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Parrhesia e dissimulazione. La verità di fronte al potere
[*Parrhesia and dissimulation. Speaking truth to power*]

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ABSTRACTS

TIZIANA FAITINI – FRANCESCO GHIA,
Un profilo storico-concettuale della parrhesia politica
(pp. 11-28)

This essay is intended to provide a wide-ranging reconstruction of the history of the concept of parrhesia in relation to its political implications. Moving from Michel Foucault's reading of the concept, the paper gives a succinct overview of its use in classical Greece and in biblical texts, in order to emphasize the internal dialectic which has always riven the relationship between parrhesia and democracy but arrived at its most intense with the modern separation of external and internal fora.

SECTION I

GIAN LUIGI PRATO
Dimensioni socio-religiose della parrhesia giudaica nella tradizione linguistica dei testi biblici
(pp. 31-62)

This paper shows that while the Greek parrhesia is above all concerned with the public and political spheres, the one of the Jews integrates and directs both spheres towards a different perspective, in which the religious dimension is strongest. In this new dimension parrhesia is framed within a religion based on the "law". In such a context, although on the one hand parrhesia is a legitimate claim to freedom, on the other it can be turned into a licence to persecute those who do not obey the law. The history of the term, however, demonstrates how the dialectic between its exclusively political and exclusively religious use is a permanent feature of the biblical interpretation of parrhesia, both in the Jewish context and, subsequently, in that of the New Testament.

ANDREA COLLI
«Non in proverbii sed palam»: la parrhesia di Cristo nel commento al Vangelo di Giovanni di Tommaso d'Aquino
(pp. 69-88)

There is no consistent translation of the term parrhesia in the Vulgata. This would seem to create an insurmountable obstacle to the reception of the concept, not so much in the Paleochristian world – still close to Hellenistic influences – but rather in the studia and the universitates studiorum of the 13th Century. Our study of Thomas Aquinas' biblical commentary shows, however, that the Greek interpretation and use of the term remains crucial, not only in the exegetic field, but also in the construction of some important concepts in medieval philosophical thought. Christ's three ways of preaching, distinguished by Thomas (in occulto, in proverbii and palam), thus become a novel point of view from which to reassess his idea of truth and the different ways in which it may be reached.

DANTE FEDELE,
Il parresiasta punito, ossia Momus di Leon Battista Alberti
(pp. 89-110)

This contribution is a reading of Momus by L.B. Alberti which highlights the "freedom" with which the main character, Momo, interacts with Jove and the ambiguous status of the "truth" of his words. After

having shown briefly that Momo is described as a parrhesiasta on a number of occasions in some of Lucian of Samosata's dialogues that may have been known to Alberti, we stop to consider this relationship, in many ways paradoxical, between prince and "counselor", analysing the conditions that make it necessary, its internal structure and its condition of possibility which reveal all the historical ambiguity of the notion of parrhesia. We hope thus to offer some points for consideration in regard to the problem of political advisors in the Renaissance and that of parrhesia as a form of political discourse around the government of the Prince.

LORENA CEBOLLA SANAHUJA

La verdad ilegal y su relación con la acción política

(pp. 111-24)

For Kant, the duty to make a public, rather than private, use of reason entails the possibility of contributing to the progress of humanity. It implies an opposition between the use of reason according to the norm and that very use against the norm, or the "illegal" use of reason. If privacy is identified with obedience, public thought creates change, allowing space for the political action of reform, or even revolution. In this sense, the public use of reason, telling truth in the face of power, can be considered an expression of an illegal proposition or judgement. Truth involves a change of perspective, the germ of revolution, a continuous and perpetual adjustment of the real or determined to the indeterminable just and ethical. Kant's insistence on differentiating between morality and religious dogma, between men under the determined law of God and men under the undetermined human law, responds to the need to establish a space "always to determine", i.e. a space that is defined, during the Enlightenment, by its opposition to current or positive legality.

