

EDITORIAL

It is only two years since we wrote an editorial to mark the expansion of the journal from two to three issues, and we now celebrate the journal's further expansion into a quarterly. This achievement reflects not only a sustained interest in Italy across the UK, but an increasing willingness of Italian scholars to publish their work in English and a rising regard for our UK-based journal on the part of English-speaking scholars worldwide. We thank all those scholars who have contributed to the success and expansion of *Modern Italy* and urge them to keep up their submissions so that the journal can continue to meet the expectations of its readers. The Editorial Committee is currently considering appointing an Associate Editor from North America to act as a more efficient channel of communication with contributors from that area of the world and to raise even further the journal's profile there.

If all this suggests a growing internationalisation of the study of modern and contemporary Italy, then the Association for the Study of Modern Italy (ASMI) is at the heart of that process, acting – through its journal, annual conference, prizes and subsidisation of other activities – as an organisational focus for the interaction and growth in the study of one of Europe's largest and, many would argue, most captivating countries. ASMI's membership growth and the rise in institutional subscriptions to *Modern Italy* in recent years have complemented the increase in demand to publish in the journal, suggesting the creation of a 'virtuous circle' of expansion. The Association is anxious to continue to facilitate this process and, for this reason, has kept to a minimum the increase in its membership rate for ordinary members and left the rate for unwaged (students/seniors) members unchanged for the coming year, making this quarterly journal (which automatically comes with ASMI membership) exceptional value for money.

It is sad that this latest achievement has not been witnessed by the Founder of ASMI, Christopher Seton-Watson, who passed away in September 2007; yet his original vision for the growth in the study of modern and contemporary Italy will continue to inspire all those who work for the Association, and it is fitting that we have established, from 2008, the annual 'Christopher Seton-Watson Memorial Prize' (500 Euro) for the best article published in *Modern Italy* during the calendar year. We look forward to awarding the first prize (for 2008) in 2009.

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(Editors)