Institution: University of Warwick
Unit of Assessment: 28 Modern Languages and Linguistics
Title of case study: Reading Publics in Renaissance Italy, *c.* 1400–*c.* 1650
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)
New studies at the University of Warwick into the writing, production and reading of philosophical works in Renaissance Italy have reassessed the importance of works written in the vernacular language for the diffusion of classical philosophy (1400-1650). The research findings have improved the quality of catalogue entries for relevant holdings in libraries and a database, and have enhanced the knowledge of librarians working with these collections worldwide. The research has been communicated to professionals and the general public internationally, particularly in Italy, the US and the UK. The research has also been used to inform pedagogical activities for adult learners and secondary school students.
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)
Research into the rise and development of reading publics in Renaissance Italy (*c.*1400-*c.*1650) is a major focus of academic enquiry in the Italian Department. The research is rooted in Lines's monograph on the Latin diffusion of Aristotle's *Ethics* in Italy (2002) and Gilson's monograph on Dante's reception in Renaissance Florence (2005), as well as the work of Vanhaelen on vernacular translations of Plato (2012). Such research activity has been advanced by an AHRC-funded project, 'Vernacular Aristotelianism in Renaissance Italy' (2010-13) led by Lines and Gilson (PI and Co-I). The project team also comprises Co-I Professor Jill Kraye (Warburg Institute), Research Fellow Eugenio Refini (Warwick) and PhD student Grace Allen (Warburg). This project helped to secure a successful application for a Marie Curie Intra-European fellow at Warwick, Eva del Soldato (2012-13). Research in the area by Gilson, Lines and Vanhaelen also contributed to a successful bid to the Andrew W Mellon Foundation for workshops on 'Reading Publics in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe' within the Warwick interdisciplinary Centre for the Study of the Renaissance (2009).
The AHRC project explores the Renaissance diffusion of the works of the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, whose encyclopaedic production on logic, natural and moral philosophy, metaphysics, and rhetoric formed the backbone of the programme of study in European universities and religious orders from the re-discovery of his complete writings in the twelfth century until the mid-seventeenth century. Numerous studies undertaken in the past thirty years have shown that there was a renewed interest in Aristotelian philosophy in Renaissance Italy underpinned by new translations, commentaries, and other interpretations. These studies have, however, focused almost exclusively on the Latin tradition of interpreting Aristotle, which was a strong feature of philosophy teaching in the universities and monastic schools. Our research, by contrast, has shown the parallel interest in Aristotle in other contexts (academies, courts, print shops) which used the vernacular to address a public that may not have known Latin or may have felt more comfortable with learning communicated in the vernacular languages. The research has highlighted how such acts of 'cultural transfer' produced sophisticated explanations of ancient thought in the vernacular, thereby pinpointing – against the prevailing scholarship – the richness of the study of philosophy in vernacular and the interactions between the learned Latin culture and a vernacular popular culture.
By examining how, when, and in what contexts vernacular translations of Aristotle's works, related lectures, commentaries, and compilations were produced and circulated, our research has uncovered a broad vernacular reading public interested in Aristotelian philosophy. The project has identified an extraordinary wealth of interest in ancient philosophy by humanist writers (such as Alessandro Piccolomini, Bernardo Segni, and Antonio Brucioli) working in the vernacular. It has also shown the multiple ways in which vernacular interpretations of Aristotle re-presented his thought or showed its relationship to Platonism and Christianity.
3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)
• Eugenio Refini, *Vernacular Aristotelianism in Renaissance Italy: A Database of Works,* with the

collaboration of David A. Lines, Simon Gilson, and Jill Kraye (first publication, May 2012, http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/projects/vernaculararistotelianism/database/). Known as VARI database.

- David A. Lines, 'Rethinking Renaissance Aristotelianism: Bernardo Segni's *Ethica*, the Florentine Academy, and the Vernacular', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 66.3 (Autumn 2013), 824-65 [peer-reviewed; REF2]
- Simon Gilson, '"Aristotele fatto volgare" and Dante as "Peripatetico" in Sixteenth-Century Dante Commentary"', *L'Alighieri: rassegna dantesca*, n.s., 39 (gennaio–giugno 2012), 31–63. [peer-reviewed; REF2]
- Maude Vanhaelen, '"Cose di Platone fatte Toscane": Language and Ideology in two Vernacular Translations of Plato Printed by Francesco Priscianese', *Modern Language Review* 107 (2012), 1102-20. [peer-reviewed; REF2]
- Eugenio Refini, '"Aristotile in parlare materno": Vernacular Readings of the Ethics in the Quattrocento', in *Latin and Vernacular in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by Eva Del Soldato and Andrea Rizzi, special issue of *I Tatti Studies* 16 (2013), 311-42. [peer-reviewed]
- Eva Del Soldato, 'The Élitist Vernacular of Francesco Cattani da Diacceto', in *Latin and Vernacular in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by Eva Del Soldato and Andrea Rizzi, special issue of *I Tatti Studies* 16 (2013), 343-62. [peer-reviewed]

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Additional funding was provided by Warwick's Research Development Fund (£8090: 2007); by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for collaboration with the Newberry Library (a public library in Chicago) and by the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa for the colloquium '*Aristotele fatto volgare'*: *Aristotelian Philosophy and the Vernacular in the Renaissance* (Pisa, September 2012, £700).

