

Giacomo Scarpelli CV

Giacomo SCARPELLI is Associate Professor in History of Philosophy, Department of Studies on Language and Culture at the University of Modena e Reggio Emilia, where he teaches courses in History of Philosophy, Institutions of Philosophy, History of Ideas and Writing stories for Cinema.

His research primarily focuses on philosophy and science and literature. He studied the work and thought of Darwin and A.R. Wallace, and also the psychological development of the Monotheistic idea, through a Freudian analysis. He investigated about “ingegno e congegno”, that means between natural intellect and science and technology. Then he studied some dialectical and apparently contradictory aspects of Nietzsche's thought; he also explored the overturning of the traditional image of ancient Greece as a world of perfect harmony and rationality operated by Nietzsche, and by Frazer (intended as the creator of a "philosophy of myth"), by Freud and by some other thinkers (Burckhardt, Rohde and the so-called Cambridge Ritualists) at the turn of the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries..

Giacomo Scarpelli is author of many essays and articles and of the following books: *Il cranio di cristallo. Evoluzione della specie e spiritualismo* (Bollati Boringhieri 1993), *Il dio solo. Le misteriose origini del monoteismo* (Mondadori 1997, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura 2003), *La scimmia, l'uomo e il Superuomo. Nietzsche: evoluzioni e involuzioni* (Mimesis 2008); *Ingegno e congegno. Sentieri incrociati di filosofia e scienza* (Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura 2011) *Il razionalista pagano. Frazer e la filosofia del mito* (Meltemi 2018).

He edited a *Storia della Biologia in Italia* (Theoria 1987) and works by Kant, Bergson, Maimon, Galileo, Campanella, Pananti.

Education and training

Giacomo Scarpelli graduated *cum laude* at the University of Florence, and obtained the Ph.D. at the Dept. of Philosophy of the same University of Florence. He made researches in England and United States. Subsequently he received a research grant from University of Calabria. Since 2008 he is Research Fellow in History of Philosophy at Department of Studies on Language and Culture at the University of Modena e Reggio Emilia. He also obtained in 2017 the National Scientific Ability as associate professor in History of Philosophy and in History and Philosophy of Science.

In 2009 he joined the Teaching Council of the Doctorate School in Humanities (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) and is a referent of the philosophical-historical area.

Research history

From 1983 to 1992, thanks to the funds of the Doctorate and then to those granted by the CNR to the Department of Philosophy of the University of Florence, he carried out several studies and research activities in institutions and libraries in the following countries: England (Linnean Society, Museum of Natural History, British Library, Museum of Mankind Library, Cambridge University Library); United States (American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, American Museum of Natural History of New York, Yale University, Harvard University) ;France (Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris). In January-March 1992 he took part in the Palethnological mission in the Libyan Sahara led by Professor Fabrizio Mori (University of Rome "La Sapienza"), aimed at investigating the prehistoric cave paintings of the Tadrart Acacus.

He participated as a research unit member of the PRIN 2001 project entitled “Life Sciences and Mind Sciences between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries: the new information technologies for the study of tools, experiments and theories”; to the PRIN 2003 project entitled “Innovative methodologies for the treatment of themes and problems of the history of science between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries”; to the PRIN 2007 project entitled "The image of animals and the image of man between philosophy and science of life.” He also participated as a research unit member at the 2010 International Research Project entitled “Nature, environment, quality of life (NAQUAVI)” - University of Modena and Reggio Emilia and the Cassa di Risparmio di Modena Foundation and the FAR 2015 project entitled “Between evolution and adaptation. Human nature and technological development” (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia). As project leader (PI), he obtained the FAR 2017 fund for the research entitled “Psyche, techne and physis: Homo sapiens between myth and knowledge philosophical” (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia). He has taken part in the following projects of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia: Departmental FAR 2020, entitled "Rewritings"; Departmental FAR 2021, entitled "The evolutionary hypothesis between misunderstandings and intuitions. Cataloguing and valorisation of an Athenaeum library collection"; research project NODO 2021, entitled "The origins of the Roman Inquisition: sources, protagonists, instruments"; FAR 2025, entitled “Technological Development and Moral Issues”. Project leader (PI) of FAR 2024, entitled “Totalitarismi. Questioni storiche e filosofiche” (Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia).

