

Francesco d'Assisi e la cura del creato



La “questione francescana”. Il problema delle fonti



Un santo per tutte le stagioni?



ZANZARIERE S. FRANCESCO



Mini-cloud di parole chiave

fraternitas minoritas

humilitas animalis

cura “materna”

libertas

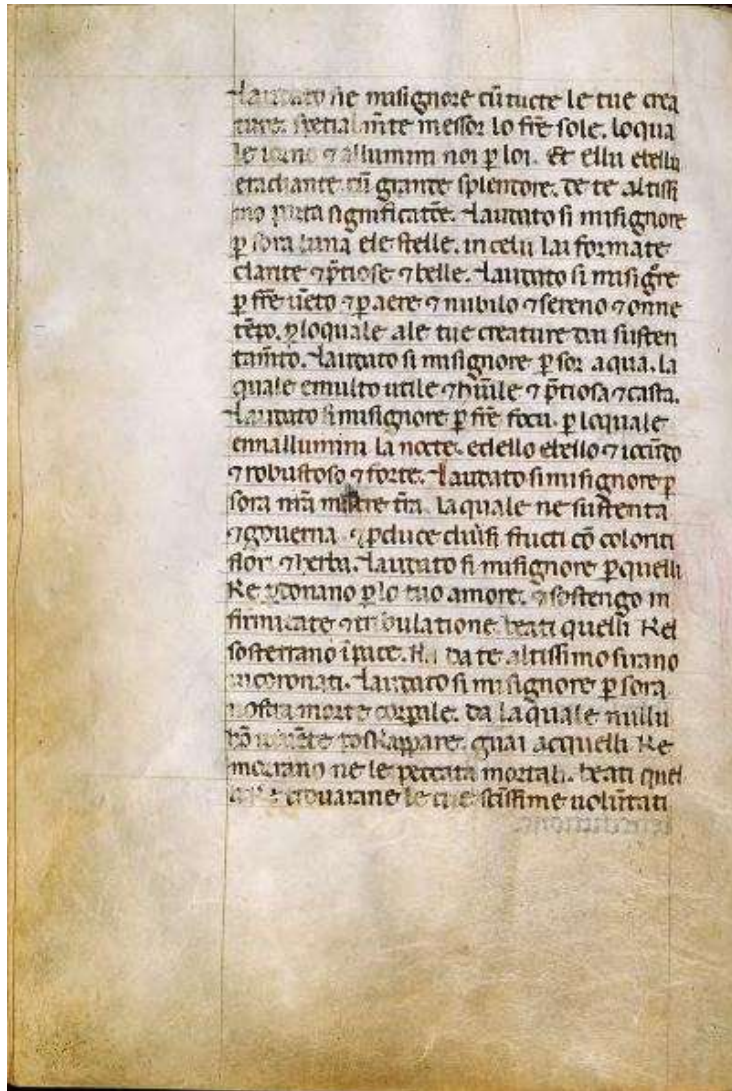
oboedientia vs *hybris*

Al cuore della spiritualità di Francesco: l'esperienza della *compassione*. Dal *Testamento* (1226)

Il Signore dette a me, frate Francesco, d'incominciare a fare penitenza così: quando ero nei peccati mi sembrava cosa troppo amara vedere i lebbrosi e il Signore stesso mi condusse tra loro e usai con essi misericordia. E allontanandomi da essi, ciò che mi sembrava amaro mi fu cambiato in dolcezza d'animo e di corpo. E di poi, stetti un poco e uscii dal mondo.

Dominus ita dedit mihi fratri Francisco incipere faciendi poenitentiam: quia, cum essem in peccatis, nimis mihi videbatur amarum videre leprosos. Et ipse Dominus conduxit me inter illos et feci misericordiam cum illis. Et recedente me ab ipsis, id quod videbatur mihi amarum, conversum fuit mihi in dulcedinem animi et corporis; et postea parum steti et exivi de saeculo.

Il *Cantico di Frate Sole* (1225)



La predica agli uccelli (*Vita prima*). L'"evangelo per ogni creatura"?

