

History and Tradition: A Personal Memoir

Elizabeth Cropper – I Tatti September 14, 2011

I cannot thank you enough for this honor. It is especially meaningful to me because given in memory of two outstanding women, Agnes and Elizabeth Mongan; because it was created by a brilliant and generous benefactor, Mel Seiden (Harvard class of '52); and because it is awarded by and at Villa I Tatti – a place whose beauty and sense of purpose inspires everyone who comes here, and especially today.

The occasion gives me an opportunity, first of all, to say something about my indebtedness as a scholar to Florence and to I Tatti. (1) I first began to study here in 1969 while working on my dissertation on Pietro Testa, reading at the Kunsthistorisches Institut, where, to my amazement, Testa prints hung on the walls, (2) and in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe of the Uffizi, (3) where many of his drawings are kept - Testa was after all a Tuscan, even though he made his short and brilliant career in Rome. It was to complete my book on Testa that I came to I Tatti in 1978-79 (4), spending a wonderful year with John D'Amico and David Quint, among others. I had first visited in 1973 when Charles Dempsey was a fellow (5), and our arrival up the via di Vincigliata in a hot and rusty red Fiat Cinquecento, turning into the gates to see white doves fluttering, and being met by Signor Gioffredi remains completely unforgettable. A rediscovered postcard documents how showing up early has always been awkward for the director from the point of view of lunch, but that the library always welcomed fellows! During my own fellowship I completed my Testa book – nobody then thought it a bad idea to finish a large work related to a dissertation, or indeed to write about the 17th century. I was also

able (6) to think about the Zaccolini manuscripts in the Biblioteca Laurenziana that year, learning a valuable lesson about breaching the boundaries of scholarship: Leonardo scholars knew about these volumes, thanks to Carlo Pedretti's publication, but had little interest in their importance for Nicolas Poussin, whereas Poussin scholars had long been interested in Zaccolini but had no inkling of the whereabouts of the manuscripts. It was in Florence, of course (7), that I had even earlier become fascinated by Parmigianino's *Madonna of the Long Neck*, and it was again the mind of a 17th century artist that provided inspiration. (8) Pietro Testa annotated his reading of Agnolo Firenzuola's "Delle Bellezze delle Donne," and his little diagrams led me to a new interpretation of the altarpiece, (9) and related works. My 1976 article (10) "On Beautiful Women: Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo* and the Vernacular Style" was not yet about Bronzino, but it was about Poussin and Botticelli, Leonardo and Raphael, as well as Parmigianino, and its argument had much to do with poetry (11) and the meaning of style. I have always questioned modern divisions of form and content, as much as the limitations of period boundaries; and if I had any theoretical models in writing this study, then they were such diverse thinkers as Jacob Burckhardt, Rensselaer W. Lee, Ridolfo Renier, and John Shearman. (12) In Philadelphia access to the Bryn Mawr College library, full of little studied nineteenth and early twentieth century literature on Renaissance women, provided a daily treasure-trove in my search for sources. This adventure was yet another lesson in the importance of cross-pollination of fields, of times, and places, of following an idea without restrictions-- something that flourishes at I Tatti, and, I hope, at CASVA.

(13) The notion of a Tuscan vernacular style, and the ways in which represented beauty could signify meaning had long fascinated me when I first wrote about (14)

Bronzino for Craig Smyth's *I Tatti Festschrift*, then expanding these thoughts for the landmark Yale conference that was published as *Rewriting the Renaissance* in 1986, and in which gender issues were given prominence in a new way. My interpretation was always, however, indebted to the daily presence of great works of art in Florence whenever possible, and of the rich resources in this city for thinking about them. (15) My little book on Pontormo's *Halberdier* was commissioned by the J. Paul Getty Museum, but it was the experience of working in Florence, of situating history in a real place, and literally thinking about the work (16) from the ground up (and for those of you who know the book this image will be familiar), challenging received conventions about political iconography and mannerism, that made it possible (17) to see something new. The discipline of working in Florence, where so many have before, demands that one go back to the beginning, whether to documents, (18) to drawings, or to eyewitness testimonies and rethink issues on a large scale. (19) In response to suggestions that work done here may be too narrow and specialized, I would say that Florence provides the freedom and resources to think about very many things, while insisting upon meeting the highest standards of scholarship. The virtue of novelty, or originality, coming out of tradition has been a steady theme in my own work: the choice and determination to innovate and encourage originality in any direction is always up to us