Furthermore, from 1993 to 2005 he completed further researches at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia on the relationship between biology, environment and humanism. He elaborated a partial examination of the "Rivista di Biologia" (vols X-XII, 1919-1930) and of "Scientia" (vols I-XLVIII, 1907-1930), formerly "Rivista di Scienza" (1907-1908). In 2005 he prepared a bibliography of Italian periodical publications of environmental and ecological inspiration. In 2008 he obtained an individual FAR funding for research, entitled "Relations between philosophy and scientific and literary imagination in the period 1880-1930".

Fellowship and scientific activity

Giacomo Scarpelli is Fellow of the Linnean Society of London since 1986 (elected on a proposal by Gerald Durrell), Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (London) since 1989 (elected on proposal by Giuseppe Montalenti and Claudio Barigozzi), Mitglied of the Sigmund Freud-Gesellschaft of Vienna since 1989, Member of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq (formerly the British School of Archeology in Iraq) (London) since 2001, Membre societaire of the SACD - Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques (Paris), Member of the European Film Academy (EFA, Berlin) since 2015. He was also Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute from 1991 to 2001 (elected on the proposal of Jacob W. Gruber). Member of Società Italiana di Storia della Filosofia (SISF) from 2022.

Giacomo Scarpelli is editor of "Another Now. A Journal of the History of Ideas" (first issue in preparation), Florence University Press, from 2025; publishing editor of "Azimuth - Philosophical Coordinates in Modern and Contemporary Ages", from 2014 to 2025 (recognized scientific journal Anvur, area 11); editor of "Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà" from 2014 (recognized scientific journal Anvur, areas 10 and 11, **class A**, A2/A3/A4); member of the Scientific Board of "Thaumazein. Rivista di filosofia" (recognized scientific journal, areas 10 e 11, **class A**, C1/C3/C5), from 2025; member of Scientific Committee of "Scienza & Filosofia" (recognized scientific journal Anvur, area 11, **class A**, C1/C2/C3), from 2021; member of the Scientific Committee of "Giornale di Bordo", from 2017 (recognized scientific journal Anvur, area 10); editorial consultant of the series "Civitas", directed by Tommaso Codignola, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, from 2011; member of the Scientific Committee of the series "Dillinger, scrigni di cinema", directed by Augusto Sainati, editions ETS, from 2016; editor of the journal "Ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa" from 2012 to 2014 (recognized scientific journal Anvur, areas 10 and 11).

He was Referee Cineca of the MIUR SIR program (Scientific Independence of Young Researchers) and also Referee for the journals "Intersezioni", "I Castelli di Yale", "Scienza & Filosofia", "Archivio di filosofia", "Estetica. Studi e ricerche", "Thaumazein", "Filologia antica e moderna", "Discipline filosofiche".

Teaching and administrative activity

From 2008 until today Giacomo Scarpelli has taught as a professor at the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy, then Department of Studies on Language and Culture at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, the following disciplines: Science, technology and environment, History of political ideas, History of the relationship between philosophy and science, Moral philosophy, History of ideas, History of philosophy, Institutions of Philosophy in the three-year and master's degree courses. He also taught at Doctoral School in Humanities, at TFA class A037, and courses on Writing stories for Cinema at the Master of Public History. From 2009, he was a speaker or co-rapporteur, of more 70 degree thesis (Cultural Sciences, Conflict Analysis, Anthropology and History of the Contemporary World, Inter-University Philosophy).

