

24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>  
JULY 2017

GENOA, ITALY

GENOA SCHOOL  
OF HUMANITIES

MOTHER  
THE  
MOTHER

# THE MOTHER

organised by:  
**Lorenzo Chiesa**  
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**Mosca**

**Luisella Brusa**  
Psychoanalyst  
**Lorenzo Chiesa**  
Philosopher  
**Luisa Lorenza Corna**  
Design and  
Art Historian

**Ida Dominijanni**  
Philosopher  
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**Chiara Fenoglio**  
Literary Critic  
**Raffaello Palumbo**  
**Mosca**  
Literary Critic

Established in 2013 and directed by Lorenzo Chiesa and Raffaello Palumbo Mosca, the Genoa School of Humanities (GSH) offers weekly series of seminars in English held by scholars of philosophy, literature, and other subjects, as well as by psychoanalysts, filmmakers, poets, and novelists.

The topic of our seminars of Summer 2017 is the mother, which we will approach in our consolidated interdisciplinary way from the perspectives of psychoanalysis, feminism, literary criticism, and philosophy.

Producing a straightforward and consistent definition of maternity, motherhood, and mothering is unexpectedly difficult. What is a mother? Who is one's mother? It is clearly not sufficient to understand her as the "female parent of a child" or "a woman in relation to her child or children". Does woman become a mother at the moment of conception, gestation, or parturition? Or, conversely, is the mother primarily a product of complex – socially and ideologically – discursive practices that evade any strictly biological concept, or at least structurally supplement it?

Feminism in its various expressions has both contested motherhood, if not rejected it, as an oppressive apparatus of patriarchy, and saluted it as the irresistible cipher of a fundamental sexual difference to be championed. What are the philosophical, political, and aesthetical implications of these contrasting stances? How does the more and more evident decline of paternal authority influence all this?

Lacanian psychoanalysis has insisted on overcoming the alleged dichotomy between the mother as the real locus of a natural drive and the father as the symbolic site of culture and the Law. But then, quite bluntly, why is a mother irreducibly not a father, and vice versa? What is the basic symbolic function of motherhood? In what sense can we talk of a specific maternal desire that is neither masculine nor feminine and rather evokes an overwhelming and quasi-cannibalistic drive?

Like feminism and psychoanalysis, literature has long explored the love and conflicts that accompany the mother-child relationship. Can this ambivalence give rise to a specifically maternal discontent, guilt, shame, and even repulsion? How and when does a parent "fail" to be a mother? And, on the other hand, how and when is a child not "worthy" of a mother's care? Does the representation of such tensions require particular narrative approaches that inevitably rely on an autobiographical dimension?

The GSH proposes itself as a venue where young scholars have a real possibility to deepen their knowledge, not only by attending seminars, but also by actively discussing in an informal context their own research projects with highly qualified teachers and among themselves. One of the basic ideas of the GSH is that learning is enhanced by the suspension of formalisms, hierarchies, and the principle of authority that usually define traditional academic contexts. Each day revolves around one or two presentations by an invited speaker and is enriched by roundtables, small study groups, and debates that are always attended by one or more seminar leaders. The exchange of knowledge and ideas is facilitated by the limited number of students (max 15), and by the interdisciplinary nature of the seminars.

Speakers/seminar leaders at the GSH are leading international figures in their academic and extra-academic fields. They are based both in Italy and abroad. Participants are thus exposed to different cultures, teaching methods, and disciplinary perspectives. They are also enabled to establish new research networks and acquire practical information on how to access PhD and post-doctoral programmes. The GSH has welcomed students from several countries, including Italy, the UK, Russia, Iran, Israel, and the Ukraine.

## PROGRAMME OF SEMINARS

### Monday 24 July:

- 10:00 Welcome and introduction to the Summer 2017 seminar series (Lorenzo Chiesa & Raffaello Palumbo Mosca)
- 10:30 “Carla Lonzi: From Dualism to the Group” (Luisa Lorenza Corna)
- 12:00 Q&A / Discussion
- 15:00 Roundtable on Luisa Lorenza Corna’s seminar (chair: Raffaello Palumbo Mosca)
- 17:00 Drinks and nibbles

### Tuesday 25 July:

- 11:30 “Why the Mother?” (Ida Dominijanni)
- 13:00 Q&A / Discussion
- 16:00 Roundtable on Ida Dominijanni’s seminar (chair: Lorenzo Chiesa)

### Wednesday 26 July

- 10:30 “The Role of the Mother in Contemporary Italian Literature” (Chiara Fenoglio)
- 12:00 Q&A / Discussion
- 15:00 Roundtable on Chiara Fenoglio’s seminar (chair: Raffaello Palumbo Mosca)

### Thursday 27 July:

- 10:30 “The Desire of the Mother: Psychoanalysis and Beyond” (Lorenzo Chiesa)
- 12:00 Q&A / Discussion
- 15:00 Roundtable on Lorenzo Chiesa’s seminar (chair: Raffaello Palumbo Mosca)

### Friday 28 July:

- 10:30 “On Why a Mother Is Not a Father, and Vice Versa” (Luisella Brusa)
- 12:00 Q&A / Discussion
- 15:00 Roundtable on Luisella Brusa’s seminar (chair: Lorenzo Chiesa)
- 17:00 Drinks and nibbles

Seminars are held in English, unless all participants speak Italian

## REGISTRATION FEES

5 days of seminars: €50

4 days of seminars: €00

3 days of seminars: €50

2 days of seminars: €00

Please, pay by bank transfer to:

Spazio Musica (reason for payment: GSH)

Bank: CA.RI.GE.

