

# cristianesimo nella storia

RICERCHE STORICHE ESEGETICHE TEOLOGICHE • STUDIES IN HISTORY THEOLOGY AND EXEGESIS

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## *Articoli di*

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## *Recensioni di*

L. Pozzi, A. Piras, M. La Loggia, F.X. Risch, N. D'Acunto, F. Andrews, M. Lodone, R. Paciocco, A. Russo, M. Maraviglia, C.E. Clifford, J. Connelly, S. Merlo, G. Zamagni



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## *Articoli*

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M.P. Donato, L. Berlivet, S. Cabibbo, R. Michetti, M. Nicoud, D. Agostini,  
M. Hadas-Lebel, B. Aland, U. Longo, C. Maresca, R.A. Lo Bello, R.C. Finucane,  
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flagellazione quale strumento di partecipazione alla Passione e insieme una inedita valorizzazione dell'umanità del *Christus pauperculus* che è già nella *Vita Romualdi*. Questa percezione rivoluzionaria del divino e soprattutto dell'uomo nel suo rapporto con Dio avrebbe rappresentato solo un aspetto della multiforme eredità lasciata da Pier Damiani, di certo il più importante.

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C. Maresca, «*Se quasi Christi martyrem exhibebat*». *La leggenda agiografica di san Lanfranco vescovo di Pavia (†1198)*, Premessa di Vittorio Lanzani, (Quaderni dell'Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà 1), Roma, Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 2011, pp. X-182.

The brief *vita et miracula* of Lanfranc, bishop of Pavia (d. 1198) merit this admirable critical edition by Claudio Maresca for a number of reasons. Not least of these is the unusual historical approach to composing a hagiographical text adopted by bishop Bernard Balbi (d. 1213), Lanfranc's successor in Pavia, perhaps better known for his writings on canon law. In the frame of a traditional episcopal *vita*, he begins with a brief account of Lanfranc's studies, election as bishop, virtues as a prelate, protection of his see against incursions, action against heretics, preference for the monastic life, the resistance of the clergy and people to his desire to resign, his illness and holy death in the monastery where he had wished to become a monk. But Bernard's account of his predecessor also outlines the political circumstances of conflict between bishop and urban elite. His careful attention to details such as the Pavia consuls' request for ecclesiastical funds to help pay for a new circuit of city walls has earned the text a reputation for historical reliability. In recounting the miracles, moreover, Bernard underlines his own proximity to many of them, often completing a story by noting that the beneficiary or witnesses had come to him to swear to the truth and details of an event. Pleasingly, six notarised copies of these preliminary accounts survive and were recently edited by Vittorio Lanzani (author of the preface to this volume) in *Cronache di miracoli. Documenti del xiii secolo su Lanfranco vescovo di Pavia*, Milano, Cisalpino, 2007. Comparison of the documents with Bernard's catalogue of miracles reveals his editorial choices, turning personal stories into *exempla* while retaining enough local colour and notarial language to make them convincing.

A second justification for paying close attention to this dossier is that Lanfranc's struggles with the consuls of Pavia over the control of Church property led quickly to identification with Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury who had died just a decade before he became bishop. For stylistic reasons it seems unlikely that a fresco portraying the attack on Becket in the monastic church associated with Lanfranc in Pavia could have been painted as early as the very end of his episcopate, as suggested here (following others). Nonetheless, the parallels in the two stories are certainly interesting and Bernard may have had them in mind. The pericope chosen for this critical edition appropriately underlines how Bernard portrayed Lanfranc as

both a Christ-like figure and a martyr, misunderstood by his contemporaries. Not unlike Becket.

Maresca premises his critical edition of the three extant manuscripts of the *vita* and miracles with a meticulous guide to previous scholarship, starting from the thirteenth century and frequently quoting earlier historians at length. This somewhat long-winded technique highlights the importance of Lanfranc to local historians of Pavia, most of whom were ecclesiastics, and also exposes the gradual process by which the figure of this Lombard saint was first confused with and then extricated from that of Lanfranc of Canterbury. More pertinent to most readers will be Maresca's recapitulation of recent research, which demonstrates the wider historiographical debates around the *vita* and miracles of Lanfranc some of which he rightly leaves unresolved. Thus on one hand (34), he notes Maria Pia Alberzoni's 'acute observation' that the *vita* may have failed to achieve its aim (the papal canonisation of Lanfranc) because it was outmoded and out of line with Innocent III's model for energetic bishops: the pope did not need an example of a bishop-monk yearning for the contemplative life, while Lanfranc's style of confrontation with consular leaders was replaced c. 1209/10 by a preference for conciliation and mediation. On the other, Maresca reminds the reader (35) of Lanzani's observation that papal canonisation was not yet necessary for a local cult to flourish and that papal failure to canonise was probably contingent, for reasons now obscure. What *is* certain is that the *vita* was written in a transitional phase when bishops such as Bernard still claimed responsibility for identifying local saints, while the popes were asserting a monopoly on saint making. Lanfranc's cult remained local and within the Vallombrosan order; he was beatified only in 1888.

