

Romolo Murri during the years of Fascist regime

This research aims to discover some important aspects of Romolo Murri's life and thought during Fascism. Archival and documentary sources, most of which are new, have been the very starting point of this work that intends to analyze this subject following three different approaches: the journalistic production, the works written by the ex-priest during core moments of regime history and finally, some debates in which Murri took part. Long unconsidered as a negligible period from both a chronological and a substantial point of view, Fascism gave him new notoriety: a role that he was going to hold even after the end of his political experience.

The works which were published either by himself or by accredited reviews and dailies such as "Il Resto del Carlino" and "Critica fascista" were very important. In particular, the first one was an irreplaceable source of income and maintenance for his family. This was not a minor detail, taking into account the existential and material difficulties of an excommunicated person who lived in a context of concordatory regime.

If his journalistic activity before 1926 gave him a more participant point of view on the various phases of the Liberal State crisis and the coming of Fascism, following years activity felt the effects of the press regimentation, revealing a restriction of comments, often bridled and steered by directives that came straight from the top. Starting from the thirties, Murri's journalistic production concerned mainly foreign policy and this caused significant self-censorship cases: total, partial or even preventive. Nevertheless, he concealed and reduced the most censurable aspects even during the first years of Fascism. On the other hand, "third page" articles were similar in subject to Murri's coeval works and gave cause to osmotic dynamics.

The analysis of *L'ulivo di Santena*, of *Idea universale di Roma* and of *Il messaggio cristiano e la storia* seems to outline a path between Romanity and Christianity, that means an always larger space saved for Christian subjects as an irreplaceable basis of civilization: an aspect that threw the Fascist subject more and more into the shade. This tendency tallied with his concomitant resumption of contacts with Catholic world; but this did not mean he stopped criticizing the Church that was blamed for his insufficient historical translation of Christ's message, in connection with a wartime crisis which was to be interpreted as the crisis of Christian civilization.

These subjects can be also found in Murri's contribution to "Critica fascista" in 1941-1942 during a worsening phase of relations between the Regime and the Church, when his articles animated the page *La Chiesa e la crisi del mondo*; hid behind it were De Luca's shadow advices to Bottai through the well-known "monthly letters": an aspect of Murri's current affairs activity which was quite ignored because of his use of pen names. Nevertheless, it is important for the anonymous dialogue on the review (and not only there) with the "Gerarca" who did not miss a chance to attack Catholic disengagement towards the war.

Some moments of the relationship between Murri, Croce and Gentile have also been taken into account, with special reference to 1943 works that analyze how Christianity and Catholicism cross Murri's reflections.