



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Momento: Studi galileiani*. by Paolo Galluzzi

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narrative reconstructions (e.g. Menocchio “must have *felt* very much alone”). In the inevitable mingling of ideas and feelings that characterize the “texts,” the analysis of individual traits now and then tends to slip into a picturesque commentary that is either simplifying (p. 103) or obscure (p. 79), while the methodical aggregate of history of ideas, history of social conditions, history of intellectual exchange, and cultural typology works brilliantly and produces moments of high perceptiveness.

In John and Anne Tedeschi’s exemplary translation, the crucial element of the case—namely the emerging of a “common store of traditions, myths, and aspirations handed down orally over generations” through contact with written culture—is demonstrated in spite of the scarcity of hard evidence. However few or distorted may be the traces left by the oral culture of the subordinate classes in pre-industrial Europe, this analysis of Menocchio’s ordeal clearly poses the problem of the basic popular currents within medieval and post-medieval high European culture and opens a suggestive vista on the tapering off of an era of “hidden but fruitful exchanges, moving in both directions between high and popular cultures”: another aspect of incipient modernity, with its increasingly rigid distinction between the cultural hegemony of the leading classes and the social levels subject to indoctrination from above.

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Paolo Galluzzi. *Momento: Studi galileiani*. (Lessico Intellettuale Europeo, 19.) Rome: Edizioni dell’Ateneo & Bizzarri, 1979. xvi + 436 pp. L.18,000.

This most unusual lexical study of Galileo’s uses of the words *momento* (Ital.) and *momentum* (Lat.) sheds unexpected light on the origins of his “new science” of motion. Historians of science were generally aware that these terms had a variety of meanings for Galileo, but no one to date had attempted to sort these out and discern their relationship to the development of his thought. Paolo Galluzzi has rendered an outstanding service to Galileo scholars by doing just this, and, perhaps even more important, by manifesting Galileo’s debt to the Greek and Latin traditions that preceded him while at the same time according him proper credit for substantial innovations of his own.

The study is divided into two parts, the first surveying the differ-

ent meanings of *momento* and *momentum* in various traditions (Greek, Biblical, Aristotelian, Archimedean, Vitruvian, etc.), and the second tracing how these meanings were employed by Galileo at different times and in nuanced ways as he proceeded from his earliest writings to the full flowering of his thought in the *Two New Sciences*. The meanings that prove most significant are these: moment in the sense of instant; the figurative sense of importance or weight; any small quantity, in general; natural inclination, proportional to weight; determinate inclination, arising from other than weight; and degree of velocity. The work concludes with valuable appendices that give references to every instance of Galileo's use of *momento* and *momentum*, classified according to the foregoing meanings, in the National Edition of his writings.

In summary, Galluzzi's thesis is the following. Galileo's first usage was that of *momento della gravità* in the static or Archimedean sense, which he attempted to incorporate into a science of falling bodies through the related and derived concept of *momentum velocitatis*. Finding difficulty in reconciling gravity as a cause of motion with the equal acceleration experienced by all bodies regardless of weight, he gradually accorded more autonomy to the expression *momentum velocitatis*, finally conceiving it after the fashion of an instantaneous velocity and thus merging the meanings of moment as inclination with that of moment as instant (or infinitesimal of time). The bases for these changes of meaning are to be found in the fourth and sixth books of Aristotle's *Physics*, especially as translated and expounded in medieval and Renaissance Latin commentaries, where the term *momentum* had come to be used indifferently for natural inclination, for the infinitesimal of time, and for the infinitesimal of motion (otherwise rendered as the *mutatum esse* corresponding to any instant of the duration of a local motion). It was Galileo's preoccupation with developing a rigorous geometrical-mathematical treatment of natural motion, in Galluzzi's estimation, that led him to conflate the static significance of *momentum* (characteristic of earlier mechanical treatises) with the dynamic and infinitesimal significance that a *nuova scienza* of naturally accelerated motions would require. And the term *momentum* itself was sufficiently equivocal, as Galluzzi sees it, to be able to carry these subtle changes of meaning, while at the same time sustaining a continuous development within Galileo's own thought (pp. 383–387).

Galluzzi's work is one of prodigious labor and vast erudition, tak-

ing account not only of classical, medieval, and Renaissance sources and of Galileo's own writings, but also of recent contributions of Clagett, Clavelin, Drake, Moody, and Wisan to Galileo scholarship. His results are impressive and will have to be taken into account in all future studies. They corroborate others turned up by quite different approaches (including those of the reviewer), particularly by way of endorsing a qualified continuity thesis that sees "modern" science as developing from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century science (as well as from that of classical antiquity and the Middle Ages), with far greater dependence on an ongoing Aristotelian tradition than has hitherto been suspected.

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Kaspar von Greyerz. *The Late City Reformation in Germany: The Case of Colmar, 1522-1628*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1980. DM.68.

There is today a revival of old-fashioned political narratives of the Reformation. Von Greyerz's book is the latest in a series of such reactionary studies that includes the recent well-known works of Thomas Brady, Jr. and Hans-Christoph Rublack, whose views have strongly influenced the author.

Reminding us that the urban Reformation was not confined to the first two or three decades of the sixteenth century, Von Greyerz defends the uniqueness of the "late city Reformation," which he believes followed a fundamentally different pattern of development than the early city Reformation of the 1520s and 30s. Whereas the latter was forced on a city "from below" by popular social and religious unrest, the former was an Erastian magistrate's reform—the result of the "authorities' progressively restless quest for undisputed hegemony in the city's ecclesiastical affairs" (p. 103). The Colmar Reformation was "entirely introduced 'from above' (in 1575) by the ruling patriciate . . . in the virtual absence of any competent urban reformer" (pp. 3, 163-169, 196-205), and it had the support of only a minority of the citizenry at the time of its imposition (p. 197). Internally the Reformation strengthened the "prevailing oligarchical regime" and furthered the decline of the "corporate-communal ideal," while externally it assisted the city's political emancipation from the