

## ABSTRACTS

ALAIN PONS, *Vico and the 'Descrizione del mondo moderno'*.

Can Vico's system be extended to 'future things'? This is the question the paper tries to answer, going through the short chapter of *Scienza nuova*: Descrizione del mondo antico e moderno delle nazioni osservata conforme al disegno de' principi di questa scienza. Here the great modern european monarchies seem to be the *acmé* of civilisation, but we know the 'corso delle nazioni' doesn't provide for a definitive and perfect stage. Only heroism perhaps – as it is taught in *De mente eroica* – can keep always open the route to the new and a view of 'future things'.

MANUELA SANNA, *Nature and barbarism: a way of the hearth*.

For Vico modern knowledge is unable to speak a language of the heart, that is typical of barbarism. This essay analyzes Vico's concept of barbarism considering it not a model of narration on the theme nature/culture, but rather a metaphor which describes a starting point where knowledge is not referred to learning but instead to identification; barbarism is the difference arising from the proximity to the unknown. Vico's conception of history is also discussed, as the key to interpreting the cultural pluralism which characterizes our contemporary world.

BALDINE SAINT GIRONS, *About necessity of poetry yesterday and today. Vico and Fondane*.

A poet such as Benjamin Fondane said that the need for poetry has never been as deep as to-day, but, at the same time, as desperate and misled because unconscious of his vital challenge: poetry is initially the rectification of «a twisted balance» and the assertion of a proud belief. A philosopher such as Pierre Kaufmann shows how strong emotions are unsettling the constants of size, form or existence which make us believe at the existence of a real which should be «common and ruling». The emotional gust once vanished, we forget it. But the proper operation of poetry is precisely to give us access to our trouble, so strange and isolating it may seem.

Vico admirably highlighted the crucial role of poetry in anthropogenesis and politogenesis. In what sense «barbarism of reflection» that threatens our

civilization, could be attributed to an undervaluation of the humanizing and civilizing powers of poetry?

PIERRE GIRARD, *Giambattista Vico between 'investigante' tradition and materialism.*

The aim of this article is to question the success that Vico's 'solitude' has had as an interpretative category, because it often obscures the Naples philosopher's relations to the tradition preceding him, and in particular to the methodological materialism conceived by the 'Investiganti'. Behind this 'solitude', which establishes a sort of discontinuity between Vico and his time, there are in fact several hidden layers of complex determinations that I will bring to light in order better evaluate the meaning of the project of a 'new science'.

ANDREA BATTISTINI, *Vico's defence of Bible's truth.*

This essay aims to demonstrate that according to Vico the Bible is a standard for the chronology of the human history, and the history of the Hebrews a paradigm of humanity. Anyway this use of the Bible runs the risk to consider the Hebraic history a tale not different from those of the other nations. So Vico avoids any contact between the Hebrews and the other nations. The few aspects in common are only philological parallels while maintaining philosophical distinctions.

LEVENT YILMAZ, *Sociability issue in Vico.*

The main focus of the article is on European ideas about the origin of human societies. The question of how in the past humans formed the phenomenon called society is accompanied by a parallel question about the nature of man, as they were posed by post-Renaissance political philosophers. From 1500 to 1850, a fictional speculation (man's primordial liberty as a source of terror and obstacle for the formation of society) will form the basis of modern politics. This fiction is neither Biblical, nor Aristotelian: it comes most probably from the reading of Lucretius' book V and Ulpian's initial sentences of the *Corpus iuris civilis* in which he defines the natural law. Vico deals essentially with this problem, in order to criticize Hobbes.

ROBERTO EVANGELISTA, *Freedom and necessity. A 'reprehension' of Spinoza's metaphysics in Scienza nuova 1730.*

This article aims to pinpoint the Vico's critique, to Spinoza's and Locke's metaphysics. I will focus the attention to the link that emerges between causality and necessity. Metaphysics according causality, and metaphysics according necessity, represent an error that lead to a wrong conception of God and substance, or even toward an atheistic philosophy. Through these assumption I will attempt to discuss the relationship between Vico's and Spinoza's philosophy, even by dealing with the method exposed by Vico in the 1730 version of his *Scienza nuova*. Doing so it will

be possible to approach the problem of the necessity of human action in Spinoza; but from the other side, it will be possible remind the debt that Vico incurs with the natural philosophy.

