Le gouvernement pontifical sous Pie XI. Pratiques romaines et gestion de l'universel, études réunies par
Laura PETTINAROLI

Rome, École Française de Rome, 2013

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Le gouvernement pontifical sous Pie XI. Pratiques romaines et gestion de l'universel, études réunies par Laura PETTINAROLI, Rome, École Française de Rome, 2013, 24 cm, 847 p., 45 €, ISBN 978-2-7283-0957-3.

- 1 The opening of the papers of pope Pius XI (1922-1939) in the Vatican Archives in 2006 inevitably provoked a veritable 'explosion' of conferences and studies of the pontificate of that pope – monographs, journal articles and edited collections. Some historians like Emma Fattorini with her book *Pio XI, Mussolini e Hitler* (Milan, 2007) and David I. Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe* (New York, 2014) have focussed on papa Ratti himself, while others like John Pollard, *The Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism: 1914-1958* (Oxford, 2014), have used the documentary sources now available to look at Pius XI's pontificate 'in the round', so to speak. Yet others have used those materials to produce edited collections of essays on various aspects of the pontificate, like Jean-Pierre Delville and Marko Jacov (eds) in *La papauté contemporaine (XIX^e-XX^e siècle/Il papato contemporaneo (secoli XIX-XX))*, *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique* and *Collectanea Archivi Vaticana*, 2009 [in fact, this volume covers the history of the papacy from 1914 until the end of the pontificate of St. John Paul II], Alberto Guasco and Raffaella Perin (eds) in *Pius XI: Keywords: International Conference* (Milan 2009, Zurich, Berlin & Muenster 2010), and Charles R. Gallagher, David I. Kertzer

and Alberto Melloni, *Pius XI and America : Proceedings of the Brown University (Providence, October 2010)*. Laura Pettinaroli's volume very much fits into the latter category.

- 2 Given the near-obsession in the historiography of the twentieth century papacy until very recently with the pontificate of Pius XII and his responses to the Holocaust, this new emphasis upon the pontificate of his predecessor is most welcome. It is impossible in this short space to list and separately evaluate all of the contributors and contributions but suffice it to say that they range from established *maestri*, like Étienne Fouilloux, Emma Fattorini, Francois Jankowiak, Jacques Prévotat and Roberto Regoli, to up and coming younger scholars like Liliosa Azara, Lucia Ceci and Alberto Guasco. The majority of the essays focus precisely on the subject of the title, that is the ways in which papal government functioned during the pontificate of Pius XI, a man of an authoritarian and demanding temper. They thus shed a great deal of light on the relationships between the various dicasteries of the Roman curia, especially the most important ones – the Secretariat of State/Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, the missionary congregation Propaganda Fide, the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office and Index, and the Consistorial Congregation. They evaluate the relative weight of the pope, cardinals and other high-ranking prelates in decision-making processes, as well as providing glimpses into the ways in which all three collected and analysed the information they were continually receiving from a variety of sources. They also throw much light on the functioning of both formal and informal papal diplomacy : in regard to the latter, Giulia D'Alessio provides an important insight into the role played by Mons. Amleto Cicognani, apostolic delegate in Washington, in the development of the relationship between the Holy See and the USA in the years before the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1940. Thus the actual workings of papal central government in Rome are not privileged to the disadvantage of centre-periphery relations in this volume. Indeed, the consequences of the massive expansion of Vatican diplomatic relations with the 'successor states' and other powers, which was inaugurated by Benedict XV (1914-1922), and the decisive 'turn' in the Holy See's missionary policy commenced by that same pope and carried forward by his successor are the subject of over a quarter of the contributions, thus providing us with case studies of the application of Vatican policies at a local level.
- 3 Naturally, in a volume which is so centred on decision-making in the Vatican, key personalities in the Roman curia during Pius XI's pontificate are a focus of attention – like the essay on Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli as Secretary of State (Fattorini) and that on Father Mariano Cordovani, the 'house-theologian' of the Vatican (Philippe Chenaux). Lesser personalities like Mons. Gustavo Testa, the papal diplomat charged with representing the pope during the Ruhr Crisis of 1923 (Marie Levant) and Mons. Francesco Borgongini-Duca, first papal nuncio to Italy (Alberto Guasco) also have space here. I do regret, however, that no one has contributed a study of Fr Wlodimir Ledechowski, Father General of the Jesuits and a man of enormous behind-the-scenes influence in the Vatican at this time to the volume. Indeed, what is urgently lacking is a broader study of the role of the Jesuits in Vatican decision-making processes during this pontificate, though the essay about enquiries into communism (Giunipero) does touch on Jesuit bishop Michel D'Herbigny, who was Pius XI's as extraordinary representative in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, and head of the commission *Pro Russia* in the early 1930s.

- 4 Nevertheless, Laura Pettinaroli has brought together a very important and very useful collection of studies of the workings of papal government during the pontificate of Pius XI. It will certainly prove to be of great value to the dozens of scholars still consulting Pius XI's papers and not only in the Archivio segreto, but also papers relating to his reign in the archives of the Holy Office, Propaganda, and Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari : the latter were mysteriously, and in my opinion irrationally, separated from the Archivio segreto some years ago.
- 5 These essays demonstrate how the various branches of the Roman curia handled the vast increase in the business transacted during the pontificate of papa Ratti. They also show how this pope, whose very '...charisma was governing, who expressed himself though governing', as Andrea Riccardi describes it in his Conclusion to the volume, managed to cope with the many new challenges and threats which fate threw at the Catholic Church in this period – including the rise of the Soviet Union and international communism, Fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany and rampant, often violent secularism and anti-clericalism elsewhere in the world. The challenges faced by papa Ratti's successor, Eugenio Pacelli, pope Pius XII (1939-1958) were arguably not very different, though the Holocaust and other Nazi-fascist atrocities during World War II, and the post-war persecution of the Catholic Church in Eastern Europe and Asia were, admittedly, on a different scale.
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