Last but not least Maresca's introduction points to the work of Paolo Golinelli (1994) and Maureen Miller (2000). Golinelli (quoted here 56) observed just how original Bernard was: the *vita* 'inserts itself self-consciously into the struggle of the urban Church in defence of its property and prerogatives and reflects exceptionally vividly the historical moment when the free commune ... appropriated the city, eating into episcopal property and even going so far as to appropriate the stables of the ailing bishop for the construction of the *Palatium civitatis*' (my translation). For Miller's study of episcopal palaces (quoted here 35) this was a key case study, exposing the way that hostility played out in spatial terms. For in Pavia, despite the saintly resistance of a figure such as Lanfranc, the consuls gradually took over the episcopal palace, acquiring not just the stables but the whole building by the end of the thirteenth century.

As this review has made clear, Maresca is very careful to situate his work and to acknowledge the efforts and ideas of other scholars. This makes his work an excellent guide to recent investigation of Lombard ecclesiastical history and hagiography. Nonetheless, Maresca's own contribution is substantial. Previous editions and translations were based either on the two much later texts (Rome, Biblioteca Valicelliana H 12, late 16th /early 17th century and Pavia, Archivio storico diocesano, p.a. E cart. Vescovi, 1, 16th-century) or on a single, early manuscript originally in the Cistercian library at Lucedio, with a different, shortened, final section (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana H230 inf., first half 13th century). Maresca has done a great deal of work on the language and provides an exhaustive critical apparatus and commentary. This underscores just how expert Bernard was at the traditional hagiographical methods



of biblical quotation while also drawing on his own legal training, occasional classical writings and on still other contemporary sources beyond those already mentioned.

The forty posthumous miracles have been widely exploited. Apart from the detail on witnessing to the bishop, they are conventionally outlined, starting with identification of the beneficiary, the problem, the petition to the saint and eye witnesses to the cure. Those who benefitted encompassed all social classes and ages: noblewomen, mothers and children, babies, knights, shoemakers, millers, prisoners, priests and monks, judges, quite a few who had known Lanfranc in person, but also some from as far afield as Rome and Piedmont and of course, many who had first appealed to medical doctors or to other saints without success. Those who came were cured from incredulity, damage to one or both eyes, fevers, hernias, gout, paralysis, blindness, muteness, madness, injuries caused by accidents or brigands. A girl condemned to burning for poisoning her brother after a trial by duel went against her is perhaps the most particular; a wax horse and a silver image of St James, the most interesting of the many *ex votos* described. As with so many miracle accounts, those of Lanfranc furnish numerous details suitable not just for a history of belief but also for a history of disability and bodily impairment. But Bernard begins with a woman who was able to walk again after she had had herself blessed by the dead hand of the bishop (*manu se fecit beati presulis consignari*). This she did while Lanfranc's unburied corpse was still lying on the funeral bier in the monastic church. The selection of miracles was presumably driven by chronology: this was the first he could place. However vivid, convincing and 'historical' Bernard wished to be, this is nonetheless a powerful evocation of now unfamiliar practices of belief and death.

The edition of the *vita* and miracles is accompanied by translations into Italian which seem designed to explicate rather than offer a literal reading. The volume concludes with appendices discussing the figure of Lanfranc in liturgical texts, the 1888 decree confirming the cult (edited on pages 156-157) and a note about a very short epitome of the life of Lanfranc which Maresca came across only after the book had been paginated (transcribed on 164). The timing must have been frustrating for the editor but the text offers a very appropriate epilogue to the volume, since it concisely summarises the key elements in Lanfranc's life, a skeleton of the longer *vita*. This is a book which offers many points of contact with on-going research questions and deserves to generate new studies.

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R.A. Lo Bello, *Resistenza profetica. Arnaldo di Villanova e i frati minori*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2014, pp. IX-121.

Sulla copertina del recente volume di Rosario Andrea Lo Bello è riprodotto il f. 148r del codice Vat. lat. 3819 della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, che – come si legge nel risvolto posteriore – contiene delle *Profezie papali illustrate* (si tratta di uno dei testimoni dello stadio più evoluto, a livello iconografico, della serie di *Vaticinia*