

Giorgio Caravale. *Predicazione e inquisizione nell'Italia del Cinquecento: Ippolito Chizzola tra eresia e controversia antiprottestante.*

Studi fonti documenti di storia e letteratura religiosa. Bologna: Il mulino, 2012. 306 pp. €23. ISBN: 978-88-15-24103-0.

In this welcome addition to his previous studies, Giorgio Caravale compellingly analyzes and reconstructs an inquisitorial process in Northern Italy in the sixteenth century, and in the process illuminates the way in which heterodox Lutheran ideas had infiltrated into the Italian scene. What is novel and significant is that Caravale brings together two historiographical traditions that have developed in parallel: the history of the Inquisition and the history of preaching. His work therefore integrates, builds on, and extends the pioneering studies of Adriano Prosperi (Inquisition) and Roberto Rusconi (preaching). At the heart of his argument is the increasingly sophisticated rhetorical skill of heterodox preachers in the period, who achieved their ends by silence and omission, not by positive affirmations of Lutheran tenets.

The central protagonist, Don Ippolito Chizzola (1521–65) serves both to dramatize and illustrate the central argument: born in Brescia, a member of the Canons Regular of the Lateran and a successful preacher in the second part of the 1540s, he was brought to trial at the end of the decade for his suspect views, was forced to a public recantation, and then, in a few years, turned into a successful anti-Protestant controversialist, and, in addition, served covertly as an informant to Cosimo I, Grand Duke of Florence. Caravale examines the external evidence of

both the Inquisition's accusations and Chizzola's reactions, drawing on decrees archived in the Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, and importantly, the record of the interrogations in Rome and Chizzola's own letters, conveniently appended at the end of Caravale's book — a boon to students and scholars alike.

How Chizzola came to be infected by the Lutheran contagion Caravale explains in the opening chapters. He documents Brescia as a center for less than orthodox preaching where suspect preachers were occupying pulpits of most urban churches and where the sporadic and disorganized intervention of ecclesiastical authorities was devoid of any effectiveness. Chizzola's profile was not that of an isolated, eccentric preacher: his acquaintances and his attitudes paint a portrait of a man of the Church who counted himself among *spirituali* united under the leadership of the Spaniard Juan de Valdés. Caravale reconstructs the network connecting Chizzola to heterodoxy at Lucca by way of a follower of Pietro Martire Vermigli, Celso Martinengo. From Martinengo Chizzola acquired, "in all probability," the fundamentals of an anti-Roman critique and a Pauline (and Lutheran) instruction that would inform his preaching. Crucially, it was Martinengo's later flight from Italy (1551) that spurred Chizzola to recant his heterodox views and to become a loyal servant of the papacy.

The core of the book begins in chapter 4. The narrative moves from Cremona (1548) to Venice (1549), to Imola, and then to Rome (late June 1549). It deals with the censorship of Chizzola for the bold ideas that emerged from his preaching, and the beginnings of the inquisitorial process against him. The ecclesiastical authorities were increasingly less disposed to tolerate the ambiguity of his preaching. For Caravale, the inquisitorial proceedings were the result of "his youthful passion for the pulpit." It was his Lenten sermons in the principal cities of Northern Italy, Venice in particular, which resulted in a constellation of complaints, suspicions, warnings, and explicit accusations of heresy. The success of his preaching is noted in the inquisitorial proceedings: he attracted "a good audience and popular favour," and it was hinted that the charges were fuelled by "old preachers" left without hearers and therefore jealous of his success.

Caravale interrupts the account of the proceedings to insert three chapters devoted to an examination of the content of Chizzola's preaching as reflected in the records of the interrogations in Rome. He expertly analyzes the way in which Chizzola had absorbed the ideas of the Northern humanist Erasmus, as expressed in his *Exemolosis*, on the issue of penance and confession, and skirted the orthodox view of the absolute necessity of the sacrament, its validity by reason of its divine origin, as distinct from the worthiness of the priest and/or the penitent. Chizzola admitted that he did not want to enter into this discussion and that he had avoided it in his preaching. As Caravale points out, the interrogation of Chizzola had a particular edge: the decree of the Council of Trent, confirming that of Lateran IV enjoining annual confession to a priest, was only a few months away. Throughout, Caravale's discussion uncovers the evasiveness of Chizzola's responses and the importance of the influence of Valdés (who had championed Nicodemism).

Chizzola had learned well the skill of communicating a message, Lutheran in leaning, through the veil of silence and omission. He could only be accused of omitting to preach, for example, the obligation of annual confession, or of not ever using the term *transubstantiation*.

Conversion, adjuration, and then rehabilitation became redemption in 1562 with the publication of Chizzola's *Discourses to confute particular heresies*. As Caravale's important and intriguing analysis concludes, we are confronted with a Chizzola, the opportunist, who lived his remaining years unambiguously as a hero of Catholic orthodoxy.

PETER HOWARD  
Monash University