Editorial

Ten years ago, *Nuncius* joined the group of scholarly journals printed by Brill, a change accompanied by a new editorial format. During the ensuing decade the journal has consolidated a respected place in the international arena of periodicals on the history of science. As its subtitle—*Journal of the Material and Visual History of Science*—states, the journal's objective is to explore the historical importance of material and visual culture in science. As the new editor-in-chief of *Nuncius*, I firmly believe that focusing on these aspects is of more strategic importance than ever, in terms of both the prevailing theoretical assumptions and emerging interdisciplinary synergies.

The themes explored by *Nuncius* encompass the history of a wide range of visual and material tools: instruments, museums and private collections, specimens, models, the entire gamut of images and printed or unprinted material (illustrations, photographs, tables, diagrams, printed texts, letters, notebooks, manuscripts, lists and catalogues), films, teaching aids, audiovisuals, and scientific and diagnostic devices. During their history the sciences have left a wealth of material and visual evidence that can shed light on the practices and actors involved, the techniques and processes developed, the various materials and means of representation used, media and their audiences, and the specific places and settings where the artefacts of science can be found. From botany to physics and from astronomy to biology, images and objects have played a crucial role in the sciences, providing the tools required to observe, experiment, model, map, record, question, test, display, teach, and communicate knowledge of the natural world and physical phenomena.

At the same time they testify to the political and social implications of scientific inquiry and practices. They are the tangible products of an endless, complex process of mediation between the producers (from scientists and artisans to manufacturers), agencies, media, places and settings, narratives and interpretations, public audiences and consumers, all of which may change over time. Scientific images, objects, and visual representations embody, translate, act and circulate science, allowing historians to recount its history from unique and illuminating angles, re-enacting processes and practices, and retracing the interactions between the arts and sciences.

Focusing on the visual and material practices of science places the journal at the intersection of the history of science, technology, and medicine;

the history of knowledge, philology, the visual arts, the book history; as well as museum studies, to list just some of the fields in which they have played an important role. Since its inception as *Annali dell'Istituto e Museo di storia della scienza di Firenze*, founded in 1976 by the historian of science Maria Luisa Righini Bonelli, at the time director of the Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza in Florence (now the Museo Galileo), the journal has always sought to foster dialogue across disciplines and areas of expertise, and encourage the exchange of ideas between university scholars and museum-, library- and archive-based researchers engaged in the history of instrument making, the historical-scientific heritage, museum collections, and the study of the arts and sciences.

Nuncius will continue to pursue its objective of studying this long tradition, but is also committed to evolving and adapting in the light of recent scholarship. At first primarily dedicated to the history of instruments in the early modern period, the journal is now seeking both to extend its time frame (scrutinizing cultures from the pre-modern to the twentieth century) and broaden the historical contexts under examination to include, for example, the Arabo-Islamic tradition, early modern and modern Asia from China to India, or pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica, adopting a comparative and global perspective that extends far beyond Western visual and material scientific traditions and practices, although these will remain an essential reference point for *Nuncius*. Published under the auspices of the Museo Galileo, the journal will aim to facilitate the exchange of ideas between scholars throughout the international community trained in different research traditions.

Nuncius has grown rapidly over the past few years. It now publishes three issues annually for a total of 750 pages covering a wide range of topics and case studies. Thanks to Brill's web services we can now guarantee that accepted articles will be available online in about 6–8 weeks after acceptance, in advance of the journal issue in which they are scheduled to be published, with a DOI that can be used for reference purposes. Besides original and copiously illustrated full-length articles, the journal devotes space every year to special issues that contain original work presented at seminars or meetings, addressing topics of interest to its wide-ranging readership and providing a broad array of perspectives and ideas on the visual and material aspects of science.

Bringing to light and studying primary sources—written, visual, and material—is one of the central assets of the journal, as attested to by the section *Documenta inedita*, whose aim is to publish original documents held in museums, libraries, and archives all over the world. These include descriptions of collections of artefacts and illustrations, annotated transcriptions of unpublished manuscripts, and catalogues connected with the material and visual practices of science.

In 2021 *Nuncius* is inaugurating a new *Focus* section, which will provide concise critical analyses and discussions of key issues, emerging historiographic trends, and new methods of research. A long-standing feature of *Nuncius* is its large number of review articles and book reviews, aimed at bringing attention to recent advances and novel contributions to the field. These will be continued and—in a fresh initiative beginning this year—reviews of temporary exhibitions and permanent museum collections of particular interest will be added. We also plan to further improve the web resources of the journal, compiling special issues comprised of a selection of *Nuncius*' past essays on specific themes; these will be offered exclusively on-line within a rapid time frame. Moreover, we will broaden our open access policies, improving our indexation, in order to increase the readership and visibility of the journal.

With these initiatives and the broad variety of topics and perspectives covered, we hope to attract new authors and readers as we continue to explore the potentialities of the visual and the material as powerful tools in the history of science over the centuries.

Elena Canadelli