Invited by Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, Giacomo Scarpelli held a seminar at the University College London, on Alfred R. Wallace (November 1985). He lectured at LUMSA (Free University Maria Santissima Assunta), Rome, Faculty of Literature and Philosophy, degree course in Communication Sciences (from 2006 to 2010). Invited by the Italian Rabbinical College (Beth haMidrash larabbanim haitalqi), Rome, a degree course in Hebrew Sciences, he gave a lecture on Salomon Maimon (March 2012). Invited by the Suor Orsola Benincasa University, he gave a lecture at the Institute Grenoble, Naples (October 2013). Subsequently, he has participated in conferences or held seminars or workshops, as well as at the Department of Linguistic and Cultural Studies or at the Rectorate of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, at the San Carlo Foundation College (Modena, 2014), at the San Filippo Neri University Residence (Modena, 2015), at the Department of Humanistic Studies of the University of Ferrara, (Ferrara 2017), at the Italian Episcopal Conference, Archivio Centrale dello Stato and the National Office for Ecclesiastical Cultural Heritage (Rome, 2017), at the Teatro Massimo in Cagliari, at the Festival of Anthropology and the University of Bologna (Bologna, 2019), at the Suor Orsola Benincasa University, Liceo 'Umberto I' and Palazzo Il Grenoble (Naples, 2019), at the 'Celli' Prize (Siena, 2019), again at the University Suor Orsola Benincasa (2021), at the Department of Civilisations and Forms of Knowledge, University of Pisa (Pisa, 2021), at the LUC (Libera Università Crostolo, Reggio Emilia, 2022), at the Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici dell'Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia (2023).

Institutional assignments: in 2010-2012 he was elected representative of the Research Fellows in the Council of the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy; since 2012 he has been responsible for writing tests on philosophical subjects for admission to the degree course in Cultural Sciences; he was involved in the orientation and guidance of university choice (Culture Sciences) for secondary school students; he participated in the TFA 2011-2012, as commissioner, lecturer, examiner, committee president for the final exam; he is a member of the Board of the basic degree course in Cultural Sciences since 2010, of the Council of the Master's Degree in Anthropology and History, of the Board of the Master's Degree in Inter-University Philosophy (Parma, Ferrara, Modena / Reggio Emilia), in 2012-2013; since 2013; he is tutor for the Master's Degree course in Inter-University Philosophy; he was Representative of Quality (RQ) for the Master's Degree in Anthropology and History and from 2017 he is a member of the Review Group for the Master's Degree in Anthropology and History. From 2018 he is Representative of Quality (RQ) for the degree course in History and Contemporary Cultures. Since January 2019 full member of the Commission for Teaching Contracts, Division 11. Since November 2019 Member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Humanities Library. Since December 2019 contact person for the degree course in Contemporary History and Cultures for student reports. Since January 2020 Contact person for the Anthropology and History programme for student reports. In 2020-2021 Deputy member of the Committee for the Doctorate in Humanities (XXXVI cycle), Modena. From June 2020 Member of the Scientific Committee of the Master in Public and Digital History. From 1 July to 30 September 2020 Provisional Quality Manager of the Master in Anthropology and History. From 1 October 2020 Member of the Departmental Joint Committee of Professors and Students. From 25 November 2020 Member of the Research Publications Committee. In 2020-2021 substitute member and in 2021-2022 full member of the Doctoral Commission in the Humanities (XXXVII and XXXVIII cycles), Modena. From 2021-2022 contact person for Erasmus international mobility agreements. From October 2024 President of the Joint Commission of Professors and Students. In the academic year 2025-2026 President of the Final Examination Committee for the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the Humanities, 38th Cohort.

In 2009 he joined the Teaching Council of the Doctorate School in Humanities (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia).

Extra details

Giacomo Scarpelli received a commemorative medal from Monsignor Gianfranco Ravasi on 21 November 2009, during the meeting organized by the Pontificium Consilium de Cultura, Vatican City. He is registered in the Register of Journalists since 1987, and he has signed articles for the cultural page of "l'Unità" from 1994 to 2002, and occasionally on the cultural page of "la Repubblica" since 2008. He collaborated also with the RAI School / Education Department, and was host of "Terza Pagina", RadioTre RAI (1998).

He carries out Third Mission activities in Modena (lectures and conferences).