I have been deeply gratified (20) by the reception my work has found in Florence, and by the generosity of colleagues here, especially Annamaria Petrioli Tofani, Antonio Natali, and Carlo Falciani, who included me in their pathbreaking exhibitions. The same holds true (21) for the invitation from Carl Strehlke to work on Pontormo and Bronzino for an exhibition in Philadelphia, (22) where we learned much together about the

connections between handwriting and drawing, (23) and for which many generous loans of drawings came from Florence to a sister city. (24) I was honored by Marzia Faetti's invitation to write an introduction to her exhibition of Guercino drawings at the Uffizi because of my engagement in the world of Seicento drawings in both Florence and Bologna. I am pretty certain the Mongan sisters would be pleased and satisfied by this sort of collaboration.

Other aspects of my Florentine research were less predictable (25) Literally discovering Artemisia Gentileschi's children and their godparents in the Baptistery archives in response to an invitation to write an essay for a volume on women in the baroque from Giulia Calvi was thrilling, and provided a new perspective on the life of a female painter who was pregnant four times in five or six years, something that earlier images of Artemisia as rape victim or feminist heroine had not allowed for. The opportunity to write about Artemisia for Keith Christiansen and Judith Mann's exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum followed from these Florentine discoveries, as did Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi's invitation to write for the Pisan exhibition on Galileo, for which I examined Artemisia's extraordinary image of *Inclination*.

I could go on, (26) especially about the importance of the Villa Spelman, where Francesco Solinas (seen here with Philippe Morel and Charles Dempsey in Paris) played such an important role, and about more recent relationships between the National Gallery in Washington and the Soprintendenza in Florence under Cristina Acidini's direction. But I hope, without preaching to the choir, to have said something about the importance of discovery in fertile ground, of not making rules about what approach is or isn't allowed, of respect for the traditions of scholarship without embracing orthodoxy, and

about the immense value of collegiality and friendship. Of course, I don't mean to imply that the flourishing of scholarship in Florence results from the simple happenstance of being in this extraordinary city: the formulation of new questions is as essential here as anywhere, as is curiosity about all aspects of cultural history on a global level.

Inspiration in my case, however, has most often come from the opportunity to look long and hard at works of art, whether in their original context, in museums, the conservation laboratory, or in the pages of a book. It has also come from teaching, and I am delighted that some of my former students are here today.

(27) I think previous recipients of this award probably felt as I did on hearing about it – first that it should have gone to somebody else, and then deep anxiety about how to respond. I am proud to have known all of my predecessors –as I did both Mongans --but I heard only Paola Barocchi's deeply moving comments on accepting this prize. Caroline Elam with characteristic generosity recently sent me a copy of her words, and shared her memories of anxiety: her eloquent words only increased my own apprehension. I am not sure that the first recipients of the award made more than a few remarks, and indeed I don't think this the occasion for a scholarly lecture. What follows will be something of a hybrid, a collection of thoughts about people and places, about the work I am doing now, and about the writing of stories about the past, about the relationships among history, memory and tradition.

(28) My title was indeed inspired by the project I am engaged in at CASVA, together with Lorenzo Pericolo, now of the University of Warwick, who is here today, and a small group of young colleagues: that is, the edition and translation of Carlo Cesare Malvasia's *Felsina Pittrice*, first published in Bologna in 1678. I don't need to tell this

audience that Malvasia set out to correct the record of the history of Bolognese art in the face of Giorgio Vasari's willful neglect, especially as far as the Trecento was concerned. Less well understood is Malvasia's deep opposition to the sort of history that Vasari wrote, presented as the work of a single author, as a definitive history of the rebirth, or renaissance, of art in Florence after its total disappearance, and its perfection in Michelangelo. Malvasia's approach was quite different, forensic rather than epideictic, based on his training as a lawyer and theologian. He established chronology through consulting documents, deconstructed texts, and verified the facts of the case through ocular inspection. But something more was at stake for him than correctness, and that was a view of time, culture, and even history as shaped by tradition, not by rupture or progress, or as a conquest of the ancients by the moderns.

