

## Fellows



**Gabriella Mazzon**  
IFK\_Senior Fellow

Duration of fellowship  
01. March 2010 bis 30. June 2010

**Gabriella Mazzon**

## **PROJECT TITLE**

Pathos as Rhetorical Strategy in Drama and Art of the Middle Ages: A Comparison of Visual and Verbal Acts of Communication

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Pathos was a common instrument of public communication in the Middle Ages, an era in which emotion-based rhetoric superseded other strategies of influencing and instructing the populace. Gabriella Mazzon asserts that verbal and visual elements are often employed in tandem to impress the public and to aid the memory.

These new communication types were particularly prevalent in the later centuries of the Middle Ages, when new mendicant monastic orders introduced novel methods of preaching. To instruct the congregation - which employed the vernacular, and not Latin - these orders believed that the use of a local language, the insertion of comic episodes, and a closer attention to worldly matters could be more potent than mystical ceremonies.

This synergy emerges very clearly in the verbal and visual aspects of drama and of iconography. Representations of pain and suffering are especially relevant in constructing this rhetoric. While aspects germane to the history of art, literary criticism, and iconography have been widely examined, a systematic, integrative analysis of these factors from a linguistic perspective is outstanding. By analysing, e.g., specific dialogic structures or the repetition of particular words and figures of speech, a linguistic approach sheds light on how people were made cognizant of the value of suffering in their progress towards salvation.

## **CV**

Gabriella Mazzon is full Professor of English Language and Linguistics at the University of Cagliari, Italy. Her main research interests are varieties of English, the history of English, and the historical sociopragmatics of English.

## **Publications**

(among others): *Interactive Dialogue Sequences in Middle English Drama*, Amsterdam 2009; (ed.), *Studies in Middle English Forms and Meanings* (Proceedings of the 5th ICOME Conference, Naples, 24-27 August 2005), Wien 2007; *A History of English Negation*, London 2004; *Pronouns and Nominal Address in Shakespearean English: A Socio-Affective Marking System in Transition*, in: Irma Taavitsainen and Andreas H. Jucker (eds.), *Diachronic Perspectives on Address Term Systems*, Amsterdam 2003.