



DISF – Centre for Interdisciplinary Documentation in Science & Faith

Report 2017-2018

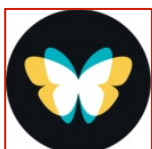
ADSIR – Advanced School for Interdisciplinary Research

General Presentation

The *Interdisciplinary Documentation Centre for Science and Faith* (DISF) is a research and training centre at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, in Rome. Set up in 2001, it was inspired by its founders' experience during the preparation and publication of the *Dizionario Interdisciplinare di Scienza e Fede* ("Interdisciplinary Dictionary of Science and Faith", G. Tanzella-Nitti and A. Strumia, eds., 2 vols., Urbanian University Press - Città Nuova, Rome 2002 – ISBN: 8831192655).

The DISF Centre has its own [Board of Directors and Scientific Committee](#). Currently, the core staff is composed of: Rev. Prof. Giuseppe Tanzella-Nitti (Director), Dr. Ivan Colagè (Assistant Director and Researcher), Dr. Flavia Grossi (Executive Secretary and Web Editor), and Dr. Elena Pautasso (Web Editor and Researcher).

The Centre aims at promoting a synthesis between faith and reason for all those engaged in intellectual and research activity, also offering advice and consulting to people working or studying abroad. The Centre pursues two main priorities: training young scholars (through the *Advanced School for Interdisciplinary Research*, [ADSIR](#) – Italian acronym SISRI), and informing the large audience (through the web portals [inters.org](#) and [disf.org](#)). The Centre's programmes address scholars from a variety of disciplines with different philosophical and religious backgrounds.



The Centre is currently supported by a donation from the **Templeton World Charity Foundation** (TWCF). The Italian websites and the educational initiatives also have other Italian sponsors, such as the **RUI Foundation** and the **Italian Conference of Bishops** (CEI).

ADSIR for Young Scholars

Permanent Seminar 2017/2018



The [Nine-Year Teaching program](#) promoted by ADSIR (*Reappraising the human within science, not against science*), is structured in triennia; each year foresees four National Seminars. The last Academic Year was the second of triennium B, focused on *“Views on nature, conceptions of the human being and images of the Foundation”*. The activities of this triennium focused on the

rich, long-lasting and meaningful philosophical reflection about knowledge of nature, human life, and the longing for ultimate meaning, also unveiling the links of the views of nature and the images of the human being with our understanding of the “Foundation”.

The seminars follow a participatory methodology addressed to young, under-35 graduates. Each seminar begins with a lecture by an invited speaker, followed by a group work (problem solving). After lunch, each group (generally 3 or 4) present its results in a plenary session, followed by floor discussion and comments by the invited speaker. The meetings were held in Rome on 4 Saturdays (in November, December, February and March, respectively), from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm, and saw a total of about **110 participants**.

The four meetings on “Conceptions of the human beings”

November 4, 2017 – The human being as “soma”

Giorgio GRUPPIONI, full professor of Anthropology at the Faculty of “Conservazione dei Beni Culturali” University of Bologna

December 2, 2017 – Beyond the human being: the “cyborg” **Alessandro VATO**, Italian Institute of Technology, Centre for Neurosciences and Cognitive Systems, Genoa-Rovereto



February 10, 2018 – The human being as mind

Filippo TEMPIA, full professor of Physiology, Dept. of Neurosciences, University of Turin.

17 marzo 2018 – The human being as the image of God: person in relation

Rocco BUTTIGLIONE, Director of the Chair of “Philosophy and History of European Institutions”, Pontifical Lateran University, Rome.

Local Seminars

Besides the National Seminars, ADSIR also has local branches in **Bologna, Rome, Naples, and Bari**, where Local Seminars have been organized. The meetings involve people beyond those reached by the Permanent Seminar and aim at promoting

the interdisciplinary approach, at informing about the developments in different fields of knowledge, and at creating synergies among scholars at the regional level.