Tradition can mean many things, but a contrast with notions of history is fundamental to its definition. The sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945) argued that history tends to start when social memory and continuous tradition cease to function: history, then, is for the few, collective memory for the larger community. In his magisterial "Lieux de mémoire," Pierre Nora (b. 1931) took up this idea and examined the memories of "living societies," in relation to the historical reconstruction of what is no longer, differentiating the *milieux* of living memory from the *lieux* of history that come into being when memory fails. This working distinction helps, I think, to refine our understanding of Malvasia's rejection of Vasari, compelling us in turn to reflect on our own practice.

Malvasia insists that everything he writes will be based on secure foundations: either he will have witnessed something himself, or it will be reported by the person

involved, “or by his family or servant.” Conjectures will be based on the probable, and he will rely on the “unimpeachable memoirs” of those who were present, referring to his own work, therefore, not as history, but as “memorie.” (29) Malvasia is concerned with the sort of living tradition that, as modern theories of cultural memory reassert, addresses a broader cultural condition. This underlies his bequest of his own precious diamond-encircled portrait of Louis XIV to his confraternity at Santa Maria della Vita, specifically to adorn the fourteenth century fresco fragment there by Simone de’ Crocefissi on the anniversary of his death. In another often-noted statement, Malvasia insists that he prefers to trust reports recollected and passed on by many “than I will a **single one** who, after the memory of events had ceased, took to writing them down entirely according to his own will and wishes.” He demands to know why oral history is considered less trustworthy than the false history written by a Herodotus, or a Thucydides, silently associating Vasari with the seductive writing of Herodotus against which Plutarch railed.

A consciousness of the different qualities of history, memory and tradition, can be discovered at the heart of Malvasia’s writing. (30) In mentioning the many relics in Santo Stefano in Bologna that rendered it a new Jerusalem, he anticipates skepticism from those who believe that everything old was destroyed by the barbarians. He responds that knowledge of such things is ancient, and that even the law trusted *in antiquis*, when other proof was lacking. And here he cites John Chrysostom: “traditio est? ne quaeras amplius,” or “it is tradition; do not seek further,” adding “why should I doubt what our ancestors have passed on to us from age to age.” And why would I want to disagree,” he concludes, “with the statement in *Ecclesiasticus*: “Let not the discourse of the ancients escape you, for they have learned of their fathers; for of them you shall

learn understanding.” For Malvasia the notion of tradition was an ancient one invoking both legal and ecclesiastical authority.

Traditio, or *paradosis*, had to do with the handing on of knowledge or practices, and education itself, in Plato’s view, was such a handing on of tradition. Cicero argues for the special value of traditional fictions that preserve a deeper truth though time and space: *sic enim est traditum* is his motto in the *Laws*. He even justifies the legal passing on of intellectual property, by the idea of *traditio*, insisting upon the common ownership of the academy. (31) This was also Malvasia’s view, according to which the tradition of Bolognese painting belonged to everyone, and relied on the handing on of knowledge from generation to generation, wherever it originated, rather than upon Vasarian notions of innovation and novelty: and this was, of course, Domenichino’s understanding of tradition in the face of charges of plagiarism against his *Last Communion of Saint Jerome*, about which I have written at length.

(32) Malvasia determined to preserve even clumsy works of the past because they belonged to a living present, and should not be consigned to the junk heap simply because of the market demand for novelties. His position reflects in part the wider views of the Catholic Reformation, shared by such figures as Cassiano del Pozzo and Antonio Bosio. But it also reveals an awareness already in the seventeenth century of a difference between what has been called “grand narrative” and multiple “micronarratives,” and as a result, the dialogue between Malvasia and Vasari challenges us as much as any theory of postmodernity.

In the spirit of this long dialogue between oral history and grand narrative, I now want to say something about the Mongan sisters, whom we celebrate today. The Harvard

side of their stories is often told as part of a grander narrative, but I first knew instead of their education at Bryn Mawr College, one of several institutions for the education of women, (33) from my high school in Wakefield, Yorkshire, (34) to Newnham College Cambridge, to (35) the graduate school at Bryn Mawr, to which I owe a good deal. The Mongans were Catholic in addition to being female (and it's hard to know which was the greater disadvantage), but Bryn Mawr, with its Quaker foundation, took no exception to that, just as Newnham College founded by the moral philosopher Henry Sidgwick in 1871, was unique in having no college chapel and remains non-denominational, open to all women. Cambridge University itself, amazingly, accepted women as full graduates only in my lifetime.