MILENA MARIANI

«Non più servitori muti di dèi muti». La parrhesia in Hans Urs von Balthasar e Karl Rahner

(pp. 125-40)

*The theme of parrhesia clearly emerges in a few dense pages, dating back to the 1950s, by two of the greatest theologians of the 20th Century. At first sight Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner seem to be restating two different but already traditional interpretations: the first, in *Das betrachtende Gebet* (1955), reveals the connection between parrhesia and prayer; the second, in a short study, *Parrhesia, Von der Apostolatstugend des Christen* (1958), portrays it as a quintessential virtue of the herald of the Gospel. However, this paper intends to demonstrate that they both recall some aspects of the original political interpretation of parrhesia and they also introduce new and unusual perspectives.*

DEBORA SPINI

Verità e politica. A partire da Hannah Arendt

(pp. 141-58)

My paper draws together various observations on the political valency of the subject of "truth telling", beginning with Hannah Arendt and her examination of the troubled relationship between truth and politics, in order to explore what the elements of the problem might be today, particularly in relation to democracy. I will discuss how it might be necessary to articulate and problematize the concept of truth, opening more towards a narrative than an argumentative paradigm. I will then attempt to retrace the details of the truth-politics relationship as it stands today, in many ways very far from the context in which Arendt's philosophical thinking took root, although the latter is still able to throw new light on the meaning of parrhesia in our indifferent democracies.

SANDRO CHIGNOLA

Il coraggio della verità: Michel Foucault

(pp. 159-88)

This essay attempts to examine Foucault's use of the concept of parrhesia and to understand why he makes it so central to his interpretation of classical and late classical thought. Such an interpretation is not in fact random or impolitic, but actually of critical importance because of the light it sheds on the whole body of Foucault's analysis of power. The paper is divided into three parts. The first focuses on Foucault's idea of critique. The second analyses the core tenets of Foucault's interpretation of parrhesia as these were developed in his Course at the Collège de France. The third deals with the repositioning of parrhesia in the model of governmentality and focusses particularly on the "parrhesia of the governed".

SECTION II

GIAN LUIGI PRATO

Il racconto di 2Re 5 (la "conversione" di Naaman il Siro) nel suo contesto letterario e storico-religioso (e in riferimento remoto a Hobbes, Leviatano XLII 11)

(pp. 197-240)

This paper examines the antecedents, the implications and the aporia of the story in Kings 2,5. The religious codification which characterises the historical setting of the story of Naaman is epitomised in the axiom of Micah 4,5, according to which each people has its own god, and the connection between god and people is to be understood as a function of the land in which that people lives. From this perspective, Naaman's request to bring home a load of earth from the land of Israel is of great importance in the story. At the moment in which Naaman is converted, he shows himself to be aware that a god is always connected with a land. The conflict shown in the story is not therefore between two geographical lands, one of which might be superior to the other, but between the divinities to which the two lands are intrinsically linked.

RAYNOLD MEYNET

La licence du lépreux dans les évangiles

(pp. 241-52)

Naaman is only mentioned once in the Gospels, when, in St Luke's Gospel, Jesus, while explaining the proverb according to which nobody is a prophet in their own country, reminds us that of the many lepers around in Elisha's time, the only one to be cured was a foreigner, Naaman the Syrian. This paper shows, through an exegetic exploration, how in the language of the Synoptics the curing of lepers is both a symbol and an anticipation of the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven in Jesus. This coming is recognised by the disciples as the symbol of the new Covenant foreseen by the prophets during exile, which is based not on the laws of Moses, but on faith in He who absolves and saves, taking upon himself the leprosy of sin. The "licence of Naaman the Syrian" is thus implicitly reinterpreted as the preeminence of a "religion of redemption" over a "religion of law".

