro stretta connessione con i generali sviluppi culturali e politici che segnavano le vicende del paese, in un lungo legame con la realtà di tradizione iberica.

Mexico and lotteries

The experience of Mexico in the sphere of ludicity, and of lotteries in particular, is a good example of the relationship that could develop between a distant European capital and its colonies. In the context of Spain's great colonial empire, New Spain was not only the first viceroyalty to be established by Madrid; it was also the biggest, with Mexico City at its heart. The process of colonisation followed several different routes, which were paralleled by developments in ludic practices and game-playing. From this point of view, lotteries offer a clear example of the enduring and intermixed links between Spanish society and culture and those in Mexico. In addition, tracing the history of Mexican lotteries also gives an admittedly partial insight into their close connection with the general cultural and political developments of the country and their abiding reflection of Spanish tradition.

Mexiko und Lotterien

Die Geschichte des Spiels in Mexiko und insbesondere die dortige Lotteriegeschichte stehen beispielhaft für Beziehungen zwischen einer europäischen Hauptstadt und ihren weitab gelegenen Kolonien. So war insbesondere innerhalb des riesigen spanischen Kolonialreichs Neuspanien nicht nur das erste von Madrid eingerichtete Vizekönigreich, sondern auch das flächenmäßig größte mit Mexiko-Stadt als Hauptstadt in seiner Mitte. Die Kolonisierung erfolgte auf unterschiedlichste

Weise und parallel dazu fanden auch ludische Aktivitäten ihren Weg nach Mexiko. In dieser Perspektive stellen Lotterien ein klares Beispiel für die nachhaltigen und auf vielfältige Weise miteinander verflochtenen Beziehungen zwischen der spanischen Gesellschaft und Kultur und den Überseeterritorien dar. Die Geschichte der mexikanischen Lotterien nachzuzeichnen bedeutet gleichzeitig (wenn auch nur ganz allgemein), ihre enge Verknüpfung mit den allgemeinen kulturellen und politischen Entwicklungen in dem stark durch die iberische Tradition geprägten Land herauszustellen.

Alessandro Arcangeli

As well as lecturing in Early Modern History at the University of Verona, Alessandro Arcangeli is a cultural historian who is active in research networking (Chair of the International Society for Cultural History, 2013-2017) and in methodological and historiographical reflection on the field (see for instance his *Cultural History. A concise introduction*, London 2012). His main research interests include the cultural history of dance, leisure, dreams and the affective life in the European Renaissance. His most recent book is *L'altro che danza. Il villano, il selvaggio, la strega nell'immaginario della prima età moderna* (Milan 2018).

Anna Bellavitis

Having earned her PhD from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales-EHESS-Paris, Anna Bellavitis is currently Full Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Rouen where she directs the *Groupe de Recherche d'Histoire*. She participated in the research promoted by the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche *Le campagne trevigiane in età moderna*, publishing the book *Noale. Struttura sociale e regime fondiario di una podesteria della prima metà del secolo XVI* (Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche-Canova, Treviso 1994). Her present research interests concern women and gender history, labour history and family history in early modern Venice. Her recent publications include: *Il lavoro delle donne nelle città dell'Europa moderna* (Viella, Rome 2016; English translation Palgrave Macmillan, London 2018). She has recently directed an international research project on apprenticeship in early modern Venice, the results of which will be published in *Apprenticeship, Work, Society in Early Modern Venice*, edited with Valentina Sapienza, (Routledge, London, forthcoming).

Anna Bognolo

Currently a lecturer in Spanish Literature at Verona University,

Anna Bognolo's research interests centre on links between Italy and chivalric romances in the Spanish Renaissance. Together with Stefano Neri she set up the *Mambrino Project*, which organises an annual international seminar on chivalric romances and Renaissance narrative, and publishes the journal *Historias Fingidas*. She directs *Mapping Chivalry. Romanzi cavallereschi spagnoli dal Rinascimento al XXI secolo*: a digital approach, financed under PRIN 2017 (legislation to promote projects of pre-eminent national importance), pursued jointly by the Universities of Verona, Roma-Sapienza, Trento and Salerno. She also has a deep-seated interest in the works of Miguel de Cervantes and in literary theory. Her publications include *La finzione rinnovata. Meraviglioso, corte e avventura nel romanzo cavalleresco del primo Cinquecento spagnolo* (ETS, Pisa 1997); *Repertorio delle continuazioni italiane ai romanzi cavallereschi spagnoli. Ciclo di Amadis di Gaula* (Bulzoni, Rome 2013, 'Biblioteca del Cinquecento').