(36) At Bryn Mawr, where Agnes learned Berenson's attributions almost by heart, the Mongan sisters studied with Georgianna Goddard King, whom BB identified in 1914 as "the best equipped student of Italian art in the United States or England." Agnes went on to her Smith College M.A. in Florence with Clarence Kennedy in a course that began on September 15th 1927 outside the baptistery doors, initiating a love for Florence and its art. (37) She and Betty stayed with Berenson in Vallombrosa in 1929, and lifelong friendships followed. Agnes had become Paul Sachs' research assistant and entered the famous museum course he had begun a few years earlier. Betty would take the course in 1932 before herself leaving for study in Florence, where Berenson hoped she might stay.

For both Mongan sisters (A and B, as they were familiarly known), Berenson and Paul Sachs provided models for connoisseurship and learning (and of course they were not eligible for a full program of graduate work at Harvard). Of Sachs's course Betty said: "the training was really of the utmost importance. You learned bibliography, you

learned about people, you learned about museum management, and most of all, if you didn't know something, you learned where to go find it – whether it was an object, a person, or a bit of information. This was the real clue to what you should be up to, a projection of the Bryn Mawr intellectual curiosity. It didn't matter that you didn't know it, but you certainly should know where to go and get the answer. And if not, you'd better not come back. That was fundamental.“ And she always felt that BB liked her because she didn't try to impress him. Whereas Sachs, Betty felt, had enthusiasm, Berenson had real enjoyment, and she saw in him an ascetic whose true interests were philosophy, languages, and reading.

Much of what I have just reported verbatim comes from the oral histories the Mongans provided to John Harter of the National Gallery of Art Archives in 1988/89. At the Gallery, obviously, I feel a very strong connection. (38) Agnes, a key figure at the Fogg, was somewhat on the fringes in Washington, though she was present at the dedication of the Gallery by President Roosevelt on March 17 1941. She and her friends Lincoln Kirstein, Eddie Warburg and the Gallery's future director John Walker, all founders of the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, would have preferred something more modern, like the building Philip Johnson was designing for the Museum of Modern Art. Both Mongans, like many of their generation, shared a passion for modern art that paralleled love for the old masters. (39) In the end Agnes was impressed by John Russell Pope's building.

(40) Agnes Mongan strongly supported the creation at the Gallery of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts in 1979, housed in I.M. Pei's East Building, and felt that it changed the way many people saw the institution. As she put it “if we're

trying to build the reputation of the National Gallery we certainly should have a band of scholars behind us.” (41) She thought that John Walker’s experience with Berenson (and here they are seen together in Vallombrosa with Frederick Hartt) had provided inspiration, and that J. Carter Brown, director at the time of CASVA’s creation, had shared that dream – but she was adamant that the CASVA had to be denser and wider than what Berenson aspired to, addressing the whole nation. Betty Mongan was much closer to the Gallery, serving as curator of the Rosenwald Collection for almost thirty years, both before and after it came to Washington. She took a more critical approach, especially towards John Walker. He mistrusted European scholarship in a way that she thought he may have gotten from BB, but wasn’t sure. Whereas David Finley wanted the Gallery to become an American institution, both democratic and scholarly, Walker wanted a more nineteenth century establishment like the National Gallery in London (as it was then). According to Betty Mongan, Walker didn’t want scholarship, didn’t want German refugee professors giving lectures, and would not ask outside for help on attributions, far less allow scholars to see the files. “Now this is hardly high scholarship is it?” she asked. (42) Fortunately, things changed rapidly, and both the National Gallery and CASVA are today open to the widest range of scholarship and people. But Elizabeth Mongan’s comments remind us of the dangers of exclusivity, not so long ago.

(43) The Mongans’ oral histories indeed often tell a story different from the official lines of Who’s Who. It isn’t often told, for example, that when Betty retired in 1963 (at 53) she felt utterly burned out. In her own words:” I was tired of being used by everybody –Huntington [Cairns] and all these gents – for whatever they wanted done. They never gave me a secretary. And after all, you would think if I had been a man, I

would have had a secretary ten years earlier. I'm not a female crusader by any terms, but at my level and with the work I had done, at least a secretary somewhere along the line could have been found for me. Wouldn't you say?" She moved on to do new things – first of all teaching at Smith. But despite her frustrations, she always (rightly) considered that her greatest achievement had been “helping to make the National Gallery of Art's collection of graphic arts an outstanding collection” on an international level. She was personally proud of completing that ambition, and the public owes her much gratitude.