LUIGI F. PIZZOLATO

L'imbarazzo del cristianesimo antico di fronte alla licenza di Naaman

(pp. 253-66)

The episode of Naaman the Syrian is mentioned in Jesus' first sermon, in Nazareth (Lc 4,27). The Patristic literature in which the figure of Naaman appears refers back to this verse – and almost only to this one. Starting with an examination of some allusions to it made by Ambrosius in the Expositio evangelii secundum

Lucam, *this paper focuses on Theodoretus of Cyrrus (393-460), who analyses the text in Quaestiones in libros Regnorum et Paralipomenon, and on Rupert of Deutz's (c. 1075-1129) subsequent treatment of the subject in his De sancta Trinitate.*

MASSIMO PERRONE

La licenza di Naamàn il Siro (4Re 5,18-19) nel contesto della tradizione esegetica del Medioevo latino

(pp. 267-90)

A faith compelled into secrecy and the recourse to (apparently) idolatrous dissimulation are the critical elements distinguishing the biblical episode of the miraculous healing of Naaman the Syrian. This paper aims to chart the history of its reception in the context of the medieval exegetic tradition and outline the most important interpretations of it. The analysis reveals that the episode was only slowly accepted. The exegetes of the Carolingian period are characterized by an unexpected and widespread lack of interest in addressing the question; only at the beginning of the 12th century the balanced analysis of Rupert of Deutz sets a new direction, and, then, between the 13th and 15th century, the interpretation of the episode assumes its final shape, and also becomes polemical.

MASSIMO CAMPANINI – FRANCESCA FORTE

La dimensione pubblica della religione in al-Ghazālī

(pp. 291-310)

The episode of Naaman the Syrian is not referred to in the Qu'ran, but regards a problem that can be considered characteristic of Islamic ideology: that of the relationship between the public and private dimensions of religion and worship. An analysis of the figure and thought of Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111), considered one of the pillars of Sunni doctrine and practice, appears particularly relevant to this question. His most important work, the 40 volume Rebirth of the Religious Sciences, and its Arabic summary, the Book of the 40 Religious Principles or Kitab al-arba'in fi usul al-din, which this paper examines in particular, are an actual demonstration of this attempt to mirror the earth in the heavens and the heavens on earth, through, above all, the example of the prophet Mohammed and his exemplary behaviour, the sunna.

ENRICA FABBRI

Dissimulazione religiosa e martirio a partire dalla ripresa hobbesiana della licenza di Naaman

(pp. 311-26)

The story of the episode of Naaman the Syrian in the 16th Century is complicated and not restricted to the field of exegesis. It was during the Reformation that the story of Naaman began to be perceived as strongly contemporary, a topicality owed to essentially practical and/ or political, rather than doctrinal or theological, reasons. From this point of view, Hobbes inherited a debate which originated a century earlier and which constitutes the historical and theological premise – direct or indirect – of Hobbes' positions. Before examining Hobbes' reflections on the subject, the paper therefore identifies some of these sources in 16th Century thought.

MASSIMO GIULIANI

Anti-marranesimo: chiave di lettura del trattato Jerusalem di Moses Mendelssohn

(pp. 327-52)

The reading of Jerusalem by Moses Mendelssohn presented here identifies the particular element inserted into Mendelssohn's "theological-political" work from Spinoza's Tractatus as very real "anti-Marranism".

In order to test this interpretative key it is vital to clarify what Marranism actually is, both historically and from a theological-political perspective. This essay then moves from the question of the right to excommunicate – at the heart of Jerusalem – to a demonstration of its contiguity (continuous and discontinuous) with Spinoza.

MICHELE NICOLETTI

La licenza di Naaman in Carl Schmitt

(pp. 353-78)

Using the interpretation of the license of Naaman given by Hobbes, Carl Schmitt asserts the need for a separation between the internal and the external fora, an assertion that appears equivocal and unacceptable to Erik Peterson, considering the historical context of 1930s Germany, which seemed to him instead to require the public witnessing of truth. This essay, by tracing the confrontation between the two writers within the theological-political debates of their time, shows the extent to which their different interpretations of the role of the modern state were fundamental to this opposition. Schmitt's position, in fact, can also be understood in the light of his vision of the modern state as a space in which theological conflict can be neutralized and conflict between friend and enemy humanized.