IBAN: IT72 M061 7501 44800000 0260 880

Payments should be received no later than 10 July 2017. Please, send a copy of the payment receipt to [registration@gsh-education.com](mailto:registration@gsh-education.com)

## HOW TO REACH US

Seminars are held in Genoa, Via Parini 10, in a nineteenth century villa. From Genova Brignole railway station take bus number 43 toward Nervi. Get off in Via Albaro; cross Piazza Leopardi and you reach Via Parini.

## SEMINAR LEADERS

**Luisella Brusa** works and lives in Milan. She is a psychoanalyst and a member of the World Association of Psychoanalysis and of the Scuola Lacaniana di Psicoanalisi. She teaches at the Scuola di specializzazione in psicoterapia di orientamento lacaniano of the Istituto Freudiano. She has collaborated with the Università Cattolica of Milan and with the University of Bergamo. Her publications include: *Mi vedevo riflessa nel suo specchio. Psicoanalisi del rapporto tra madre e figlia [I Was Seeing Myself Reflected in Her Mirror. Psychoanalysis of the Mother-Daughter Relation]* (Franco Angeli, 2004); "Psicoanalisi del trauma", in D. Cosenza, M. Recalcati, A. Villa (a cura di), *Introduzione alla psicoanalisi contemporanea* (Bruno Mondadori, 2003). She has edited the Italian edition of Paul Federn's *Fatherless Society* (Paparo, 2013).

**Lorenzo Chiesa** is Director of the GSH and Visiting Professor at the European University at St Petersburg and at the Freud's Dream

Museum of the same city. He was previously Professor of Modern European Thought at the University of Kent, where he founded and directed the Centre for Critical Thought. He held visiting positions at the University of New Mexico, the Istituto di Scienze Umane (SUM) of Naples, the Institute of Philosophy of Ljubljana, and the Jnanapravaha Institute of Mumbai. He published books and edited collections on psychoanalysis (*Subjectivity and Otherness*, MIT Press, 2007; *Lacan and Philosophy*, Re.press, 2014; *The Not-Two: Logic and God in Lacan*, MIT Press, 2016) and on political theory (*The Italian Difference*, Re.press, 2009 – with Alberto Toscano; *Italian Thought Today*, Routledge, 2014; *The Virtual Point of Freedom*, Northwestern University Press, 2016). He edited and translated books by Agamben and Virno into English and by Žižek into Italian. His work has been translated into more than ten languages.

**Luisa Lorenza Corna** teaches in the faculty of Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies of the University of Leeds. Her main research interests are Marxism and aesthetics, post-war Italian art and architecture and theories of the metropolis. She has written about art and architecture for various journals, amongst which, more recently, *Domus* and *Mute*. At the moment she is editing and translating, with Jamila Mascot and Matthew Hyland, an anthology of Carla Lonzi's art historical and feminist writings for Seagull Books. She is also a co-organiser of the research seminar *Marxism in Culture* ([www.marxisminculture.org](http://www.marxisminculture.org)) at the Institute of Historical Research, London.

**Ida Dominijanni** is a philosopher, political theorist, essayist and journalist. Her most recent book is *Il Trucco. Sessualità e biopolitica nella fine di Berlusconi [Make-Up/The Trick. Sexuality and Biopolitics in Berlusconi's Fall]* (Ediesse, 2014). She has been for decades an editor and columnist of the newspaper *il manifesto*. Dominijanni is also a member of the Diotima community of women philosophers in Verona and a member of the Centre for the Reform of the State (CrS) in Rome. She has been teaching political theory at Roma Tre University in Rome, the Universities of Siena and Verona, and Cornell University

(as a fellow of the Society for the Humanities). Her writings on politics, populism, feminism, and psychoanalysis have been published in national and international scholarly journals and volumes. Her essay “L'impronta indecidibile” [“The Undecidable Mark”] (published in *Diotima, L'ombra della madre [The Shadow of the Mother]*, Liguori, Napoli 2007) will be included in C. Casarino and A. Righi (eds.), *An Other Mother*, (Minnesota Univ. Press, forthcoming).

**Chiara Fenoglio** holds a PhD in Italian literature and is a member of the Literary Jury of the prestigious “Premio Campiello”. She is also a literary critic for “La Lettura”, the cultural supplement of the newspaper “Il corriere della sera”. She has published a number of essays in national and international journals, and is the author of two monographs: *Un infinito che non comprendiamo. Leopardi e l'apologetica cristiana dei secoli XVIII e XIX* (winner of the Tarquinia-Cardarelli Prize), and *La divina interferenza. La critica dei poeti nel Novecento*. She collaborates with the publishing house Mondadori.

**Raffaello Palumbo Mosca** is Director of the GSH and a literary critic. He holds a PhD with honors in Romance Languages from the University of Chicago and a PhD in Italian literature from the University of Turin. He has taught Italian literature in the US (University of Chicago) and the UK (University of Kent). He is the author of a number of essays on modern and contemporary European literature and history of literary criticism published in American and European journals (“Lettere Italiane”, “Modern Language Notes”, “Raison Publique”, “Nuovi argomenti”, “Studi Novecenteschi”, and others). His book *L'invenzione del vero. Romanzi ibridi e discorso etico nell'Italia contemporanea* won the International Tarquinia-Cardarelli prize in 2014. He is also a reviewer for Books In Italy and an author for the publishing house Zanichelli.

## MORE INFORMATION

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