■ BOLOGNA

ADSIR Bologna, coordinated by Prof. Alberto Strumia and Dr. Luca Arcangeli, gathers scholars coming from the Northern and Central Italy and is based at the *Veritatis Splendor Institute* in Bologna. As many of the involved scholars are currently abroad for their academic activity, the meetings may also be attended in videoconference. Four meetings have been organized during the past Academic Year:

December 16, 2017: **Introduction to the Seminars** (A. Strumia)

January 27, 2018: **Form-Matter: Introduction to the hylomorphic theory** (F. Tedesco)

March 24, 2018: **Qubit and quantum computers** (F. Telesio)

May 5, 2018: **Theories of knowledge** (F. Tedesco)

ADSIR Bologna has also promoted, together with the Institute for Religious Sciences "A. Marvelli" and the Dioceses of Rimini and San Marino-Montefeltro, a research and training program on Science & Faith, addressed to high school teachers.

■ ROME

ADSIR Rome has organized a cycle of six Seminars on the topic **Views on man and theories of knowledge: Emblematic figures of the 20th Century**. The cycle has been coordinated by Dr. Mirko Di Bernardo, of the University of Rome Tor Vergata, which also gave its patronage to the initiative. Each seminar (held either at Tor Vergata or at the ADSIR) focused on one among the following thinkers: **Jaspers, Popper, Cassirer, Polanyi, Wittgenstein, and Quine**.

■ BARI

ADSIR Bari, coordinated by Dr. Michele Crudele, promotes workshops on interdisciplinary topics related to the Science & Faith dialogue, which gather interested students and scholars. This year, the meetings focused on **Some Believing Scientists: The personal religious dimension in scientific research**.



Annual Workshop 2018, May 19-20

The Annual Workshop is a two-day event closing the year of the *Permanent Seminar*. In this occasion, ADSIR members and friends offer communications on specific topics within the general subject of the workshop. The best communication is awarded a prize of 1,000 euros, the "**DISF Award**".



The theme for this year (actually, the 10th edition) has been **Learning from history. The historical perspective and the history of ideas in human culture**.



The Workshop was held at the *Bonus Pastor* Conference Centre, in Rome, and about 40 people, including students, teachers and researchers, participated to this edition. Keynote speakers have been Professors **Franco Garelli** (sociologist) and **Paolo Zellini** (mathematician). The winner of the DISF Award 2018 has been **Dr. Luca Arcangeli** (PhD in Philosophy) with a communication titled ***On Shared Memory***.

The second and the third classified (Miriam Savarese and Marco Nicoletta, respectively) were awarded a scholarship for the 2018 Summer School promoted by ADSIR.

Summer School

This Academic Year, ADSIR organized the **Second Summer School**, held from July 29 to August 5, 2018 in Prati di Tivo, a beautiful Appenine village on the hillside of the Gran Sasso Mountain. The topic of the Summer School was ***Broadening the scope of reason: The outline of the educated person between specialization and interdisciplinarity***. The initiative,



reserved to young scholars with at least a B.A. and younger than 35, has been possible thanks to the support by the TWCF and by the IPE (*Istituto per Ricerche e Attività Educative*) of Naples. ADSIR has granted 12 scholarships covering all the costs to attend (except the travel) to scholars coming from anywhere in Italy. 16 selected scholars attended the School. A serene and productive atmosphere, augmented by evening social activities and an excursion on the top of the Gran Sasso, has ensured the unrolling of the program, which saw four compulsory courses, a workshop on neuroscience, optional seminars and *Quodlibetales* sessions.

The four courses:

- *The contemporary question on truth: reason, wisdom and culture* (Alberto **Peratoner**).
- *From information to knowledge: the present-day value of epistemic virtues* (Giampaolo **Ghilardi**).
- *Intelligence to be sharpened. Why we cannot do without reason's humanistic dimension of reason* (Antonio **Petagine**).
- *Broadening the scope of reason: the case of theology* (Marco **Vanzini**).

ADSIR Awarded

ADSIR 9-year program, titled ***Reappraising the human within science, not against science***, has been submitted to the Second Edition of the *Expanded Reason Academic Award 2018*, promoted by the **Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI Foundation** and the University Francisco de Vitoria in Madrid. **Our program** has been ranked **within the 10 finalists** among about 300 competitors to the Award.