George Brocklehurst

Currently working towards a PhD at the Warburg Institute, University of London, George Brocklehurst's project, funded by the London Arts and Humanities Partnership (LAHP) and supervised by Sara Miglietti and Alessandro Scafi, explores the reception of the Greco-Roman symposium in Italian humanist literature. He holds degrees in classics from the University of Saint Andrews and the Institute for Classical Studies, University of London. His article *Giovanni Pontano's Convivial Poetics. The Lepidina (1496) and the Renaissance art of banqueting*, recently won the 2021 Society for Neo-Latin Studies Early Career essay prize.

Hervé Brunon

Specialising in the History of Gardens, Landscape and Ecology, Hervé Brunon is the Director of

Research at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique/French National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre André Chastel, Paris). His contribution to the field of environmental humanities embraces a number of different disciplines (history, art history, philosophy, anthropology, literature, botany, and so on). Initially centred on notions of nature, his work subsequently concentrated on the poetic perception of places, exploring motifs such as the labyrinth and the grotto, and on concepts such as wisdom. He is a member of the editorial committee of the journal *Les Carnets du paysage* and of the scientific committee of the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche. His published works include: *Jardins de sagesse en Occident* (Seuil, 2014); *L'Imaginaire des grottes dans les jardins européens* (with Monique Mosser, Hazan, 2014); *De la peinture au jardin* (edited with Denis Ribouillault, Olschki, 2016).

Peter Burke

Emeritus Professor of Cultural History, University of Cambridge, and Fellow of Emmanuel College, Peter Burke's latest book is *Play in Renaissance Italy* (2021).

Diego D'Elia

Now a Lieutenant Colonel in the Carabinieri Corps and Chair Holder at the Centre of Excellence for the Stability Police Units in Vicenza, Diego D'Elia earned a PhD in Cultural Heritage Protection and went on to conduct research on the bibliographic, cultural, legal, artistic, iconological and iconographic aspects of chess history, with specific interest in the late Mediaeval and Renaissance periods. He has published many authoritative articles and books, including editions of the ms. Vaticano Boncompagni N3 and of the ms. 1475 of the Biblioteca Bertoliana, as well as a critical edition of the *Deventer Poem*. His research has revealed numerous unpublished documents,

including an engraving for *La Filosofia degli Scacchi* by Marco A. Severino (17th century), the oldest known draft prints of a chess book (Lucena, circa 1497), a Venetian chess poem of the 18th century and a translation into English of *Una partita a scacchi* by Giuseppe Giacosa (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Patetta 839).

Antonella Fenech

A researcher at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique/French National Centre for Scientific Research (Paris), and deputy director of the Centre André Chastel (CNRS, Sorbonne University, Culture Ministry), Antonella Fenech was a fellow of the Académie de France and the École française in Rome, and of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence. Her works on early modern art in Italy consider artistic and visual productions in their political (*Giorgio Vasari. La fabbrica de l'allégorie*, 2011; *Histoire de Florence par la peinture*, 2012) and cultural dimension (*Frisés peintes. Le décor des villas et palais au Cinquecento*, 2017, with Annick Lemoine; *Les façades peintes. XV^e-XVII^e siècle*, with Jérémie Koering, forthcoming). Recently, her work has been devoted to ludic practices in images and societies in the early modern period (several articles already published). As a fellow of the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia University (2023), she continues research for her new book – *Sottosopra. Corps à contre-sens dans les images entre Moyen âge et modernité* – which deals with the modalities, functions, expressions, semantic and empathic dimensions of the human body depicted 'upside down,' in the Western visual culture of Modernity.

Alberto Fiorini

Since graduating in History with a dissertation entitled *Il gioco d'azzardo a Venezia nel Settecento*, Alberto Fiorini has conducted historical and anthropological

research in the field of games and gaming. He conceived and curated the exhibition *Fanti e denari. Six centuries of games* (Venice, 1989) and was associated in various ways with the following exhibitions: *Il Gioco dell'amore. Venetian Courtesans from the 1300s to the 1700s* (Venice, 1990); *Alte Spielverbote – Verbotene spiele* (Salzburg, 1995); *The World of Giacomo Casanova* (Venice, 1998); *The Discovery of Childhood* (Venice, 1999). His numerous publications include: "Ritrovi di gioco nella Venezia settecentesca", *Studi Veneziani*, n.s., XIV, 1987; "Nascita e sviluppo delle lotterie a Venezia", *Homo Ludens*, VII, 1997.

