

CORSO DI DOTTORATO IN STUDI STORICI, GEOGRAFICI, ANTROPOLOGICI

There's always that one guy in every playing group.



Workshop

**Fuzzy Thinking, Greek Writing, and Identity
in Pre-Modern Italy**

Walter Pohl, Institut für Mittelalterforschung der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften *Introductions and Conclusions*

Edward Schoolman, University of Nevada, Reno
Public Writing in Early Medieval Ravenna

Desi Marangon, Ca' Foscari, Venice
Public Writing in Fifteenth Century Venice

Thursday, 30 November 2017, h. 15.00
Sala Bortolami, Palazzo Inoch Gulinelli, Via del Vescovado 30, PADOVA

Rationale:

Fuzzy logic and its derivative, fuzzy thinking, are methods of interpreting data sets where variables and boundaries may not be known or are uncertain, and have been used in a range of applications from artificial intelligence to facial recognition software to automatic bread and rice makers.

The concepts of “fuzziness” as adopted in theoretical models are applicable here because they provide rigor in countering bivalent ways of thinking, that someone is either a member of a group or not, Greek or not, local or not, migrant or not, writing in Latin or not, especially relevant in the context of new arrivals to Italy. This dichotomization seems to be inconsistent with the contradictions noted above, where historical precedents and the migration of people and ideas from the East allowed for options in the display of identity in writing, formed from opposition to others or in solidarity with a collective.

The “fuzziness” here can incorporate aspects such as labeling, the use of language or script, and the connections to and reliance on cultural and religious traditions association with the East; yet even when taken together they do not necessarily confirm to “Greekness.” On the other hand, a single element might. These are simply part of a system with inherent uncertainty.

The two examples of Ravenna and Venice presented in this workshop address the ways in which public use of Greek language and script can lend themselves to constructing identities and other reflections of self-representation.