(44) Likewise, when we read of Agnes Mongan's appointment as Samuel H. Kress professor at the National Gallery in 1977 (aged 72) we always hear that she was the first woman in that position, first held by Jacob Rosenberg in 1965. She was indeed proud of being the first woman, but in her memoir Agnes insists that “I was prouder of being the first native born American,” which she was.

The facts of my own life could also be established in a very few official lines, but, as with the Mongans, they would not tell much about my personal memories. It was education that made it possible for the Mongan sisters to achieve what they did, and in thinking over what to say today at I Tatti, I decided to recall some aspects of my own education, and some of those who inspired and supported me, as Georgianna Goddard King, Paul Sachs, and Berenson supported the Mongans. The confidence given by education and by inspired teaching is absolutely fundamental for a creative and fulfilling life, and any serious historian would, I think, want to say something, for example, about the importance in Britain of the Butler Education Act of 1944 which guaranteed secondary education to all, with important results especially for girls and members of less privileged groups. (45) As a child I was proud of going to the same school the sculptor

Barbara Hepworth had attended, and of growing up in the world of Henry Moore (46), despite the bleakness of the landscape, seen here through Moore's vision and the photographs of my friend Chris Killip and his inspiration Bill Brandt. From my classroom window I could see provocative and sometimes inflammatory works by Moore in the Wakefield City Art Gallery. (47) This was run by the extraordinary Helen Kapp who, with the support of embattled labor councilors won countless arguments with the local conservative press. From an early age I too knew that contemporary art mattered, and had the power to get people to think, even as I relished the opportunity to visit Temple Newsom, Castle Howard, Fountains Abbey, and so many other historic buildings and collections in Yorkshire. When nobody had a car, these end of term visits were as memorable and essential as the speech day exhortation by Herbert Reade and a visit by Hepworth herself, or any grand tour. (48) If the gallery I knew is now for sale, (49) I am delighted that there is a new Hepworth Museum in Wakefield designed by David Chipperfield and that young people are drawn there, (50) as they are to the Yorkshire sculpture park.

It was at Cambridge that my understanding of the history of art was formed. This had to do with two remarkable men, Michael Jaffé and Francis Haskell. As a student of history entering Cambridge in the early 1960s one could expect to carry on more or less the same curriculum already followed for years at school. With the exception of close analysis of documents and primary texts, the lectures of Peter Laslett and Quentin Skinner, and the chance to study American history, this seemed a bit of a lost opportunity. (51) I had heard about a new program in the school of architecture in Scroope Terrace giving a Part Two in Architecture and Fine Arts. And so after

completing Part I in History, I joined the small group studying art history. I was lucky to be part of a remarkable cohort of talented people who went on to direct museums, teach in universities, run galleries, and even be successful dealers.

The excitement of being part of something new was great, and the teaching was challenging, with John Shearman, Anthony Blunt, E.H. Gombrich, and many others coming up from London. Howard Burns gave extraordinary tutorials on Italian architectural drawings. (52) But we all knew that we were students of Michael Jaffé's, whom the *Dictionary of Art Historians*, a supposedly authoritative history but without the knowledge of oral history or true memory, foolishly described as having "cultivated a personality of condescension and intimidation." To create a new subject at Cambridge was an amazing feat, and Michael taught us all a good deal about standing up for what one believed in, and for getting things done. After Eton and King's College he had served in the navy for three wartime years. He traveled a good deal afterwards, most importantly to the United States, where he visited NYU and Harvard, forming a friendship with Sydney Freedberg, and he spent a year as visiting professor at Washington University in Saint Louis. All this gave Michael a fondness for things American, and a sense of how to structure a modern course of study in the history of art. With the support of Nikolaus Pevsner, whose lectures on architectural history educated generations of students, myself included, Michael Jaffé had already begun to teach some undergraduate classes. When the program began in earnest in 1961, its every aspect bore his intellectual stamp. The history of art history, which has become such a focus in recent years, was a fundamental course, and we all read Wölfflin, Berenson, Fry, Riegl, Worringer, and many others. Richard Wolheim, Michael Podro, and Ernst Gombrich

were not only to be read but met. (53) Michael insisted that we travel to see the works we were studying –that meant Italy for me, especially Rome and Florence, but also Borgo San Sepolcro and Mantua. We studied documents, and were made to move swiftly through books in languages we didn't know. There were no monographs in English on Annibale Carracci, Domenichino, or Pietro da Cortona, no scans or xeroxes to take home from the library, and the pages of *Paragone* were to become as familiar as those of the *Burlington*. There were for us, as for the Mongans, no excuses.

