

ABSTRACTS

GUIDO MONGINI, *La sacralizzazione inavvertita. Teologie politiche dei valori dalla prima età moderna a oggi.*

This contribution explores a number of reflections on the aggressive and discriminatory potential of value systems between the Modern and the Contemporary ages. It does so by first summarising the debate pivoting on the philosophy of values which took place in Germany in the course of the twentieth century, dwelling in particular on the «tyranny of values» (C. Schmitt). It then goes on to underscore an extensive series of parallels and analogies between the concept of value and the concept of theological dogma in the 16th century. Light is thus cast on the similarities of operation of values and dogmas as vehicles of hostility and opposition. Finally, certain characteristically topical aspects relating to both lay and religious Western value systems are addressed, underscoring their intrinsic capacity to generate conflict.

BENEDETTO FASSANELLI, *Anime sante, menti inferme. Mistiche di fronte al Sant'Uffizio nel primo Novecento*

This article dwells on the recourse of the Holy Office to the nosographic categories of psychiatry in the examination of spiritual experiences in the early twentieth century. The documentation conserved in the Vatican archives of the Holy Office allows us to discern how psychopathology (the even merely evocative use of a specialised lexicon and contributions by several psychiatrists) was able to furnish the inquisitors with useful tools for resolving embarrassing cases of 'false mysticism' among the many that marked the early decades of the twentieth century.

ILARIO TOLOMIO, *Intorno alla deposizione del vescovo Giuseppe Cognata. Le sue lettere dall'esilio all'arcivescovo Enrico Montalbetti*

A handful of letters have been discovered, written by the deposed Bishop of Bova, the Salesian Giuseppe Cognata, to his former metropolitan, the Archbishop of Reggio Calabria Enrico Montalbetti. This new evidence allows us to review a pitiless ecclesiastical condemnation pronounced by the tribunal of the Holy Office in the early months of the pontificate of Pius XII. The closure of the archives relating to this pontificate has not yet permitted the necessary clarification of the facts required by justice. «For me, the case of Mons. Cognata is one of conscience», declared John Paul II, «impressed by the evidence of the proofs of the innocence of Mons. Cognata» (Perrone, *Il vescovo di Bova*, p. 243). The letters, which were found in the safe of the archive of the Archbishop of Reggio Calabria, shed at least some new light on this painful episode. They also inform us about the early years of exile of the deposed bishop, who was 'catapulted' from Calabria to Trentino, where he was swiftly concealed in the Salesian houses garbed in the cassock of an ordinary priest. The article is not restricted to the historical-biographical narration, but also addresses the species of segregationist abandon to which Mons. Giuseppe Cognata was relegated both during the iniquitous trial, based on pure calumny, and during the early years of his exile. Deprived of a legitimate defence and completely unsupported by the Procurator of his religious congregation, he ascended his 'Calvary' with a 'slow martyrdom', as he himself wrote. Nor could he fail to question himself about the responsibility of Pope Pius XII in a deplorable episode which reflected the juridical obscurantism of the Holy Office. The institution was indeed still based on the inquisitorial methods of the Counter-Reformation, aimed at extracting confessions from the defendant in order to justify the atrocious sentence which it intended to inflict. But Mons. Giuseppe Cognata never admitted to the vile charges he was accused of and continued to proclaim his innocence.

CRISTIANA NATALI, «*La religione non è solo la religione*»: *pratiche culturali e appartenenze culturali dei Tamil srilankesi in Italia*

This article analyses the domestic and collective practices of worship of the Tamil migrants from Sri Lanka. It illustrates how the celebration of the deities of the Hindu pantheon, in which both Hindus and Catholics take part, are not restricted solely to the religious dimension. Indeed, irrespective of the formal adherence to a specific creed, the Hinduism of the Sri Lankan Tamil people takes the form of participation in shared rituals of worship. Among the Catholic Tamils, the 'Tamilness' element that is identified with the Hindu tradition takes precedence over the religious aspect, which is moreover a reflection of the ritual permeability already experienced in the country of origin.

KATERINA KERESTETZI, *Making a Nganga, Begetting a God. Materiality and Belief in the Afro-Cuban Religion of Palo Monte*

Palo Monte is a Cuban religion of Bantu influence that is widespread throughout Cuba. Its worshippers, the paleros, establish ritual bonds with certain spirits of the dead, named nfumbis. Paleros believe in these spirits' ability to influence human affairs, and try to make allies of them. In order to establish a relationship with the dead, practitioners go to a cemetery, find an abandoned grave and seal a pact with the spirit of the deceased person buried there. They then dig up his remains, bring them to their domestic temple, and put them into a cauldron, the nganga. This container is not simply a home for the spirit, it is its embodiment. By giving primacy to the materiality and aesthetics of the nganga, this article attempts to shed new light on this object that scientific literature on Palo Monte has relegated to the status of mere tool at the palero's service. By describing and analyzing the operations that lead to the making of a nganga, this paper reveals some of the logics governing Palo Monte practice and shows how paleros give life and shape to a god. This focus on immanence aims to show how belief is fabricated pragmatically, through facts.