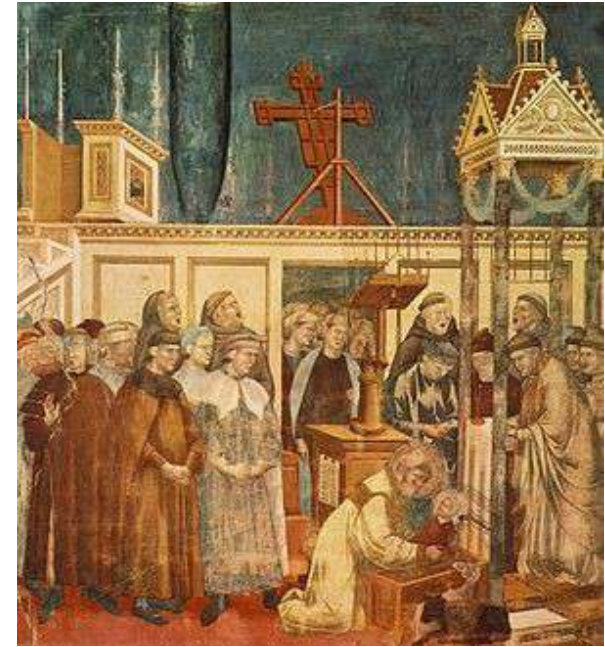
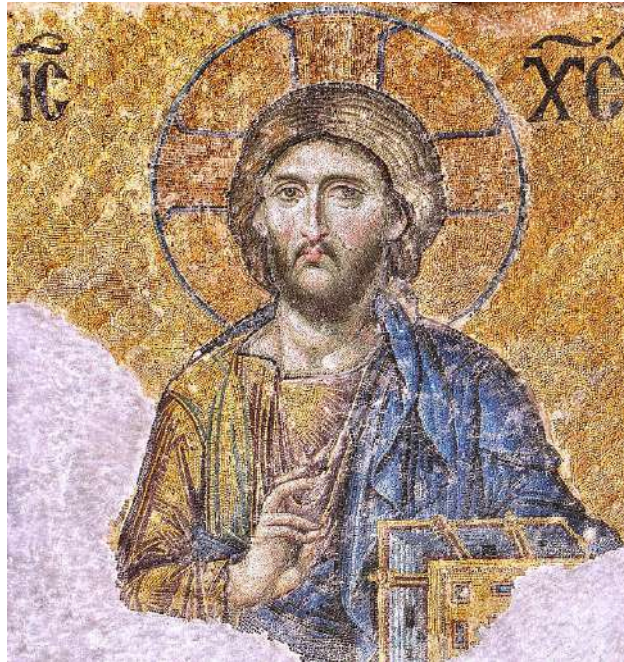
58. Mentre, come si è detto, il numero dei frati andava aumentando, Francesco percorreva la valle Spoletana. Giunto presso Bevagna, vide raccolti insieme moltissimi uccelli d'ogni specie, colombe, cornacchie e «monachine». Il servo di Dio, Francesco, che era uomo **pieno di ardente amore e nutriva grande pietà e tenero amore anche per le creature inferiori e irrazionali**, corse da loro in fretta, lasciando sulla strada i compagni. Fattosi vicino, vedendo che lo attendevano, li salutò secondo il suo costume.



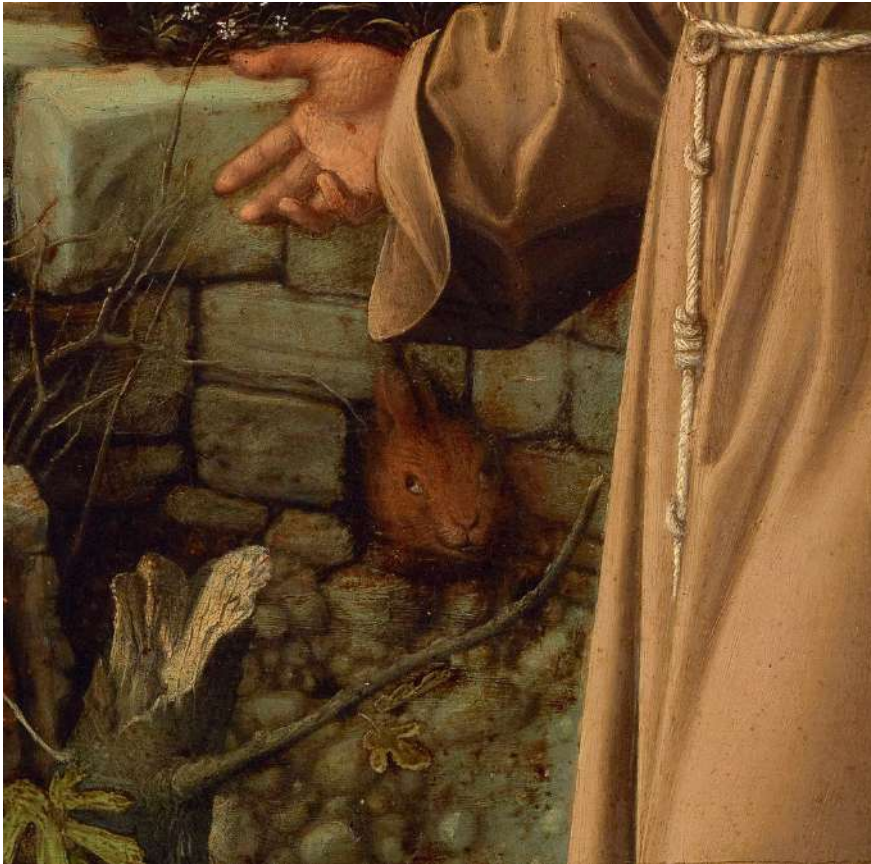
Rielaborazione dell'esperienza di Francesco in chiave teologico-moralistica: la scrofa e l'agnellino, il pettirosso, la pecora devota



Francesco e l'etica della cura: il presepe di Greccio



Non solo *per* l'uomo: “natura libera” e valore intrinseco del creato



Giudizi contemporanei sul rapporto di Francesco con la natura: Lynn White Jr. (1967)

10 March 1967, Volume 155, Number 3767

SCIENCE

The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis

Lynn White, Jr.