(54) The collections of the Fitzwilliam, from Domenico Veneziano to Alessandro Algardi, were at the center of our education. Meetings in the museum, for which the Fogg provided Michael Jaffé with a model, were exercises in connoisseurship and interpretation that were not for the timid: and Michael taught us above all not to be timid. His own intellectual battles over Rubens were noisy, just as his determination to turn the gothic splendor of King's College Chapel into a frame for a Rubens altarpiece had everyone taking sides. (55) Michael made us write coherently, taught us to give well organized talks and lectures, and insisted that we care about works of art, their creation, function, and meaning. Ideas were encouraged and there was never any question of disciplinary orthodoxy.

Francis Haskell (56) was the second Etonian in the department, then serving as Librarian, but also lecturing and giving supervisions. Where Michael Jaffé was a public person, Francis was a private one, though highly sociable and a forceful and brilliant lecturer. *Patrons and Painters* had just come out, providing an amazing example of an original book based almost entirely on published sources. Most astonishing was the fact that one fall semester he simply began to lecture on Chasseriau and Bougereau and their

critics, demonstrating intellectual agility of a sort I had not realized was possible. Francis was also interested in those artists whom Luigi Salerno would associate with “Il dissenso nella pittura,” introducing me to Salvator Rosa, Castiglione, and of course Testa. And he loved the Italian futurists, whose political views he found as interesting as those of the seventeenth century outsiders.

Both Michael Jaffé and Francis Haskell found great happiness with professional wives, and there was never a hint of prejudice in their teaching or in the department (quite the reverse in fact). Michael sent me to the United States because he had learned so much there, but also because his wife Pat had too, working on the Romney drawings at Smith College, though he also warned me about the complexities of American programs. His advice was right. I won't say much about my time at Bryn Mawr, except to record that it was there that I met Charles Dempsey, from whom I learned, and continue to learn so much. (57) The years between 1967 and 1972 were extraordinarily turbulent ones in the United States and the U.K., as in Italy, and I think I was pretty lucky to come through them, and with Charles at my side.

I knew that I had indeed pulled through when I won the fellowship to I Tatti in 1978, having just received tenure at Temple University. (58) There began with Craig Smyth a friendship from which I again learned an inestimable amount as a scholar, and as a leader and administrator. (59) Craig was a perfectionist, as I learned first hand when we worked on the second edition of *Mannerism and Maniera* together. Yet he also always found virtues in others, even as he was aware of their failings. (60) It's odd for me to recognize only now that this is a quality that seems to flourish among navy men: a training that my outstanding current director Rusty Powell, my great predecessor Hank

Millon, Michael Jaffé, and ultimately Craig Hugh Smyth (seen in the photograph with navy colleague Charles Parkhurst, future Deputy Director of the National Gallery of Art) all shared, none of them remotely militaristic in manner

It was only later that I learned about Craig's time at the National Gallery of Art and time in the Navy, and at the Munich Collecting Point. Though he knew so much from experience he never imposed his knowledge on others. (60) Craig, together with Barbara, showed that administrative work could and should be concealed in *sprezzatura*, making everyone want to follow his easy and graceful lead. Agnes Mongan saw this. She didn't know Craig well, but admired him from the beginning. "I liked his behavior" was her simple comment.

(61) In 1945-6, as Michael Jaffé was completing his war service, Craig Smyth was in Munich setting up the Central Collecting Point, and then laying the groundwork for a real swords into ploughshares operation – the establishment of the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in the former Nazi headquarters (and he always remembered with pleasure having Bronzino's *Pygmalion and Galatea* in his office). Less recognized, but so important for the History of Art and the humanities is the fact that so many other citizens of the United States and the United Kingdom engaged in the war effort in Europe were also involved in the defense of works of art, especially of the historic cities and villages of the Italian peninsula.

