

ABSTRACTS

GIUSEPPE MARIA VISCARDI, *Gabriele De Rosa e le Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura*

The encounter between Gabriele De Rosa and Don Giuseppe De Luca – considered by De Rosa to have been ‘memorable’ – took place in 1944 or 1945, before the end of World War II. In 1943, in December, after a few years of gestation, thanks to De Luca, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura was founded: 30 December was in fact the day on which the first book came out, with the emblem of a little ship, in reference to the ‘safe ship’ spoken of by Plato in the *Phaedo*, the ship of ‘divine reason’. It was Franco Rodano, leader of the Catholic Communists, to introduce De Luca and De Rosa. Abandoning his political aspirations, De Rosa, guided by De Luca, who introduced him to Luigi Sturzo, began the path that would lead him to innovate study of the history of the Catholic movement, ecclesiastical structures and ‘religious experience’. Upon De Luca’s death in 1962, a few scholars decided to continue the publishing enterprise: in addition to De Rosa were, among others, Berthold Louis Ullman, Paul Oskar Kristeller, Arnaldo Momigliano, Augusto Campana, Vittore Branca, Romana Guarnieri, Armando Saitta and Paolo Prodi. De Rosa was named chief administrator of the publishing house, but he also took on direction of scholarship. He had a different methodological approach than that of the intellectual De Luca, which was inevitably felt in the editorial choices, with the publication of volumes on social and religious history and with the foundation of series like the ‘Thesaurus Ecclesiarum Italiae’, which privilege documentation of pastoral visits, documentation that De Luca did not cite in his famous *Introduzione alla storia della pietà* (Introduction to the history of piety).

CLOTILDE CICATIELLO, *La figura della levatrice a Napoli tra prescrizioni ecclesiastiche e pratica medica (secoli XVIII-XIX)*

This study contributes to the reconstruction, through the case of the city of Naples, of the history of the only healthcare profession, still today, with specifically female practitioners. The research follows the path of Neapolitan midwives from

the nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century. The history of midwives, rather ignored in Italian historiography, is nevertheless decisive for understanding the role of women and the institution of the family in post-Unification Italy, and powerfully reveals the complexity, the gradations and sometimes the contradictions of feminine models. The role of midwives has been flattened, and sometimes oversimplified, in general historiographic constructions dedicated to women as well as those focused on healthcare policies and demographics in the early twentieth century. This study however restores an extremely complex and contradictory image of the midwife, characterised by the coexistence of a continuum of long-term aspects and stratifications and new professional achievements.

Until the early nineteenth century, the professional world spoke an exclusively male language, from which women were entirely absent. The only channel for access was obstetrics and gynaecology. This situation was paradoxically overturned over the course of the nineteenth century. Midwifery passed, little by little, from an exclusively female trade to the centre of interest in the medical world. In the period before Unification, midwifery, while remaining in the hands of women, began to be the focus of clashes. In answer to attempts by physicians to undermine and discredit them, the midwives chose the path of professionalization. They accepted education in the medicine of male physicians, but without renouncing the heritage of knowledge and experience passed down to them from traditional feminine learning.

Publications on this subject have made it possible to reconstruct the history of obstetrics and the professional path of midwives over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Italy, Claudia Pancino and Alessandra Gissi mapped out an outline of the not always smooth path that led from the empirical midwife to the professional one, trained in and regulated by scientific knowledge. In this study, the field of investigation concerns the Neapolitan context in post-Unification Italy, since this makes it possible to grasp the complexity and richness that midwives, in particular those in Naples, contributed to the process of professionalization for the entire category. The documentation preserved in the Annunziata archive made it possible to follow the midwives' path over a period ending in the 1920s/30s and to reconstruct the dynamics and events that led to a new professional profile. The personal files of individual midwives made it possible to reconstruct the human and professional paths of a few midwives, as well as their position in the hierarchy of the healthcare professions and, finally, their relationship with other women. All during a period when the relationship between physicians and midwives was, at the end of the nineteenth century, entering a new phase, characterised by collaboration and the attainment of the interests of both parties.

