

Ad lectores

Inaugurating this issue of *Antonianum* is Carlo Paolazzi's paper on St. Francis of Assisi's *Canticle of Brother Sun*. It is the "Lectio magistralis" that he delivered last year, in this Pontifical University's Aula Magna, as the University conferred upon him a Doctorate *Honoris Causa* in Theology. The fascination of Brother Francis's Canticle has had such a vast reach that it is difficult to sum up its influence however briefly, so let just a few names be mentioned as if at random to illustrate it: Cimabue, Giotto, Albert Chevallier Tayler, Frank Cadogan Cowper, Gerardo Dottori (*Triptych of Saint Francis*), Filippo De Pisis, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Franz Liszt, Carl Orff (*Laudes Creaturarum quas fecit Beatus Franciscus ad laudem et honorem Dei*), Sofija Asgatovna Gubajdulina (*The Canticle of the Sun of St. Francis of Assisi*), Giosuè Carducci, Giovanni Pascoli, Carlo Bo, Dario Fo (*Lu santo jullàre Françesco*). Almost eight centuries on, the tide of creative inspiration has touched also the Church's teaching authority, with a Pope, who has chosen to bear the name of the Saint of Assisi, now electing *Laudato si'* as the opening words of his Encyclical "On Care for Our Common Home".

Paolazzi, in his "Lectio magistralis", guides us back to that which we may well think was the meaning of the *Canticle of Brother Sun* for its Author, for the man who composed it, quite apart from its cultural reception, apart from that which poets, musicians, painters, sculptors, philosophers, and men of letters, drew from it. This meaning of the Canticle is wholly "religious", indeed liturgical. Through it Francis "a man who himself was made prayer", embodies (by words, images, musical notes) his being continually turned towards the Lord, felt first of all as Father (universally such): this is why all creatures are called to praise the *Altissimu, onnipotente, bon Signore*, recognizing Him as their Father; on this common fatherhood there depends for Francis the recognition of every creature as his own *frate* or *sora*. In the *Canticle of Brother Sun*, the relationship with the Father and with His creatures is not merely preserved and remembered. Rather, like any prayer worthy of the name – and like the sacred Liturgy, on account of its very essence and by the gift of God – it brings about a *ligamen* binding the one praying, the Blessed Trinity and the creatures, and carries us into the *communio*. As is the case with every symbolic word, of the kind that John Langshaw Austin calls

performative (*How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955*), in the *Canticle of Brother Sun* there is brought about that *re-ligamen* of Francis, that bond-with-God, on account of which we recognize him as *animal religiosus*.

Paolazzi's *lectio* brings us back to this essence of Francis's canticle. The study of this poetic text, situated at the emergence of Italian literature, is a cardinal element in the intellectual journey of Carlo Paolazzi, a scholar of Italian literature and Dantean philology, who teaches at the Catholic University in Milan and in Brescia. It is by way of this poem of Francis that Paolazzi goes on to study the entire body of the writings of the Saint of Assisi, almost all of it in Latin. Of these writings he would then prepare a new critical edition, published in 2009:

FRANCISCI ASSISIENSIS *Scripta*, critice edidit Carolus Paolazzi O.F.M.,
(Spicilegium Bonaventurianum 36) Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae
Ad Claras Aquas, Grottaferrata (Roma) 2009, XXII-504 pp.

This volume, of such fundamental importance, secures for him appreciation for a long time into the future.

The *Acta*, published in this issue, of the solemn conferral of the Doctorate *Honoris Causa* include Paolazzi's *Curriculum vitae et studiorum* and the speeches by the University's Chancellor, Michael Anthony Perry, and its Rector, Mary Melone, as well as the "Laudatio" delivered by Attilio Bartoli Langeli. The latter gave the "Laudatio" the meaningful title: "*In memoria et devocione sancti patris*" - Carlo Paolazzi testimone di frate Francesco. He chose to show, too, several slides that, projected on a screen, made his words all the more vivid.

On now to introducing the *Articuli* brought to you in this issue of our journal. The first five all consider that singular personage of not little historical significance, the hermit Pietro del Morrone, who died in Fumone on 19 May 1296, having been the Pope, in 1294, for almost five months; he was canonized on 5 May 1313 by Clement V. At least in part, these articles reflect the papers, further developed, read at the Antonianum, on 24 October 2018, at a scholarly encounter to mark the publication of two volumes of *Il processo di canonizzazione di Celestino V*, edited by Alessandra Bartolomei Romagnoli and Alfonso Marini (Firenze 2015-2016). The encounter was organized by the Antonianum's Higher

School of Mediaeval and Franciscan Studies and by the Department of History, Cultures, Religions, of Rome's Sapienza University. Published here are articles by these scholars: Paolo Vian, Marco Guida, Umberto Longo, Felice Accrocca, and Marco Bartoli. Indeed, the biographical and hagiographical data of St. Pietro del Morrone, Celestine V, are known today mostly thanks to that canonization process. Nowadays, though, with the benefit of hindsight, we can know something else, too: namely, that the particular purposes of introducing a process of beatification or canonization, in a given case, may go beyond those proper to any such process – i.e. verifying heroic virtue or genuine martyrdom, as the case may be – and that the case-specific purposes may sometimes be overlooked if not actually opposed. This is all the more likely when it is the case of a Roman Pontiff or some other historically influential personage. Together these articles afford the reader a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at what was going on around the canonization of the holy hermit, whose papal election and subsequent abdication left their mark on European and ecclesiastical history.

This thematically coordinated grouping of articles is followed by two articles with particular relevance for the present day. The first, by Americo Miranda, reads certain phenomena of the society of our time in the light of the teaching of the *Sermons* of St. Augustine, a teacher who can be said to be the contemporary of many generations, both on account of the historical period in which he lived and because of his own lived experience. The other article, by Piero Sirianni, goes to the heart of today's animated discussion on education in matters of *gender*. This article proposes inter-subjectivity as a resource for an anthropological response to the questions addressed in that discussion, within the socio-cultural sphere and even before it becomes a religious and ethical one.

The *Relationes bibliographicae* present two publications. Antonino Clemenza introduces the work just published by the South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han under the title: *La salvezza del bello* (originally published in Frankfurt, in 2015, as: *Die Errettung des Schönen*). Celestyn Paczkowski, for his part, presents Narcyz Stanisław Klimas's book on the authenticity of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, a work of analysis based on historiography, archaeology and monuments, from the first to the tenth centuries: *Autentyczność Bożego Grobu w Jerozolimie. Analiza na podstawie historiografii, archeologii i zabytków (I-X w.)*.

With thematics spanning the centuries, with an eye trained on the present in the perspective of the future, celebrating past accomplishments, reporting current research and hospitable to renewed thinking on emerging questions, this issue, too, of *Antonianum* has been put together to offer our readers rich fare that is both satisfying and thought-provoking, thereby also affording readers a glimpse at facets of the multi-disciplinary scholarship being done at our University at any given time, cooperatively other committed scholars and institutions.

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