Eleonora Gamba

Having completed a first degree at Bologna University, Eleonora Gamba went on to earn an MA and a PhD at Milan and Padua Universities respectively. As a classical philologist, her work concerns the transmission of Greek and Latin texts in the Late Middle Ages, the history of books in the early years of printing and libraries in the Age of Humanism and the Renaissance. In 2019-2020 she worked on the *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca et Byzantina* project of the Berlin Academy of Sciences. In 2021-2022 the Catholic University of Milan awarded her a research post to catalogue the 15th century printed documents owned by Bergamo Civic Library in the 'Material Evidence in Incunabula' database. She is a member of the Archivio Bergamasco and of the Ateneo di Scienze Lettere ed Arti di Bergamo and her work includes collaboration with the Centro di Ricerca Europeo Libro, Editoria, Biblioteca-CRELEB of the Catholic University of Milan, the journal *La Bibliofilia* and with an important international auction house.

Martial Guédron

Currently Professor of Art History at the University of Strasbourg, Martial Guédron has directed

the series 'Cultures visuelles' (Presses universitaires de Strasbourg), since 2018. His research focuses on the body as the basis of figurative representation and as an abiding object of investigation on the part of aesthetics, science, and morality. His publications include: *De chair et de marbre. Imiter et exprimer le nu en France (1745-1815)* (H. Champion, Paris 2003), *L'art de la grimace. Cinq siècles d'excès de visage* (Hazan, Paris 2011), *Visage(s). Sens et représentations en Occident* (Hazan, Paris 2015) and, with Laurent Baridon, *L'art et l'histoire de la caricature* (Citadelles & Mazenod, Paris 2021). He has also curated several exhibitions, including, with Thérèse Willer, *Rire à pleines dents. Six siècles de satire graphique* (Strasbourg, Musée Tomi Ungerer, Centre international de l'illustration, 2021).

Antonio Iodice

A research fellow at the University of Genoa and an honorary research fellow at the University of Exeter, Antonio Iodice's research interests include early modern commerce and political economy, with a special focus on risk-management tools, maritime trade and individual business activities. He contributes to the international projects *Risky Business: Insurance Pricing Database 14th-19th century*, coordinated by Sabine Go; *A Global History of Free Ports 1600-1900*, coordinated by Koen Stapelbroek; and the ERC project *AveTransRisk*, coordinated by Maria Fusaro. He has recently published "General Average in Genoa: between rules and customs," in *Sharing Risk. General average and European maritime business (VI-XVIII centuries)*, edited by Andrea Addobbati, Maria Fusaro, Luisa Piccinno, London 2022 (pp. 1-28); with Luisa Piccinno, "Whatever the Cost. Grain trade and the Genoese dominating minority

in Sicily and Tabarka (16th-18th centuries)," *Business History*, special issue: *Minorities and Grain Trade in Early Modern Europe*, 2021, pp. 1-20.

Juan Antonio Jiménez Sánchez

A lecturer at the University of Barcelona since 2011, Juan Antonio Jiménez Sánchez's research work has focused on the study of public spectacles during Late Antiquity, especially the analysis of the imperial monopoly over all recreational events during the Late Empire and the complex relationship that Christianity maintained with the spectacles of the Roman-Pagan tradition; the result of this line of research has resulted in two monographs (*La cruz y la escena: cristianismo y espectáculos durante la Antigüedad Tardía*, 2006 and *Los juegos paganos en la Roma cristiana*, 2010), and numerous articles and communications in specialised congresses. Another line of research involves the study of pagan survival in the Christian world of Late Antiquity, as well as the civil and canonical legislation intended to put an end to these remnants of idolatry and superstitious practices. Noteworthy contributions in this field are the monograph *Agobardo de Lyon. Sobre el granizo y los truenos. Introducción, traducción y comentarios* 2018, as well as numerous articles and contributions to collective works.