(62) It is hard to overestimate the importance of World War II in Europe for Art History in the United States, not only in terms of the arrival of refugee scholars, but also in terms of knowledge gained by those young Americans who served as monuments men or in military intelligence, and who then passed on their first-hand knowledge of art and

architecture in Europe to generations of students. Paul Sachs and George Stout at Harvard played a leading role in monument protection, and the National Gallery was also deeply involved through the work of the Roberts Commission, whose responsibility it was to draw up lists of protected monuments. (63) But this narrative needs to be widened to include the oral history of many less famous witnesses. (64) At Johns Hopkins, for example Bill Keller was art librarian for most of my time there, and it was his father, Deane Keller, seen here at Campo Tures with John Ward-Perkins, who was given the job of protecting Emilia Romagna, after coping with the allied destruction of the Campo Santo in Pisa. (65) For eighteen years, furthermore, Johns Hopkins was privileged to have a president who had been born in Germany but forced to flee with his family at the age of three. Stephen Muller's "knowledge of the world," to use Hopkins' founder Daniel Coit Gilman's phrase was not virtual, or digital, but a lived experience. For Richard Longaker, who served as Hopkins' Provost in the early years of the Villa Spelman, experience of Italy was formative. He landed in Livorno in January 1945, and witnessed the deprivations in Florence before joining terrible fighting from Tuscany to the Futa Pass. (66) Veteran Hopkins Trustees visiting the Villa Spelman took immense pleasure in seeing a revived Italy, but always visited the Florence war cemetery.

(67) It was fundamentally important that the programs Charles Dempsey and I set up at the Villa Spelman were in Florence, also home of the European University, and of other major research institutes including I Tatti, and the Kunsthistorisches Institut. Craig Smyth gave us strong support, always showing what could be accomplished if the vision was high enough. I won't dwell further on this history, except to say that the spirit engendered by the Villa programs survives in many ways. But I would like to say one

more thing about Florence as a place, and here I will be yet more personal. (68) This is how the city must have appeared on August 11, 1944, the day of its liberation, which was in fact precisely the day that I was born to a family in Yorkshire living on wartime rations. Though mined by retreating Nazi forces, and devastated by hunger and strife, Florence, unlike London or Bologna, did not experience widespread bombing. (69) On the allied side this had much to do with the work of the Roberts Commission (and I am grateful to Lucia Allais for her reference to this fascinating image). In the context of recent military disasters we should remember such official attempts to protect cultural heritage, to preserve living traditions for the future, and to remember that art historians had an important role to play in this.

It was devotion to tradition that drove Carlo Cesare Malvasia to protect as much of the Bolognese heritage as he could, and to celebrate its school, so gloriously reinvigorated by the Carracci. Not *campanilismo* so much as *pietas*, then: and more collective memory than history. In response to Vasari, Malvasia saw no need for a Renaissance, and Bologna, as Roberto Longhi understood, would pay a price for this. (70) The most graphic way of illustrating his point is indeed to compare the different fates of Florence and Bologna in 1944/45, when allied bombing and local defenses in the former were informed by a grand Vasarian narrative, whereas devastation in Malvasia's city was widespread. In a famous open letter written to Giuliano Briganti in 1945, Longhi lamented that had nineteenth century critics not destroyed the fame of local artists, "Who knows if Bologna would be weeping such bitter tears today." In his inaugural lecture at the University of Bologna in 1934, Longhi had already pointed to the loss of so many early Bolognese works, describing the

Bolognese Trecento as “the last Lazarus forgotten in the tomb.” Though Malvasia had first recorded the accomplishments of such artists as (71) Vitale, of (72) Simone dei Crocefissi, and (73) Lippo di Dalmasio, he nonetheless failed to persuade succeeding generations of the merits of his local school, whether in London or Washington, at Harvard or anywhere else, (74) and this contributed to devastation and loss in the twentieth century.

(75) In the end oral history, memoirs, and even the inheritance of the Vasarian grand narrative may all stand to fail in a global or even virtual world, just as they threatened to fall to the forces of empire in the Siege of Florence in 1529-1530 (when some thirty-six thousand citizens died), and to the power of Fascism and war in the last century. (76) Those of us born then and fortunate to be responsible today for the traditions of scholarship and for the institutions in which they thrive have, I believe, a special role to play in keeping memories alive by asking new questions and by handing over tradition through interpretation, wherever the future may lead us.

Thank you for this opportunity to say this.