

*Etica*. Tommaso Campanella.

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There has hitherto been no translation of the *Etica* into a modern language, although Tommaso Campanella himself provided an early sketch of the basic ideas in Italian already in his *Epilogo Magno*, an early version of his “entire philosophy,” as he called it (39), which he completed in 1598. He kept revising this last work in subsequent years, and when an opportunity came to publish it, not in Italy but in Germany, in the second decade of the seventeenth century, he rendered it into Latin, and this became the first part, entitled *Physiologia*, of his synthetic work, the *Philosophia Realis*. By this time the original writing had been considerably expanded, including the second section, which eventually took on a life of its own as the *Etica*. Here along with the translated *Etica* is an edition of book 6, referring to ethics, of the earlier *Epilogo Magno*, which was published in its entirety in an imperfect version by Carmelo Ottaviano in 1939.

The context is furnished by the author himself in the “Quaestiones,” appended to the 1637 definitive printed edition of this work and not included here, referring to a thousand betrayals by friend and foe alike, with a detailed description (serving to exemplify mental sublimity) of a famous torture improbably survived, during one of the many imprisonments for crimes of unorthodoxy and disobedience in respect to authorities first in Naples and then in Rome. In the most horrific circumstances, except for a short interlude as Urban VIII’s astrological advisor, he developed a remarkable philosophical vision joining theology, metaphysics, and the new natural science to a prospect of civic welfare.

For bringing the work to wider audiences, which might be less informed about the extraordinary range of Campanella’s philosophical project than this *RQ* one is, the Scuola Normale series could scarcely have found a better editor and translator than Germana Ernst. Possibly no other scholar since Luigi Firpo has devoted such energy and attention to Campanella’s writings. The present edition adds to a productivity that already includes still other Campanella editions, including the letters, the *Ateismo trionfato*, and the *Del senso delle cose*, along with coeditorship of the journal *Bruniana e Campanelliana* as well as various related studies. We are thus informed in the editor’s introduction, covering much the same ground as the introduction to the Latin edition, about the adventurous Calabrian author’s theory regarding how the spirit develops, governed by the primalities, i.e., Power, Wisdom, and Love, the dynamic of whose interaction with their objects produces all the passions, as against Aristotle’s view that virtue is an acquired habitus. Already at this point Campanella’s argument shows traces of a naturalism derived largely from the works of Bernardino Telesio, listed on the Clementine Index of 1596. No wonder the other Dominicans were dismayed. In subsequent sections there will be the explanation of an ethics founded on morality as involving freedom rather than restraint, since virtue by force alone is no virtue at all. Not far in the background are those

ideas about the world-animal analogy and panpsychism, which run through many of his productions and caused him so much trouble.

The critical notes trace an intellectual itinerary, impressive in breadth and depth, drawing upon, while criticizing, a plethora of sources, ranging from the ancient classics to the church fathers, with excursions into some rather remote corners of the early modern world, such as an account of simian bestiality recorded in Portugal by Antonio de Torquemada in 1590. This latter reference goes on to exemplify a violation of the normal course of nature, which commands the utilization of the genitals exclusively for procreation purposes within a given kind of animal. Natural adultery, Campanella specifies, is worse than the adultery punished by law. Galileo's work on sunspots comes up in the section on solicitude and the human arts, in a connection that hearkens back to the macrocosm-microcosm analogy, since sunspots for Campanella offer further proof that the sun is a living thing requiring alimentation, not unlike terrestrial creatures. For a fuller treatment of the fascinating differences of opinion between Galileo and Campanella on this and many other issues, Ernst refers to her imminent treatment of the subject, and the quality of this edition induces a fervent wish for speedy completion.

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