Haohao Lu

A Visiting Assistant Professor of Art History at Vassar College, Haohao Lu teaches Early Modern Art in Northern Europe. She completed her doctorate at Indiana University Bloomington, with a focus on early 16th-century Netherlandish art. She has held a Samuel H. Kress Institutional Fellowship at Leiden University and the Allen Whitehill Clowes Curatorial Fellowship at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. She has contributed to the

edited volume *Ut pictura amor* (2017) and the *Clowes Collection Catalogue* of the Indianapolis Museum of Art (2022).

Francesco Lucieli

Currently a lecturer in Italian at the Sapienza University of Rome and an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Italian at University College Dublin, Francesco Lucieli has worked on chivalric poetry and the reception of the *Orlando furioso*, conduct literature for women and the relationship between literature and the visual arts. He is the author of *Amore punito e disarmato. Parola e immagine da Petrarca all'Arcadia* (Sapienza Università Editrice, Rome 2013), *Jacopo Sadoletto umanista e poeta* ('Roma nel Rinascimento,' Rome 2015), *Tramutazioni dell'Orlando furioso* (Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Rome 2020). He edited Agostino Valier's *Insituzione d'ogni stato lodevole delle donne cristiane* (MHRA, Cambridge 2014) and Giuliano Dati's *Aedificatio Romae* ('Roma nel Rinascimento,' Rome 2012). With Francesca Aceto, he also co-edited *Giocare tra medioevo ed età moderna. Modelli etici ed estetici per l'Europa* (Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche-Viella, Treviso-Rome 2019).

Gherardo Ortalli

Professor Emeritus of Mediaeval History at the University of Ca' Foscari, Venice and a member of numerous academies and societies in Italy and elsewhere, Ortalli is especially interested in the mentality, culture and history of ludicity; he has been the editor of the journal *Ludica. Annali di storia e civiltà del gioco* since its first issue. In 2017 he was awarded the 'Chabod' Prize by the Accademia dei Lincei for the best Italian work of mediaeval, modern or contemporary history published in the previous five years. He is President Emeritus of the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, Venice.

Paolo Procaccioli

A lecturer in Italian Literature at the University of Tuscia from 1993 to 2022, Paolo Procaccioli's main interest is in Late Mediaeval and Renaissance vernacular literature and his publications range in subject matter from the 14th to the 18th century. His research covers early exegesis of Dante, the *novella* after Boccaccio, Pietro Aretino, polygraphs such as Dolce, Ruscelli, Doni and Sansovino, Marcolini and publishing in the 1500s, Renaissance parodic exegesis, 16th century treatises on handwriting, 16th- and 17th-century art criticism and letter-writing in the Early Modern period. He is amongst the promoters of the inter-university 'Cinquecento plurale' and 'Carteggi' research groups. He is an ordinary member of the Accademia dell'Arcadia and a corresponding member of the Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti, Venice.

Antonella Stelitano

A member of the Italian Sports History Society, Antonella Stelitano's publications include *Olimpiadi e Politica* (Forum, Udine 2008), *Le Olimpiadi all'ONU. Le Nazioni Unite e lo sport dall'embargo all'Olimpismo* (CLEUP, 2012), with Jacopo Tognon, *Sport, Unione Europea e Diritti Umani* (CLEUP, 2012) and with Alejandro M. Dieguez and Quirino Bortolato, *Bicicletta, società e chiesa ai tempi di Pio X* (San Liberale, 2013), *Pio X, le Olimpiadi e lo Sport* (San Liberale, 2012) and *I Papi e lo Sport. Oltre un secolo di incontri e interventi* (Lev, 2015) for which she won the 'Mario Alighiero Manacorda' national award for sports historiography in 2016. She won the 2021 'Premio Bancarella Sport,' and in 2022 she became a member of the Accademia Olimpica Nazionale Italiana. She holds a Coni Bronze Star for sporting merit.

Manfred Zollinger

A lecturer in Economic and Social History at the Vienna University of Economics and Business, Manfred Zollinger specialises in the History of Gambling. He is the author of *Bibliographie der Spielbücher: 1473-1700* (1996), *Geschichte des Glücksspiels vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg* (1997), and the editor of *Random Riches. Gambling Past & Present* (2016). He has also been a member of scientific boards and curator of various exhibitions on the subject in Paris, Brussels, La Tour-de-Peilz and Vienna.