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4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Owing to the complexities in the survival of early printed books and manuscripts, library catalogues and databases are often incomplete. By their nature, such catalogues and databases often lack fuller information. The *Vernacular Aristotelianism* project has improved the quality of contextual information available on catalogue references of specific collections, meta-catalogues and electronic resources. Furthermore, both it and the broader 'Reading Publics' research have been used to engage with secondary school students and adult learners in the community. These engagements have increased knowledge about the relationship between the Latin and vernacular intellectual traditions of the Renaissance and stimulated greater interest in the period.

Improving library catalogues and electronic databases
The research has had substantial impact on the preservation, presentation and understanding of Renaissance holdings at libraries around the world. The findings have been shared with librarians responsible for collections of Italian-language manuscripts and early printed books (*c.*1400-*c.*1650) in the UK (British Library and the John Rylands Library, Manchester); the USA (University of Pennsylvania Library; the Newberry Library, Chicago; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Columbia; and the Harry Ransom Research Center, Austin, Texas); and across Europe (Vatican Library; Paris BNF; Munich BSB; and Bologna BU). Engagement with librarians was achieved through individual consultations with project team members, seminars and workshops.

As a result of our research, librarians at Columbia, Pennsylvania, John Rylands (Manchester), and the Library at the National Academy of the Lincei (Rome) have gained a better understanding of materials in their collections and created more accurate and detailed catalogue entries. For example, the Rare Books and Manuscript library at the University of Pennsylvania houses more than 1800 manuscripts from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries as well as many printed books and manuscript commentaries on Aristotle. Research from the AHRC project fed directly into the work of the Assistant Curator of Manuscripts, who described how the research has resulted in 'a much better understanding of our Aristotelian manuscripts in Italian', and that 'Dr Refini identified

three manuscripts that were versions of the same text by a single author, who, until now, received no attribution in our catalogue. He also discovered the second half of one of the manuscripts, separated long ago and now at Yale University. We have improved the records for all three manuscripts by incorporating Dr Refini's research. Their relationship to our Aristotle collection overall and to each other is now much clearer'. Refini's role in this identification is credited on the catalogue entry. Similarly, the Columbia University Library has incorporated information from the *Vernacular Arisotelianism* project into its catalogue. At the National Academy of the Lincei in Rome, the Head Librarian, Dr. Marco Guardo, commented that 'the study of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts owned by his library and now included in the VARI database has brought to light several important features of our collections', and that collaboration with the *Vernacular Aristotelianism* project 'allows ongoing enrichment of our knowledge of the library holdings of the Academy. In particular, the results of the studies carried out by colleagues at Warwick on our manuscripts have contributed to enriching the reference materials available not only to other scholars, but, more generally, to all users of the library [...] the database *Vernacular Aristotelianism in Renaissance Italy* represents an exemplary model of productive exchange between researchers and librarians and curators of books'.

Our research has also informed the most important meta-catalogue of sixteenth-century books printed in Italy, EDIT16. Users of this fundamental tool, chiefly librarians and bibliographers, are linked directly to our database when viewing the catalogue entry for a specific edition, such as the 1550 commentary on *Ethics* by Segni or the 1551 translation of *Physics* by Brucioli. Since our database comprises roughly 250 editions, EDIT16 is circulating a considerable body of knowledge and helping scholars, librarians, and the general public appreciate the vibrant presence of the vernacular philosophical tradition in the sixteenth century. The Director of EDIT16, Rosaria Maria Servello, has stated that the detailed information and bibliographical richness of the database on *Vernacular Aristotelianism in Renaissance Italy* 'offers new references and opportunities for studying Aristotelian and pseudo-Aristotelian texts. *Vernacular Aristotelianism* is particularly interesting for EDIT16 for its attention to textual and paratexual features, the individuals involved and the relations with the Latin tradition'. Our database is also listed as a reference tool by EDIT16.

