

***INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES***

**International Seminar for Early Career
Eighteenth-Century Scholars**

***SOCIÉTÉ INTERNATIONALE D'ÉTUDE
DU DIX-HUITIÈME SIÈCLE***

***Séminaire international des jeunes
Dix-huitiémistes***

Silence in eighteenth-century arts, history and philosophy



2018 ISECS Seminar for Early Career Scholars

Silence in eighteenth-century arts, history and philosophy

Università della Tuscia, Viterbo, 10–14 September 2018

Proposals due by 30 January 2018

The International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ISECS) is pleased to announce the 2018 International Seminar for Early Career Eighteenth-Century Scholars. Colleagues from all fields of eighteenth-century studies are invited to submit abstracts for this one-week event. Formerly called the East-West Seminar, the International Seminar for Early Career Eighteenth-Century Scholars brings together young researchers from a number of countries each year. The 2018 meeting will take place in Viterbo, Italy and will be organized by Prof. Francesca Saggini and the Dipartimento di studi linguistico-letterari, storico-filosofici e giuridici – DISTU.

The seminar will be held from Monday, September 10 to Friday, September 14, 2018 in Viterbo, under the direction of Francesca Saggini (English Literature, Tuscia), with Antonella Del Prete (History of Philosophy, Tuscia), Paolo Procaccioli (Italian Literature, Tuscia), Saverio Ricci (History of Philosophy and Intellectual History, Tuscia), Gino Roncaglia (Digital Humanities, Tuscia). The seminar's focus on praxis will give early career scholars the opportunity to work closely with these specialists, individually or in small groups, during workshops devoted to theoretical issues, bibliographic research and research methodologies. More specific training opportunities will include know-how sessions and discussions on professionalisation (getting published, the activities and publications most valued by employers in the education sector, the peer-review system), digital methods, editorial skills. The seminar will also be an opportunity to engage with international scholars who will present their research in areas cognate to the Seminar Aims and Themes: Prof. Rosamaria Loretelli (Emerita, Napoli Federico II/Vice-President ISECS), Prof. Peter Sabor (McGill University, Montréal), and Dr. Anne Toner (Trinity College, University of Cambridge).

The 2018 ISECS International Seminar for Early Career Scholars will engage discussions on the forms, representations and modalities of silence in the eighteenth century. Silence, of individuals and cultures, of the physical voice or of the written word and information deleted from the page, has historically taken many forms. It may be reticent, dissembling or imposed by others. Voluntary or coerced, it might be the silence of women, of marginal social and religious groups, of communities that are denied the right to speak. There are other silences as well: the interruption of sound in a musical pause and the silence of religious practices, which speak to, and of, the inner life. All these forms of silence were present in the eighteenth century, as they had been throughout history, but perhaps for the first time, some of them were singled out for special scrutiny. Works on aesthetics, for example, investigated the use of silence and the implicit in rhetorical writing, or dwelled on reverie, and how it might be induced in the reader. In rhetoric, attention was paid to discursive figures and strategies capable of making silence more eloquent than the word. Conduct books devoted many pages to the art of conversation, emphasising the essential role of silence to ensure the correctness of social interactions, especially for women, but also for politicians. Censorship – whether institutional or self-imposed – also produces silences, as do the more or less conscious failures of memory found in life writing and in historical discourse: one need only think of the revisions required to write the history of colonialism,

wars or slavery. Eighteenth-century historiography attempted to remove some of the silences it found in history, often filling in the lacunae through conjecture. Silence is also represented in the visual arts and, signally, in the novel, which devised new narrative techniques for the purpose, whether to evoke the silences in characters' conversations, and the contexts and landscapes in which silence reigns (a hallmark of the picturesque, for example), or to leave the reader in suspense by strategically withholding information. And then there is the theatre, where after the triumph of pantomime and the illegitimate spectacles that deployed a hybridized combination of body, speech, stage machinery and lighting effects, the century comes to a close with the rise of melodrama, which replaced the spoken word with music and revolutionised the notion of acting as the art of speech, while giving new prominence to silent characters and heroes. Finally, there is the silence that becomes firmly and widely established in the eighteenth century through the practice of reading narrative texts for oneself, replacing the social activity of reading aloud for a group of listeners with a solitary, interiorized experience. On these and other silences, on silence in all its forms and meanings in the eighteenth century, the seminar calls for contributions. The theme of the conference, "Silence in eighteenth-century arts, history and philosophy," must thus be understood in the broadest terms possible to include:

- anonymity
- silence, reflection, meditation
- social silence, silence and social interaction
- negation: denials, disclaimers, disavowals
- silence and secrets
- censorship and self-censorship
- ellipses, omissions, blank pages, hyphens, asterisks – the typographical and linguistic modes of silence
- ghost chapters (deleted, lost, rewritten)
- silenced characters, characters that disappear
- quiet spaces: the *loci* of silence
- reading and silence
- silence as resistance and rebellion
- scripting silence and muteness
- the performativity of silence
- silence and the canon
- silence and history
- silence in relation to cultural memory studies
- silence and/as remembrance
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A detailed description of this theme (English, French, Italian), with a list of abstracts will be available online. [{dedicated page to be made accessible in Distu's homepage}](#)

The seminar is limited to 15 participants. The proposals (approx. 3 pages, double-spaced, max 1,000 words) should be based on an original research project (e.g. a doctoral dissertation) which addresses one of the aspects mentioned above. Because this is a seminar rather than a conference, each participant will be given approximately one hour to present the texts and questions that will then form the basis of a group discussion led in turn by one

of the participants. Preference will be given to scholars who are at the beginning of their academic career (ABD; PhD or equivalent for less than six years, including ECRs). The official languages of the seminar are English, Italian, French. Translations of abstracts and various seminar materials not in English will be made available to participants.

Accommodation costs (Sunday night to Friday night included), lunches and dinners (Monday dinner to Friday lunch included) will be covered in full by the organizers, who will be responsible for reserving rooms in the students' hall of residence. Other travel costs are currently under evaluation for a grant from the University of Tuscia. If the seminar should benefit from such funding, transfers from Orte train station (on the Rome-Milan train line) or the Rome airports (Ciampino and Fiumicino) to Viterbo will be covered in full or in part. In that case, in order for travel expenses to be considered, participants are asked to coordinate, to the extent possible, their times of arrival and departure, so as to enable group transfers to/from Orte train station or the Rome airports .

As is the case each year, the proceedings of the seminar will be published by Honoré Champion (Paris) in the *Lumières internationales* series.

Applications should include the following information: a brief curriculum vitae with date of PhD (or equivalent); a list of principal publications and scholarly presentations; a brief description of the proposed paper (approx. 3 pages, double-spaced, max 1,000 words); and one letter of recommendation. Colleagues are invited to submit proposals by **January 31, 2018**. Please send abstracts by e-mail to Francesca Saggini: fsaggini@unitus.it, cc'ing into the conversation Alberta Boschi alberta.boschi@gmail.com . If your email programme supports the delivery receipt option we encourage you to request delivery receipt. We will attempt to notify all correspondents before February 28, 2018 regarding the status of their submission.