



Notre Dame Institute *for*
ADVANCED STUDY



“I immediately sensed a kindred spirit in Prof. Galle who presented his ideas with the simplicity and depth of true scholarship. The overarching philosophical ideas of the normative and the descriptive which he referred to as he spoke, as well as the honest and sincere search for deeper insight into questions of meaning and value evident in his presentation put his academic topic into a larger frame of reference. As a result, the discussion which followed had all the elements that one hopes to find in seminars in graduate schools but rarely does: a unified sense of purpose in carrying on the dialogue, an honest collaborative exchange of factual knowledge, and a critical assessment of those facts in light of recent and historically entrenched intellectual trends and the work undertaken by Prof. Galle. The interdisciplinarity of the discussion opened new avenues of inquiry without detracting from the careful focus of each topic broached. More importantly, there was a readiness to address questions.

“The overall effect was to affirm my faith in the Institute's ability and determination to attract intellectuals who are openly curious about ultimate questions and are zealous in their efforts to find answers from whatever angle their specific field can afford them. The richly variegated Catholic intellectual tradition is alive and well at [the NDIAS]. As a graduate student and a Catholic who has struggled through various secular institutions with no knowledge of—and sometimes an evident resistance to—the beauty and value of this tradition, I am truly grateful and hope that in the future I can benefit more fully from the example and stimulus of your fellows and the programs inspired by your mission.”

– Peggy Garvey, Ph.D. Candidate in Literature



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“I had the honor to participate in one of the NDIAS seminars, specifically the one with Professor Roland Galle. This seminar was a great opportunity for me to be part of a conversation that, starting from Professor Galle’s lecture on French Moralists, has been able to deal with both detailed issues directly linked to the talk and larger methodological problems, such as – to use as example something that was actually discussed – the relationship(s) between history and literature. Particularly, I really appreciated the wide range of our conversation...across different languages, literatures, disciplines.

“As a graduate student...I think that these seminars are a precious resource for at least two reasons. The first reason is that sometimes dealing with fellows coming from a completely different academic environment – such as the German one, in Professor Galle’s case – might bring unexpected changes in perspective. Every new perspective, in fact, has a two-fold ability: it is both a way to assess what it is considered well-established and its resistance in time and space, and gives us the opportunity to reset that kind of intellectual curiosity that I consider fundamental in our field. Secondly, such seminars might be an amazing tool to gather in the same room graduate students and professors coming from different disciplines and experiences, in a way that not only is not so common – often unfortunately due to a lack of time –, but that might be intellectually exciting and challenging for both sides of the table.”

– Damiano Benvegnù, Ph.D. Candidate in Literature

“A recent lecture given by Professor Rolland Galle, a current Fellow of the Institute, provided me with a new and productive understanding of a topic about which I had researched and written on for some time. Dr. Galle’s presentation focused on the ethical and political implications of the French Moralists’ views on pessimism, which seemed initially unrelated to my work on early twentieth-century German literature. The ensuing conversation with Dr. Galle...revealed the rich interconnection of these traditions, and a larger set of philosophical, historical, and literary issues. I left the meeting excited about my work and with an understanding of its relationship to an intellectual conversation spanning several centuries.

“Experiences such as these suggest that the Institute’s value for graduate students is to provide a unique environment in which they briefly glimpse their work anew with the help of a diverse group of expert scholars. I cannot emphasize enough the value of this sort of experience for aspiring scholars just beginning to understand the relationships between diverse ideas.”

– Erik Larsen, Ph.D. Candidate in Literature



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