PIERLUIGI GIOVANNUCCI, *Prospero Lambertini e la prova dei miracoli: ulteriori riflessioni*

The *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione* by Prospero Lambertini is a true organic *summa* of all of the regulations and practices concerning canonisation that accumulated after the Council of Trent, and constitutes the

foremost attempt to found judgement of the sanctity of God's servants on secure, irrefutable bases. From this perspective, and I will say straightaway that for the future Pope Benedict XIV miracles were absolutely necessary for the certification of sanctity, this essay demonstrates how Lambertini was focused among other things on providing suitable treatment of the question of the judicial proof of miracles. In this sense, while on the one hand he generally remains convinced that sanctity can be effectively 'demonstrated' on the trial/canonical level, and in this reveals himself to be a consistent follower of a particular theological/speculative tradition and of Aristotelian/Scholastic categories and languages, on the other hand he does not hesitate to turn to modern science, and in particular the medical culture of his own time, with regard to the distinction between real and false miracles, and clear delimitation between the field of religion and that of superstition, revealing an attitude marked by an active and intelligent 'reformer conservatism'.

GUIDO MONGINI, *Missioni estere e tradizioni identitarie nella Nuova Compagnia di Gesù. Percorsi di ricerca nelle lettere Indipetae italiane del primo Ottocento (1817-1835)*

Missionary work, and in particular that of foreign missions in newly discovered territories, like South and Central America, India, China and Japan, strongly characterised the Society of Jesus beginning in the sixteenth century. Partially interrupted in the period between the suppression of the Jesuit Order (1773) and its reestablishment in 1814, foreign missions resumed with tremendous momentum also in the so-called new nineteenth-century Society. This study presents the first results of a broader research project dedicated to the request letters (called *indipetae* in the old Society) from foreign missions written by the Jesuits and addressed to the head of the order in the first third of the nineteenth century. It is a rich deposit of sources that had not yet been investigated and that are here used from a multiplicity of research perspectives, aiming to reveal continuities, transformations and fractures between and old and new Society of Jesus, in terms of the fundamental identifying preconditions of the order, in relation to the religious practices (such as interior discernment) activated on the occasions of the requests sent by foreign missions and in relation to the knowledge and vision linked to the missions themselves as well as their possible political and religious implications.

FRANCA ASSANTE, *'Terra' e uomini. Miseria e nobiltà. Viggiano nella crisi dell'età moderna*

The case of 'Viggiano' is emblematic of the difficulties afflicting the Neapolitan feudal nobility during the crisis at the end of the sixteenth/first half of the seventeenth century, which dragged with it the relative feuds, which were in turn deeply in debt.

This essay, therefore, in addition to narrating the events that involved (upon the creditors' request) the alienation of the Viggiano feud (in Basilicata) by the feudal lords at the time, the Dentice family, in favour of the Di Sangro family, which would elevate it from a barony to a principality, also provides a sketch of the reality of that community in all of its components (university, clergy, citizens), underlining the economic, social and behavioural aspects.

PIERLUIGI GIOVANNUCCI, *Prima del Vaticano II. Criteri di canonizzazione e tipologie agiografiche tra tarda modernità e prima età contemporanea*

This article opens with a brief summary of the doctrine of Vatican II on sanctity and the cult of saints, which shows how the text of the *Lumen gentium* exposes an 'open' sanctity, the fulcrum of which is constituted by the idea of the universal call to sanctity for all faithful Christians, accompanied by the corollary through which there are many possible paths to sanctification, based on differing experiences and life contexts. It then reveals how this doctrine was able to support, as in fact it did, considerable discontinuity in the practice of Catholic canonisation, for many different reasons, and in the first place because it made an overall 'theological' vision of sanctity available for the first time, able to overcome the essentially juridical/canonical conception typical of the late-Medieval and modern Catholic tradition. Finally, it shows how this overcoming was already in certain measure perceivable, at least as an aspiration, in canonical practice, and especially in the presentation of Christian sanctity by twentieth-century popes like Benedict XV, Pius XI and Pius XII, each of whom, in different ways and with differing degrees of intensity, seems to have perceived the need to broadly interpret the idea of 'the heroic nature of the virtues', a true 'architrave' of modern Catholic hagiology. The article concludes with a series of typological considerations on canonised sanctity between the seventeenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, which confirm and clarify the previously outlined historical picture, foreseeing further developments, not however lacking in ambiguity, with respect to the innovative potential of conciliar texts on sanctity, in post-council 'canonisation policies'.

