

ABSTRACTS DEI CONTRIBUTI

CHRISTIAN GNILKA

L'ombra della verità

The Fathers of the Church found darkened traces of Truth in ancient culture. They maintained that this was up to the natural perception of God on the part of the pagans. In addition to this theological explanation, there was an historical one. It was assumed that the Greek authors learned about the Old Testament (of the Books of Moses) in a direct or indirect way. This opinion, which seems odd to us, enjoyed great diffusion (among the Fathers); it is based upon specific general ways of thinking in antiquity. Its enduring significance is based on the fact that it clearly shows the Fathers' attitude toward ancient culture. Since Truth was misunderstood or falsified when transferred from the Old Testament, as the Fathers assumed, it cannot be found in the ancient world of thought but as a mixture of True and Untrue, and this mixture conditions the method that can be observed when dealing with ancient culture: a diacritical method that frees those elements of Truth from misapprehensions, purifies them, returns them to God, their creator and proprietor, and puts them into the service of the Gospel.

CAMILLO NERI

Il metodo della filologia (ovvero, le regole del gioco)

Some reflections on the method of textual criticism and editorial technique: types of text transmission, collecting, organizing and presenting the data, professional ethics of the scholar.

MORENO MORANI

Chrêsis per la storia di una radice

The essay aims to determine the etymology of χρῆσις and to follow the history of the word through the centuries. Obviously, χρῆσις is a *nomen actionis* consisting of the stem χρῆ- and the diffuse and productive suffix *-ti* (> *-si* in the Ionic area with a normal phonetic development). We have to do with a derivative form of χρῆ. This word is originally a noun, but it is more and more attracted in the verbal system and perceived in the speaker's consciousness as a verb. Scholars consider the root as inherited from the IE, but both the exact etymology and the determination of the primitive meaning of the word are problematic. Different ways have been tried to connect χρῆ to various Indo-European roots, but without reliable results, because the material suggests a plurality of interpretations and it is difficult to choose a more satisfactory hypothesis than the others. The most ancient uses of the word let us to conclude that χρῆ is not simply 'necessity', but rather 'desire, search for a good' which is accompanied by a 'feeling of poverty', and from this initial and uncertain value it is possible explicate and justify the distant and sometimes contradictory values of many derivatives. It seems that the original value of χρῆσις has been maintained over time up to the Greek of the imperial age. The χρῆσις thus becomes, in the Greek of Christians, the perception of a cultural gap that Christians try to fill through the *rectus usus* of doctrines and contents proposed by Paganism, (as Glinka masterfully teaches us).

ALFREDO VALVO
Chrêsis e recta ratio

The continuity of many Greek words with recent expressions is quite evident, but they don't have the same meaning. *Chrêsis* is one of the most significant words for the Christians. There is a possible correspondence in Cicero's use of *recta ratio* in *De legibus* and *De re publica*. The identification of *recta ratio* with *lex* is decisive from this point of view.

LEONARDO LUGARESI
Paolo e Tertulliano. La sfida della krisis cristiana al politeismo greco-romano

Paul's encounter with the Athenian philosophers, as narrated in Acts 17:16-34, represents, in the eyes of the Fathers of the Church, an ideal example of the Christian *krisis* of the pagan culture which makes a right use of it (*chrêsis*) possible for Christians. Paul asserts that even an expression of polytheistic religiosity such as the inscription to the unknown god placed on an altar in the city can be traced back to a deeper and truer meaning and to good use for the Christian message. On the other hand, it is precisely the close confrontation with the position of the other that induces in the Christian missionary a critical revision of his own starting position. The patristic exegesis of this episode shows how the Fathers are fully aware of its importance. Although Tertullian does not comment on it, in his work one can observe the application of the same method towards the Roman religion, whose functioning system he calls into question through his critical analysis.

GIULIANO CHIAPPARINI
Cultura profana, dottrine eterodosse e "chrêsis". L'attualità del "vero gnostico" di Clemente Alessandrino

Clement of Alexandria helped construct the hermeneutical instrument of the 'chrêsis' (right use). The Fathers used it to select elements of non-Christian cultural traditions that could be accepted. The 'chrêsis' represents the last phase of a control process that concerns things, practices or ideas. Clement applies it 'ad extra' to classical culture, because then it was assumed that the Greeks had stolen some notions from the Jews. Instead, 'ad intra' the 'chrêsis' serves to identify and counter the falsification of the truth by the heretics. The correctness of every single choice linked to the 'chrêsis' is the confirmation that the knowledge ('gnosis') possessed by the selector (assayer) is true and reliable. Clement, developing some New Testament cues, uses the image of the assayer precisely to describe the 'true gnostic', who knows how to build a 'new cultural unity' based on the confrontation with the other. The final outcome of the 'chrêsis' is indeed a conscious, cautious but open and inclusive dogmatic.