Collaborating with the British Library and enhancing information available in databases
A workshop held on 5 July 2013 at the British Library brought together librarians from the Newberry Library, the British Library, the London Library, the Bodleian Library (Oxford), the Incunabula Project at Cambridge University Library, and directors of major cataloguing projects, including the Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL), EDIT16, and the Universal Short Title Catalogue (St Andrews). The workshop, which provided a forum for discussion between academic researchers, bibliographers and librarians, included a demonstration of the project's census database and a roundtable discussion of its value for supplementing existing catalogues. Cataloguers were made aware, for instance, of how crucial it is that catalogue entries list correctly the language in which a work is written, enabling language-specific searches, and allowing users gain a comprehensive picture of how knowledge was being circulated. Both the content and the structure of the *Vernacular Aristotelianism* database have proved valuable to librarians managing contemporaneous collections. Laura Nuvoloni, Incubula cataloguer at Cambridge University Library, commented that the workshop 'provided a welcome opportunity to … learn about new online cumulative resources and projects that will help the retrieval and integration of information relating to manuscript and rare book collections … [and] highlighted the importance of databases such as the one on *Vernacular Aristotelianism in Renaissance Italy* that supplements bibliographical catalogues in providing essential information relating to the texts, their authors and the social and cultural context in which they were created'.

Highlights of the research were made publicly available online through the British Library's Facebook albums which showcase important manuscripts or images. Digitised images of 22 manuscripts and printed works associated with vernacular philosophical writing are on display along with contextual information to promote understanding of Renaissance reading cultures. In less than one month, the album had 700 likes, 271 shares and numerous comments (e.g. 'amazing and thought provoking', 'genius', and a 'national treasure').

Enriching secondary education and enhancing knowledge of cultural heritage in adult learners

The research has formed the basis for new educational initiatives for adult learners. In 2012-13 Lines led two community courses on the Italian Renaissance, with other members of the Italian Department: Refini, Vanhaelen and Del Soldato. The courses were delivered in the university's local area: the first in Kenilworth, Warwickshire (20 weeks, 17 participants) and the second in Stratford-upon-Avon (8 weeks, 14 participants). They were aimed at adult learners and the age range of participants was 45 to 85. The research on reading publics in the *Vernacular Aristotelianism* project strongly informed the structure and content of the courses, where emphasis was placed on the relationship between Latin and the vernacular, the contexts of philosophical discussion, and the development of an educated public in Renaissance Italy. In course feedback, participants demonstrated a greater understanding of the period, and of the ways its intellectual traditions were adopted and interpreted (60% of respondents). For many participants it was their first exposure to the subject and stimulated their interest in further study ('I plan to review the material from the course and to read around the subject some more to get a better perspective'; 'The course awoke in me a latent passion for the subject that I had previously assumed was merely a passing interest.'). Additional presentations to adult learners were made to University of the Third Age groups in the local area (Stratford-upon-Avon twice, Coventry, Kenilworth, and the Dene Valley) to audiences of 80+ in September 2012.

Also in September 2012, project members visited two secondary schools in Florence (*Liceo Classico Machiavelli* and *Liceo Scientifico Castelnuovo*). These visits introduced the research and initial findings, and provided a demonstration of the database. More than 100 students (aged 16-18) attended each presentation. In workshop feedback, students showed increased knowledge about Renaissance philosophy ('the importance of Aristotelian philosophy in the Renaissance'); the importance of language ('Some people thought that the sciences could be translated into the vernacular, but others thought that this wasn't possible without devaluing the sciences'); and the re-use of classical imagery ('the presence and importance of Classical culture throughout the ages').

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Social media data on BL Facebook Album https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151778113317139.1073741853.8579062138&type=1 [700 likes and 271 shares in July 2013]
2. 'Vernacular Aristotelianism' database usage, 1215 page views, 94% external users.
3. Written statement from Director of the Library at the National Accademy of the Lincei and Corsiniana.
4. Written statement from Director of EDIT16.
5. EDIT16: VARI on reference sources and examples: http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/scripts/iccu_ext.dll?fn=15&i=3017; Bernardo Segni, *Ethica* (Florence: 1550) http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/scripts/iccu_ext.dll?fn=10&i=2929; Antonio Brucioli, *La Phisica* (Venice: 1551) http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/scripts/iccu_ext.dll?fn=10&i=2933.
6. Written statement from Assistant Curator of Manuscripts, Rare Books and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania.
7. Catalogue references that incorporate the information provided by our research on 'Vernacular Aristotelianism': the University of Pennsylvania Library http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/medren/detail.html?id=MEDREN_1580850 (MS. Codex 243 – Alderotti, Taddeo 1223-1295, Leticha) and Columbia University Library http://ucblibrary4.berkeley.edu:8088/xtf22/search?field2=author;field1=shelfmark;operator2=and;operator1=and;join3=token;join2=token;join1=token;smode=advanced;term1=lodge;rmode=digscript;field3=text;docsPerPage=1;startDoc=1;fullview=yes (*Aeneid*, Alessandro Piccolomini, 1540).
8. Feedback from Community Courses, U3A talks and school visits.
9. British Library workshop (5/7/2013) feedback from participants.