FILIBERTO AGOSTINI, *La Democrazia cristiana nella provincia di Padova. Aspetti e problemi organizzativi nel 1946*

This study aims to reconstruct, through the use of unpublished archival sources, the history of Christian Democracy in the Province of Padua in its early phase, with specific reference to 1946. Focusing on the sections of the individual municipalities, the research reveals the role of the protagonists who worked out the initial programmes as well as political sentiment among the local population in the new climate after the war. The theme of party registration is also investigated, in its various aspects, and the socio-professional categories are identified ('rural, workers,

employees, artisans, freelancers') among the individuals belonging to the CD, for each municipality. Also using the reports of the Province Commissioner, the overall picture of Christian Democrat presence in the Province of Padua is formulated, with special attention to organisational difficulties, the relationship with other parties and hopes and disillusionment post-Liberation.

GIANMARIO DAL MOLIN, *I vissuti religiosi nelle catastrofi: il caso del Vajont*

This study investigates a particular and little-known aspect of the Vajont catastrophe (1963): that concerning the religious management of the tragedy by a parish community that was still strongly characterised by the ecclesiology of Vatican I.

It thus examines the role played by the religious community in the dramatic circumstances of an event where the component of human responsibility seemed immediately predominant in the face of natural disaster, thus shifting emphasis from the traditional concept of the 'finger of God' and His *divina iracundia* to that of the trials of life, however with some contradictions. The model of religious and lay *pietas* in the recovery of the bodies, the not only religious and moral but also material and social efforts of a mountain clergy that had always been close to the population and its problems, the anguished cry to God to give meaning to the tragedy and the construction of powerful local, provincial and national solidarity were some of the features of the religious experience and relative forms of comfort given to the population by the young local priest – Piero Bez – who became parish priest of Longarone just after the tragedy and the diocesan bishop – Gioacchino Muccin – a bishop from Friuli with a rather closed character but animated by powerful pastoral concern. These aspects thus intersected not only with the customary ritual exteriorisation and ways of formulating mourning deeply anchored in religion, but also with highly concrete interventions, including first aid work and materials for rebuilding the town, the difficult choice of the new modern church by the architect Michelucci and the monumental reorganisation of the make-shift cemetery of Fortogna, towards which the parish community played a role that was substantially equal to and in collaboration with the civil community.

Finally, one sees that this event was one of the last in Italy to observe the requirements typical of traditional religiosity, unlike what happens today in similar circumstances.

VALENTINA CICILIOT, *Concilio e santità: la politica delle canonizzazioni in Giovanni Paolo II*

This article analyses John Paul II's interpretation of the Second Vatican Council through his canonisation policy. What emerges is an ambivalent representation of the conciliar assembly. On one level, it is read as a moment of missionary and pastoral renewal, especially with the pope's promotion of universal sanctity, expressed in the

Lumen gentium and part of the pope's major project towards new evangelisation. On another level, John Paul II used a few beatifications and canonisations to insert the council within the magisterial tradition of the church, in a continuity that damps down the more debated or innovative aspects, in the name of ecclesiastical unity and specific forms of rigidity. Particular hagiographic models, opportunely reinterpreted and implemented, thus contributed to confirm the normalisation of the Second Vatican Council that characterised Wojtyła's entire papacy.

MICHELANGELO MORANO, *Mezzogiorno e neo-meridionalismo tra scontro sociale e confronto politico*

Previously dismissed because considered by then overcome by fascism, the southern question returned to the table with its whole general problematic nature in the period after World War II, with an awareness that was no longer restricted to a limited circle of specialists, but that also included minor figures – the socialist Luigi Cacciatore, Mons. Antonio Lanza – in the new political/institutional path.

The common ground of the mass parties – Catholics and social communists – regarding the inevitability of an attack on the 'large landed estate' with the aim of then getting past the rebelliousness of agricultural farm labour, as a cornerstone of the traditional social and productive structure, passing through the revitalisation of a neo-'Southernism', was based on a united alliance between the agricultural and industrial proletariats, and with southern industrialisation policies as a later step.

However one wants to judge the entire process, begun with the extraordinary work of its primary authors – Ezio Vanoni and Pasquale Saraceno – and then due to new implemental tools – CASMEZ, SVIMEZ – the fact remains that the history of the South passes through neo-'Southernism' as a point of intersection of political confrontation and social conflict. In any case, and often in entirely unexpected ways, the South is now far more advanced than it once was.