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Redimere e riscattare. La redemptio tra teologia e politica
[Redeem and ransom. The redemptio between theology and politics]

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ABSTRACTS

TIZIANA FAITINI

La redemptio romana e la sua reinterpretazione cristiana. Un contributo alla storia del concetto di redenzione

(pp. 3-14)

The paper deals with the concept of redemption developed by a number of Early Christian authors (Origen and Ambrose of Milan in particular). Special attention is paid to the close relationship between their interpretation of Jesus' salvific action, on the one hand, and the practical and theoretical tradition of the delivery of prisoners or debtors, which is crystallised in the juridical institution of the redemptio, on the other. Such a relationship sheds light on the history of the concept and helps to better grasp its wide, nuanced spectrum, which – far from focussing on a momentous event – seems to cover a complex network of theological, social, political and economic relations.

GIAN LUIGI PRATO

«Sarete riscattati senza denaro» (Is 52,3). La redenzione nell'Antico Testamento tra metafora teologica e linguaggio giuridico ibrido

(pp. 25-57)

*Most Old Testament texts dealing with redemption and ransom use legal language, even when God is the redeemer, although in this case the fact that God redeems without paying a ransom is emphasized. This essay reviews the terminology around both redemption and ransom, focusing on the verbs *pdh* and *g'l* and their derivatives. It also considers the topic of expiation, expressed through the ransom *kōfer* and a particular usage of the verb *kipper*, involving blood offerings. Some notes on reconciliation and slave purchase complete the survey. In conclusion, we point out that these texts clearly reveal a theological interpretation of legal language, and highlight the fact that God redeems without ransom (whether paid by, or – in the case of expiation – to him); however, this new hermeneutics is also problematic, and even appears somewhat forced. It is therefore understandable that in later theological (and chiefly Christian) traditions we detect the – at least implicit – idea that a ransom is paid to, or even by, God, notwithstanding the heavy burden imposed by such an idea.*

MASSIMO GIULIANI

Pidion Haben, il riscatto del primogenito. Interpretazioni teologico-politiche di una mitzwà

(pp. 59-74)

The paper deals with the mitzwà issued by Shemot/Exodus 13:13, which imposes the consecration and the ransom of every, human and animal, first-born. This commandment, called pidion haben, in the rabbinical judaism refers to the ransom of the first-born male son, to be paid by the father during a ceremony held 31 days after the birth. In this perspective, the concepts of redemption and ransom are discussed, and shown to imply a detheologising way of thinking of both the man and the world, and to begin a process towards political liberation and autonomy.

LAURENT WAELEKENS

La redemptio ab hostibus e la redemptio a domino tra diritto romano e diritto medievale

(pp. 75-90)

This essay presents a synthetic historical account of the Roman juridical institution of the redemptio ab hostibus and the redemptio a domino, which allowed people who had been enslaved in war, or as debtors, to regain their freedom. Particular attention is paid to the condition of the slaves – and their incomes – in the

familia of the redeemer to which they belonged until the price paid to obtain their release from the enemy (in the first case) or to purchase them as slaves (in the second case) had been reimbursed. The procedure for the reimbursement is described, and the analysis moves from classical Roman Law to the Middle Ages, highlighting the difference between the status of the slave according to Roman Law and the status of the slave during modern colonialism (when no formal procedure for ransom and reimbursement was possible).

MILENA MARIANI

«Non uscirai di là finché non avrai pagato fino all'ultimo spicciolo!». Esegesi di Mt 5,26 e origini dell'idea di purgatorio
(pp. 91-111)

Since the publication of J. Le Goff's highly successful *The Birth of Purgatory*, in 1981, much research has been done, from various historical perspectives, on the doctrine of purgatory. Greater attention has also been paid to – on the one hand – current secularized forms of the idea and – on the other – the steady spread of belief in reincarnation in the West. In this paper I investigate texts by scholars writing in the early decades of the 3rd century AD – Tertullian, in particular – with the aim of demonstrating how the Christian imaginary of “purgatory” in the hereafter, which developed gradually, influenced by Jewish and Graeco-Roman models, and driven by the necessities of pastoral discipline, was, from the beginning, characterized by the adoption of juridical categories and influenced by the system of sanctions used at the time for punishing insolvent debtors.

PAOLO EVANGELISTI

Il mandato del Redentore e i doveri dei redenti. Alle origini di un paradigma di legittimazione delle relazioni economiche e politiche (II - V sec.)
(pp. 113-51)

In this paper I present a wide range of patristic texts, which – through the theological discussion of the “divine economy” – investigate the concept of the *fidelis christianus* and its normative framework. The plan of God, carried out by the Son, involves two key figures: the individual figure of the Saviour and the collective figure of the redeemed. The theology of Salvation is framed by the logic of exchange and by certain obligations. The redeemed individual has to examine how their everyday life can meet the logic of Salvation, in order to implement it on earth. Patristic analysis not only outlines an economic ethics for the *fideles*: by defining its operational criteria and by discussing justice in economic action, it shapes the concepts and paradigms of political legitimisation which hold the community together.

JEAN-CLAUDE ZANCARINI

Redimere l'Italia dai peccati de' principi. Una lettura politico-militare della “redenzione” nel Principe
(pp. 153-66)

In *The Prince*, the words redemption, redeemer, redeem only appear in Chapter 26. In this paper, I will attempt to answer two questions: “why, in the final exhortatio of *The Prince*, does Machiavelli choose to use this semantic field of redemption, which he never uses anywhere else?” and “how should we interpret this presence of the term redemption in *The Prince*?”. Machiavelli uses words (*sins*, redemption) that were part of Savonarola's prophetic vocabulary. Whoever wants “to become the leader of this redemption”, i.e. the redemption of Italy from “barbarous cruelty and irreverence”, must “above all, as the very foundation of every undertaking, obtain his own weapons”. The task of the “redeemer” of Italy is a politico-military one. The use of the semantic field of redemption therefore functions to distance the politico-military from the theological discourse, as has already been done in Chapter 12, where the “sins” are not those intended by Savonarola, but the “sins of princes”, i.e. “sins” of a military nature.