VITO LIMONE
L'uso del concetto di sistema delle scienze in Origene

The chief aim of this article is to explore Origen's theory of the system of disciplines and demonstrate that it is an eclectic synthesis of the various theories of the system of disciplines in antiquity, which have been extensively studied by Pierre Hadot. In this regard, the article will consist of three main parts. In the first part, we shall mention the thesis of Pierre Hadot about the tripartition of the theories of the system of disciplines in antiquity (pyrami-

dal; circular; progressive). In the second part, we shall consider that Origen alternates two pivotal theories of the system: tripartite (ethics, physics, logic) and quadripartite (ethics, physics, logic, and epoptics). Finally, we shall prove that this alternation in Origen is due to the ambiguity of the epistemological status of logic and epoptics.

JEAN PAUL LIEGGI

Per una sintassi della chrêsis. La lezione di Basilio e di Gregorio Nazianzeno

Gregorius of Nazianzenus states that the concept of *chrêsis* is related to the notion of *syntaxis*. The whole work of the Creator must be 'used well', but we must also recognise that, although all realities can be used, they do not all hold equal value. Different creatures and elements of human culture have different values based on their relationship with faith.

GIOVANNI CATAPANO

L'usus christianus dei filosofi nel De Genesi ad litteram di Agostino

This paper examines the few explicit references to philosophy and philosophers contained in Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*. On these rare occasions, Augustine warns his readers about what should *not* be taken from the philosophical tradition for the purpose of interpreting the biblical account of creation. This fact, however, is not in contradiction with the methodological precepts about the Christian use of philosophers enunciated by Augustine in *De doctrina christiana*.

JOHANNES ZACHHUBER

Aristotle in Theodore of Raïthu and Pamphilus the Theologian. The search for a Chalcedonian philosophy

This chapter discusses the thought of two little-known Christian authors, Pamphilus the Theologian and Theodore of Raïthu. They probably wrote between 550 and 710 defending the version of Chalcedonianism adopted by the Second Council of Constantinople (553). Both make use of Aristotle more than previous generations of Christian thinkers. In the chapter this debt is analysed and compared with the influence of the earlier Patristic philosophy inaugurated by the Cappadocians and modified by early sixth-century Chalcedonian Leontius of Byzantium. The conclusion is that it is the latter tradition that ultimately determines the philosophical principles in the two writers including their utilisation of Aristotelian ideas.

ILARIA VIGORELLI

Corifeo e divinizzazione. Esempio di chrêsis patristica a partire da una metafora

The origin of the metaphor of the souls' dance around a coryphaeus goes back to Plato's *Theaetetus* and it was later used by the Fathers in order to describe the proper meaning of rational nature's assimilation to the Divine through the faith in Christ. This paper studies how the christian use of this metaphor can be assumed as a clear example of patristic *chrêsis*.

ANDREA ZAULI

La figura di Socrate e l'exemplum Socratis nel Martyrium Apollonii. Espressione di χρῆσις?

The reference to Socrates is a clear example of the Christian use of relating to the classical heritage that preceded it. In the Acts of christian Martyrs the figure of Socrates takes on specific connotations related to the particular context in which it is used: the trial debate between a Christian defendant and a Roman judge. The purpose of this study is to investigate how one of these acts, the *Martyrium Apollonii* – a particularly significant text as regards the object of analysis –, takes up again and refers to Socrates, according to which criteria, for what reasons and to verify if it has characters of originality that can be judged to be the fruit of *chrêsis*.

SONJA CATERINA CALZASCIA

L'uso di Omero nell'episodio delle nozze di Cana della Parafrasi di Nonno di Panopoli (2,1-69)

The paper examines the relationship between Homer and the wedding at Cana episode in Nonnus of Panopolis' *Paraphrase*. Homeric words and phrases are analysed in detail. It is shown how Nonnos uses them mainly with aesthetic purpose. The conclusion is that the poet from Panopolis makes no real attempt to Christianize Homer.

MARIA VITTORIA CERUTTI

Usus iustus e religioni. Uno sguardo sulla contemporaneità

This paper considers the actualization of *usus iustus* as it was examined by Christian Gnifka in his important monographies on *chrêsis* (*Chrêsis* I and II), firstly, and then it focuses on this actualization in two directions. In the first part, the paper focuses on documents of The Second Vatican Council and post-conciliar official documents that discuss the “right use” of specific aspects in non-Christian cultures and religions. In the second part, it considers scientific studies that discuss the “right use” in interreligious dialogue of non-Christian religions and their specific elements. An excellent example is offered by the German theologian of the religions Horst Bürkle's (1925-2015) research. He brings to light two ways this “right use” can be considered: on the one hand, to offer non-Christians a better understanding of Christian thought; on the other hand, to lead to a renewed understanding of previously neglected Christian elements.