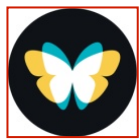


The DISF Centre for the Large Audience

Soon after the establishment of the DISF Centre, it appeared that pursuing the Centre's mission would have required a presence on the Internet. Thus, the Italian web portal disf.org was created in 2003. It is the first Italian website dedicated to the relationship between scientific culture, philosophy and theology. The site's contents, organized into several thumb-index and three main sections ([General Documentation](#), [Interdisciplinary Dictionary](#) and [Bibliographical Services](#)), seeks to provide the larger audience with study material and documentation for deepening various interdisciplinary topics. In 2006, the English counterpart of the Italian portal was inaugurated. The English portal inters.org actually hosts the [Interdisciplinary Encyclopedia of Religion and Science](#) (INTERS)

INTERS portal – Documentation, information and consulting

The DISF Centre is currently focusing on the development and promotion of the English portal INTERS, with the aim of offering an extensive database and a constantly updated **Encyclopedia** for the international audience.



The [Interdisciplinary Encyclopedia](#), also supported by a *Templeton World Charity Foundation's* donation, provides new, scholarly articles in the rapidly growing international field of Religion and Science. A [Call for Articles](#) has been launched last year, and presented on several occasions including: the biennial meeting of ESSSAT (European Society for the Study of Science and Theology) held in Lyon during April 2018, and the of the Centre FAST (Philosophy of Scientific and Technological Action) at the *Campus Bio-medico University* in Rome. It was also sent to authoritative scholars and academics worldwide. The new entries **Science, the Humanistic Significance of** (E. Cantore, 2018) and **Miracles** (G. Tanzella-Nitti, 2017) have already been published. Other entries are in preparation, among which: *Book of Nature; Chemistry; Cultural Evolution; Ecology; Magisterium of the Church; Medical Humanities; Religion, Scientific studies of.*

The [Anthology and Documents](#) section was enriched with numerous excerpts from significant works of important authors such as: *H. Jonas, A. Einstein, A. R. Wallace, A. Compton, R. Guardini*. The Anthology includes also a new section: "[Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Man and Evolution](#)." Of note is the section "[Articles of Historical Interest](#)", which now hosts papers by, e.g. *M.W. Feldman, A. Einstein, S. Carnot, T. Dobzhansky, G. Frege, and S.J. Gould*. Also the "[Websites on Science & Religion](#)" section, presenting and assessing the main websites on the subject, keeps developing.



During 2017/18, the portal included a number of [special issues](#) dedicated to important anniversaries and significant events concerning the relationship between science, theology and philosophy. In particular:

- 400 years from the Discovery of Kepler's Third Law;
- Romano Guardini: 50 years from his death;



The portal in figures

The service we offer through the portal inters.org is reaching more and more users all around the world, with a higher score in English-speaking Countries. **More than 60% of users is aged between 18 and 35 years.** In the last Academic Year (October 2017 – October 2018) almost **250.000 pages** have been visited by more than **160.000 single users**.

INTERS users

The following table reports, on a monthly basis, the number of visited pages and of single users, as extracted from *Google Analytics*. The table show the increase of accesses to the portal.

| Month | Visited pages | Single Users |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| October 2017 | 19.574 | 13.165 |
| November 2017 | 18.359 | 11.530 |
| December 2017 | 13.778 | 8.568 |
| January 2018 | 16.809 | 10.313 |
| February 2018 | 19.393 | 12.212 |
| March 2018 | 20.519 | 13.517 |
| April 2018 | 20.117 | 13.024 |
| May 2018 | 19.766 | 12.996 |
| June 2018 | 17.158 | 11.317 |
| July 2018 | 17.987 | 12.593 |
| August 2018 | 17.300 | 12.348 |
| September 2018 | 23.168 | 15.562 |
| October 2018 | 24.221 | 16.382 |
| Total | 248.149 | 163.527 |

INTERS in the world

This graph shows how the users of *inters.org* are distributed across the world's Countries. It is interesting to note that also non-Western Countries are well represented, as well as Countries where Christianity is not the most represented religion.