HARALD MAIHOLD

Gotteszorn und Nächstenliebe. Konzepte von Erlösung und Vergeltung in der frühneuzeitlichen Moraltheologie und Strafrechtslehre

(pp. 167-99)

The religious concept of redemption contributed significantly to the shaping of public criminal law in the Early Modern Age. This paper focusses on the contribution made by late Spanish scholasticism in particular, shedding light on its pervasive influence on the concept of punishment. The essential features of the Protestant doctrine of punishment are also considered, revealing theology's key role in the shaping of modern criminal law.

ALBERTO BONDOLFI

Redenzione e Riforma. Alcuni elementi di riflessione per una "teologia politica" autocritica

(pp. 201-217)

This paper provides some reflections on the concept of redemption in the Reformed Churches. First, the impact of previous theologies on the Reformation will be mentioned, paying particular attention to the connection made by some patristic and medieval theologians between original sin and politics. I will then go on to examine the same connection, as elaborated by the three main Reformers of the 16th century, and to ascertain the part played by the concept of redemption in this ethico-political context. A brief examination of the same question, as dealt with by those who came immediately after the first Reformers, then follows. The paper concludes with some thoughts on the contribution that theologies with an awareness of the implications of the Reformation can give to the understanding of "political theology" in Western society.

ANDREA AGUTI

Il dogma della reversibilità. Colpa, supplizio e sofferenza in Joseph de Maistre

(pp. 219-36)

This paper connects Joseph de Maistre's providentialist interpretation of the French Revolution in his Considerations on France (1796) with his thoughts on the problem of evil in the world and in history, which make up the theodicy underpinning the Saint Petersburg dialogues (1821). Outlining some of the features of Maistre's political theology, I reveal the link which he makes between guilt, torture and suffering, and his focus on the idea of sacrifice – in particular the sacrifice of the innocent – seen as key to the understanding of the outrage of the suffering of the righteous in the world.

OMAR BRINO

Redenzione e riconciliazione. Il confronto teologico-politico tra Hegel e Schleiermacher

(pp. 237-62)

This paper examines the concept of redemption as understood by Hegel and Schleiermacher. Both authors conceive of redemption in dialectical terms, and their ideas are deeply rooted in the history of philosophical and Judeo-Christian thought. They both want to maintain a reciprocal relationship between subjectivity and universality, and devote considerable attention to the essence of the idea of Christ's incarnation. However, the Hegelian dialectic is based on a unity which is entirely explicable in terms of an idealistic-rational sublation, while that of Schleiermacher is based on a transcendent relationship which can only be experienced in realist-existential terms.

FRANCESCO GHIA

Politica e redenzione in Paulinismus di Otto Pfleiderer. Un contributo alla filosofia e teologia della storia^{[1][2][3]} della Lettera ai Colossesi
(pp. 263-75)

This paper discusses Otto Pfleiderer's interpretation of the Letter to the Colossians in his Paulinismus. The cosmological-historical valence that Paul gives to Christ's act of redemption is highlighted, and described in economic and political terms. At the 'economic' level this action is identified with the pardoning of the debt contracted by human sinners (referring, too, to the chirograph of Colossians 2,13-14, interpreted as symbolizing law transcended by the Holy Spirit), while at the "political" level Christ's reconciliation is enacted through his depriving princes and potentates of their power, and triumphing over them. Pfleiderer's reading is discussed in the context of the theological debate of his time: we see some similarities with the interpretation of Albrecht Ritschl, according to whom the key note of the Pauline vision was his having opposed the Pharisees' concept of the supremacy of the Law with the supremacy of the grace of God.

GUIDO BOFFI

Redentori e traditori. Essere giusti con Nietzsche nell'età dell'«amministrazione economica generale della terra»
(pp. 279-96)

This paper examines the concept of redemption in Nietzsche's work. Nietzsche resolves, on the one hand, to adopt a genealogical approach to the concept; on the other hand, from a completely secular point of view, he wants to test it out in the field of contemporary cultural and ideological debate. While the first task involved reclaiming the idea of redemption by criticising the Christian power with which it had "cut a deal" in order to survive, in the second instance it was a question of freeing it from the political power – imperial Germanism – by which it had been subjugated. In view of the size of the political stakes at play, Nietzsche demands the philosophical liberation of the idea of Erlösung. He wants to redeem it from the classic dualistic – and manipulative – "shepherd/flock" paradigm embodied in the historico-political methods of the autocrat/mass dichotomy, and from what – in his eyes – emerged as a tacit understanding between liberal individualism and democratic or socialist egalitarianism

MICHELE NICOLETTI

Redenzione e rivoluzione nella modernità
(pp. 297-328)

This contribution investigates the use of the term "redemption" within Western revolutionary literature from the Early modern period onwards. The analysis of a number of texts shows that the term occurs rarely, and mainly refers to the original, juridical, meaning of redemptio ab hostibus; in fact, it is used to indicate concrete cases of redemption from imprisonment/slavery, or the independence of a people from foreign subjection. The theological meaning of the term, and in particular the sacrificial dimension which is often implied in the political theology of redemption (e.g. in De Maistre and Donoso Cortes), is far from being secularized by revolutionary thinkers in their conceiving of political and social revolution; on the contrary, it is severely criticized by many authors (among which Paine, Proudhon and Mazzini).