SECTION III

FRANCESCO GHIA

Naaman, Nicodemo e Calvino. Per una contestualizzazione teologico-politica della nozione di «nicodemismo»

(pp. 381-96)

This paper demonstrates how Calvin rejects even the theoretical possibility of turning to the biblical story of Naaman the Syrian to legitimise the practice of dissimulation. In his polemic against dissimulators the Genevan reformer prefers to use the figure of Nicodemus, emphasising how he is the exact opposite of that which the dissimulators would wish. If it is indeed true that at first Nicodemus only approached Jesus at night, it is still the case that in the end he decided to declare his faith in Jesus in full daylight. Thus, in his debate with “Nicodemism” Calvin introduces a sort of argument using Nicodemus e contrario: it is not to the believer that a licence to worship publicly in a way contrary to his private faith may be given, but, at most, similar licence may be imposed forcibly on the unbeliever, since such coercion serves to give political stability to the corpus christianum.

SILVANO ZUCAL

Pascal e l'impossibile parrhesia politica

(pp. 397-414)

The 48 fragments of Pascal's political writing collected in the Brunschvicg edition, in the section on justice, seem to show the French philosopher to have been a real advocate of dissimulation. For Pascal the laws underpinning societal order are purely and simply products of coercive force. The human justice interpreted and applied in law is therefore no more than a convention determined by coercion and only provisionally achieved. Pascal thus strongly encourages the concealment of this inconvenient truth from the people, and insists that no form of political parrhesia be engaged in. This paper interrogates the reasons for the silence about the truths of the political reality which Pascal dictates, in order to show that his position does not just serve to defend the status quo, but is rather a statement of the basic, insuperable limits of human justice.

ROBERTO GATTI

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: la verità, il potere, la parola

(pp. 415-40)

This paper reflects on the question of the relationship between speech, truth and democratic power through the thought of J.-J. Rousseau. It focusses on the rebel word, the word of truth in rebellion, the word of protest – a critical accusation, not a proposal. Having accomplished its critical task, the word of truth, in The Social Contract, takes the form of discourse required by droit naturel raisonné and creates the theoretical space – and the historical possibility – for the use of the free word, which, from within the nexus of deliberation between sovereign citizens, creates power, the very essence of which lies in precisely these interactions within the public sphere. And lastly there is the use of the sober word – the measured speech of Emilio, which precludes any possible political use.

ANDREA AGUTI

La rinuncia alla parrhesia: il caso di Dietrich Bonhoeffer

(pp. 441-52)

This paper encapsulates the Evangelical theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer's reasons for working with the anti-Nazi resistance in Germany and, when arrested and tortured, hiding his own position. This dissimulation is understood as an example of renouncing parrhesia, for which Bonhoeffer offers a justification, particularly in the essay What Is Meant by "Telling the Truth"? (1943). The thesis of this essay is situated within the context of Bonhoeffer's ethical thought, focussed particularly on the concept of responsibility, and is compared with a clearly opposing theory, that of Kant. The paper concludes by demonstrating the tensions created within Bonhoeffer's theological thought by the renouncing of parrhesia and the way in which this distances his attitude from that of a martyr.

MASSIMO GIULIANI

Dissimulazione ed ermeneutica della reticenza in Leo Strauss

(pp. 453-68)

This is a Jewish perspective on "(not) telling the truth", inspired by the Marrano practice of actually disguising their true identities within a social context full of religious and political intolerance and persecution. This paradigm finds a similar parallel in the reevaluation of the distinction between exoterism and esoterism present in some of Leo Strauss's (1899-1973) work, particularly in Persecution and the Art of Writing (1952). Arnaldo Momigliano describes this approach as the "hermeneutics of reticence". Using that distinction and pointing out the intentionally inconsistent language, Strauss rereads some of the classics of Jewish thinking, such as Maimonides, Jehudah HaLevi and Spinoza: masters of the art of telling the (philosophical) truth concealed by a complex, elaborate style.