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Ludica

Riassegnare centralità storica alle “cose del gioco” (ludica, appunto), al senso della festa, al ruolo dello sport: è questo il terreno sul quale intendiamo lavorare. È un lavoro che punta a cogliere momenti sottovalutati della generale vicenda storica, con attenzione particolare ai contesti sociali e antropologici. È un lavoro che si colloca all'intersezione tra forme diverse della ricerca, senza istituire gerarchie o deleghe. È un lavoro circolare, dall'indagine alla documentazione, dalla selezione dei materiali alla cura editoriale. «Ludica», insomma, vuole contribuire a rafforzare lo spessore critico di comportamenti e attitudini che assumono ampia rilevanza in una società connotata da istanze culturali diffuse, da una crescente dimensione del tempo libero, oggi e, ancor più, domani. Gli ambiti troppo spesso classificati come “poco seri” e lasciati ai margini, diventano quelli sui quali l'indagine si annuncia più fertile, la riflessione più urgente. La rivista contiene perciò interventi di carattere assai vario, apparati informativi, saggi in forma monografica su temi di rilievo. I contributi vengono di norma pubblicati in lingua originale, accompagnati da riassunti in tre lingue, così da rispondere alle esigenze del panorama internazionale degli studi, offrendo un comune nodo di relazioni e di scambi.

Ludica. Annali di storia e civiltà del gioco, 28, 2022

Fondazione Benetton
Studi Ricerche/Viella

Gherardo Ortalli, *Messico e lotterie*

Premio Gaetano Cozzi

Eleonora Gamba, *Il compleanno di un patrizio veneziano alla fine del secolo XV fra divertimento ed erudizione: la testimonianza del De ludo talario di Leonico Tomeo*

George Brocklehurst, *Convivial Humanism: Giovanni Pontano on scholarship as virtuous play*

Ludic Emotions

Alessandro Arcangeli, Antonella Fenech, *Ludic Emotions: some introductory reflections*

Haohao Lu, *Games, Flirtation, and the Use of Interpretive Risk.*

Jan Sanders van Hemessen's 'Portrait of Husband and Wife Playing Tables'

Hervé Brunon, *Allégresse, rire et effroi: les émotions ludiques dans la poésie des jardins italiens de la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle*

Martial Guédrón, *La caricature: plaisir et discrédit d'un petit jeu d'imitation*

Schede/Observations/ Fiches/Karten

Occasioni ludiche. Gioco e scrittura del gioco nella tradizione letteraria italiana: Paolo Procaccioli, *La fortuna, i dadi, il lotto di Girolamo Garimberto*

Diego D'Elia, "La battaglia di due re con finte schiere": una mostra bibliografica sul gioco degli scacchi alla Biblioteca Bertoliana di Vicenza

Antonella Stelitano, *Ruota a ruota. Storie di biciclette, manifesti e campioni. Treviso, Museo nazionale Collezione Salce, 24 maggio-30 ottobre 2022*

Libri/Books/Livres/Bücher

Mario Resta, «Cristo vale meno di un ballerino?». *Danza e musica strumentale nel vissuto dei cristiani di età tardoantica*, recensione di Juan Antonio Jiménez Sánchez

Serio ludere. Sagesse et dérision à l'âge de l'Humanisme, a cura di Hélène Casanova-Robin, Francesco Furlan, Hartmut Wulfram, recensione di Francesco Luciola

Nicholas Scott Baker, *In Fortune's Theater. Financial risk and the future in Renaissance Italy*, recensione di Antonio Iodice

Heinrich Bebel, *Facetiae. Jokes and funny stories from the*

sixteenth century, edited and translated by Sebastian Coxon, review by Peter Burke

Jesús Gómez, *La literatura y el ocio en la sociedad cortesana del Siglo de Oro*, recensione di Anna Bognolo

Bob Harris, *Gambling in Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century*, Rezension von Manfred Zollinger

Donna e sport nella storia d'Italia. Atti del VII convegno nazionale SSS, a cura di Antonella Stelitano e Matteo Monaco, recensione di Anna Bellavitis

Dell'andare in bicicletta e altre divagazioni. Antologia per ciclisti e sognatori, traduzione e cura di Francesca Così e Alessandra Repossi, illustrazioni di Fabio Consoli, recensione di Alberto Fiorin