TÜRKER ARMANER, *The order of ideas: Vico and Spinoza*.

Vico, in *The New Science*, states that philology, a study on discourse and languages, should consider the correspondence between the ideas and things. In other words ideas, as representations of things, in Vico's account, hold the same order as that of the things: the order of ideas and the order of things have the same structure, an approach which, about a century ago, Spinoza was defending with respect to the body-mind relation in *Ethics*. The meticulous analysis of the Old Testament by Vico and Spinoza leads both to investigate the origins of the political order in the framework of 'Law', the order of the practical pursuits, and its representation in the history of ideas. This paper shall be an attempt to compare Vico and Spinoza as being the forerunners of a secular theology and the founders of a practical philosophy.

JÜRGEN TRABANT, *On the Vico Road: the sematological lane*.

The metaphysical, the politico-historical and the poetico-sematological approach are the three main traditions in Vico scholarship. The article affirms the importance of the sematological approach. It delineates the three main themes of Vico's sematology: the three languages, the sematological twins (*lingue e lettere*) and the *dizionario mentale comune*. This philosophy might appeal to modern philosophical and anthropological positions. What has Vico's narrative to say to modern semiogenetic scenarios (e.g. Tomasello)? Vico's anti-Cartesian philosophy is a philosophy of embodiment. What does the duality of *lettere* and *lingue* contribute to a modern theory of symbolic articulation?

PETER KÖNIG, *Vico's philosophy of authority. A dead-end on the Vico street map?*

There has been, in the 20th century, an intense debate concerning the meaning and the social, legal and political role of authority, responding to a commonly felt 'crisis of authority'. After presenting the outlines of this discussion, it is asked why Vico who understood his *New Science* as a 'philosophy of authority' was totally absent in it. By concentrating on three 'perplexities' connected with his notion of authority the paper then wants show that Vico indeed has a substantial contribution to offer to a philosophical discussion of authority.

GEORGES NAVET, *Vico's democratic republics*.

This article attempts to revisit the vichian concept of popular (or democratic) commonwealth. In Vico's conception, historical and rectilinear time appears and develops only by tearing away from natural and circular time, which is never fully

eliminated and remains threatening. From the first families to the foundation of democracy, the temporal line is rectilinear and rising: democracy is a summit, an impassable summit, which involves that man for the first time appears to himself as man. But men are not heroic enough to keep and preserve the moment: monarchy will be a remedy, and not a new conquest; circular time started curving the rectilinear line. Vico does not reject democracy; it turns out that men are not up to it.

RAFFAELE RUGGIERO, *Vico and historical reconstruction of the feudal institutes: neapolitan jurisprudence between XVII and XVIII century.*

The aim of this paper is to outline the cultural movements and the normative politics in the Neapolitan kingdom during the life of Giambattista Vico (1668-1744). It was a period marked by the development of a new jurisprudence, not limited to the opposition between a conservative juridical class and the enlightenments. However, cultural confrontations and important reforms, such as the conflict between tax administration and feudal society, show the ability of that leadership to find original solution to the knot of social, economic, juridical, political problems that looms in the history of Southern Italy a relevant constitutional switch.

MONICA RICCIO, *Lombroso and Vico.*

The paper deals with the presence and incidence of Vico in Lombroso's work. This subject has never been studied by vichian scholars, perhaps because of its theoretic irrelevance, but more probably because of the embarrassing and racist contents of Lombroso's theories. But we must remember that these theories met with great and immediate success and circulation, playing a central role in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian and European culture.

Along the road that Vico's work has run across the centuries, its halt in Lombroso's books is certainly eccentric, but it is also a sign of vitality.