A conversation with Aldous Huxley not infrequently put one at the receiving end of an unforgettable monologue. About a year before his lamented death he was discoursing on a favorite topic: Man's unnatural treatment of nature and its sad results. To illustrate his point he told how, during the previous summer, he had returned to a little valley in England where he had spent many happy months as a child. Once it had been composed of delightful grassy glades; now it was becoming overgrown with unsightly brush because the rabbits that formerly kept such growth under control had largely succumbed to a disease, myxomatosis, that was deliberately introduced by the local farmers to reduce the rabbits' destruction of crops. Being something of a Philistine, I could be silent no longer, even in the interests of great rhetoric. I interrupted to point out that the rabbit itself had been brought as a domestic animal to England in 1176, presumably to improve the protein diet of the peasantry.

All forms of life modify their contexts. The most spectacular and benign instance is doubtless the coral polyp. By serving its own ends, it has created a vast undersea world favorable to thousands of other kinds of animals and plants. Ever since man became a numerous species he has affected his environment notably. The hypothesis that his fire-drive method of hunting created the world's great grasslands and

helped to exterminate the monster mammals of the Pleistocene from much of the globe is plausible, if not proved. For 6 millennia at least, the banks of the lower Nile have been a human artifact rather than the swampy African jungle which nature, apart from man, would have made it. The Aswan Dam, flooding 5000 square miles, is only the latest stage in a long process. In many regions terracing or irrigation, overgrazing, the cutting of forests by Romans to build ships to fight Carthaginians or by Crusaders to solve the logistics problems of their expeditions, have profoundly changed some ecologies. Observation that the French landscape falls into two basic types, the open fields of the north and the bocage of the south and west, inspired Marc Bloch to undertake his classic study of medieval agricultural methods. Quite unintentionally, changes in human ways often affect nonhuman nature. It has been noted, for example, that the advent of the automobile eliminated huge flocks of sparrows that once fed on the horse manure littering every street.

The history of ecologic change is still so rudimentary that we know little about what really happened, or what the results were. The extinction of the European aurochs as late as 1627 would seem to have been a simple case of overenthusiastic hunting. On more intricate matters it often is impossible to find solid information. For a thousand years or more the Frisians and Hollanders have been pushing back the North Sea, and the process is culmi-

nating in our own time in the reclamation of the Zuider Zee. What, if any, species of animals, birds, fish, shore life, or plants have died out in the process? In their epic combat with Neptune have the Netherlanders overlooked ecological values in such a way that the quality of human life in the Netherlands has suffered? I cannot discover that the questions have ever been asked, much less answered.

People, then, have often been a dynamic element in their own environment, but in the present state of historical scholarship we usually do not know exactly when, where, or with what effects man-induced changes came. As we enter the last third of the 20th century, however, concern for the problem of ecologic backlash is mounting feverishly. Natural science, conceived as the effort to understand the nature of things, had flourished in several eras and among several peoples. Similarly there had been an age-old accumulation of technological skills, sometimes growing rapidly, sometimes slowly. But it was not until about four generations ago that Western Europe and North America arranged a marriage between science and technology, a union of the theoretical and the empirical approaches to our natural environment. The emergence in widespread practice of the Baconian creed that scientific knowledge means technological power over nature can scarcely be dated before about 1850, save in the chemical industries, where it is anticipated in the 18th century. Its acceptance as a normal pattern of action may mark the greatest event in human history since the invention of agriculture, and perhaps in nonhuman terrestrial history as well.

Almost at once the new situation forced the crystallization of the novel concept of ecology; indeed, the word *ecology* first appeared in the English language in 1873. Today, less than a century later, the impact of our race upon the environment has so increased in force that it has changed in essence. When the first cannons were fired, in the early 14th century, they affected ecology by sending workers scrambling to the forests and moun-



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Attualità di Francesco: ecologizzare il cristianesimo?



Dal *Saluto alle virtù*

La santa obbedienza confonde ogni volontà corporale e carnale, e tiene il corpo di ciascuno mortificato per l'obbedienza allo spirito e per l'obbedienza al proprio fratello; e allora l'uomo è **suddito e sottomesso** a tutti gli uomini che sono nel mondo, e non soltanto ai soli uomini, ma anche a tutte le bestie e alle fiere, così che possano fare di lui quello che vogliono, per quanto sarà loro concesso dall'alto del Signore.

Sancta obedientia confundit omnes corporales et carnales voluntates et habet mortificatum corpus suum ad obedientiam spiritus et ad obedientiam fratris sui et est **subditus et suppositus** omnibus hominibus, qui sunt in mundo, **et non tantum solis hominibus, sed etiam omnibus bestiis et feris, ut possint facere de eo, quicquid voluerint, quantum fuerit eis datum desuper a Domino.**