



Enlightenment  
*and*  
Catholicism  
*in*  
Europe

*A Transnational History*



*edited by*

Jeffrey D. Burson *and* Ulrich L. Lehner

*University of Notre Dame Press*

*Notre Dame, Indiana*

# 11



## Lodovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750)

*Enlightenment in a Tridentine Mode*

PAOLA VISMARA

Lodovico Antonio Muratori was one of the most influential cultural figures in Italy in the first half of the eighteenth century. His nephew, Gianfrancesco Soli Muratori, wrote a very informative, although celebratory, biography of him. Today, after about two and a half centuries, Muratori is still waiting for another biographer. He was an extremely complex character: an active priest, the author of various scholarly works, and in correspondence with many illustrious people. He left a great intellectual heritage, and his thought has been interpreted variously. This chapter will outline in broad terms Muratori's personality in the context of his time, with a particular emphasis on the so-called Catholic *Aufklärung*, a version of the Enlightenment that spread in the Habsburg lands and in Italy. Two commonly acknowledged features of "Enlightened Catholics" are their desire for a

renewal of the church with the help of secular sovereigns in order to take the church back to its roots, and the marginalization of the importance of dogma (Plongerón 1969, 1970; Rosa 1999, 149–84).

During the first decades of the eighteenth century, the cultural consequences of the Enlightenment were not completely clear, which is why, for instance, Benedict XIV accepted Voltaire's dedication of his book *Mahomet*. At that time, the opposition between the Enlightenment and Catholicism was not yet recognized. Not until the pontificates of Clement XIII and Pius VI did the fundamental tension become obvious.

In the course of Muratori's life, the first signs of the gradual political weakening of Rome appeared, but the Catholic Church continued to be very influential. Despite internal debates in the church, its religious accomplishments according to the ideals of the Council of Trent were clearly visible. At the same time, within the church some were attempting to adapt the Catholic doctrine to new sensibilities. To penetrate Muratori's thought and to evaluate his role, we must study his life and works within the broader context of the Catholic *Aufklärung*.

### Intellectual Formation

Born in Vignola in 1672 to a family of artisans, Muratori studied at the Jesuit College in Modena, following the traditional *cursus studiorum*, which included classes in grammar, the humanities, and philosophy. He graduated in philosophy and, a few years later, canon and secular law. There is rich information on his early years in an autobiographical work written in 1721, a letter to Giovanni Artico, Count of Porcia, entitled *On the Method I Followed in My Studies (Intorno al metodo seguito nei miei studi*; Battistini 1994). The Count of Porcia, who was collecting short autobiographical descriptions of the early life of the most important living Italian men of letters, commissioned him to write it. Muratori wanted his autobiography to be published only after his death; it was eventually published in 1772 because of the premature death of the Count of Porcia.

Muratori's connections to literary salons in Modena allowed him to be in touch with the cultural environment of that town and to meet many influential people, including the marquis, Giovan Gioseffo Orsi, and the men of letters Carlo Maria Maggi and Francesco de Lemene, both members of the Arcadia (Viola 2009). Muratori soon realized that his ignorance of Greek was a problem for his intellectual formation, and he tried to overcome it. In that period, Italian culture appeared to him less developed than that of the rest of Europe.

During those years, Muratori was a pupil of Benedetto Bacchini (1651–1721) (Momigliano 1963; Golinelli 2003), who strongly influenced him. Bacchini inspired in him an interest in sacred erudition (origins of Christianity and ecclesiastical history) and the desire to create an encyclopedia of knowledge that could combine French erudition (Maurists), German culture (Leibniz), and the scientific Italian tradition (from Galilei to Malpighi) (Raimondi 1989). This is very important for understanding the evolution of Muratori's thought and the origin of his peculiar attitudes, namely, his emphasis on logic, on the vital need for research, on the sound use of reason, and on the ethical and civic responsibilities of men of letters (Cottignoli 1994).

Thanks to Bacchini, Muratori deepened his skills in philology and ecclesiastical history. During his years spent at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan (1695–1700) as a *dottore*—a scholar charged with working on the collections of the library—he devoted himself to philology (Flammini 2006). Although he did not always achieve excellent results, he developed an attitude of fidelity to philological evidence, even when such evidence was in conflict with the most celebrated traditions. The years in Milan were rich with experiences that strongly influenced Muratori's personality. He broadened his knowledge of Europe, and thanks to lively correspondences like the one with Antonio Magliabechi (1633–1714), he widened his network of connections.

### Muratori and History

In 1700, Muratori moved to Modena, where he became the archivist and librarian at the court of Duke Rinaldo d'Este. His expertise in

history was especially crucial in the thorny "Comacchio Affair" (Bertelli 1960). The territories of Comacchio were disputed: as property of the Holy See from 1598, they were claimed by the Este family with the support of the Holy Roman Empire. Their claims relied not only on the threat of armed intervention but also on historical documents. The writings on this topic tested Muratori's skills as a historian. He thoroughly collected and studied the sources and used all the instruments of philology and medieval historiography, as can be seen in his work entitled *Rights of the Empire and of the Este Family on the City of Comacchio* (*Piena esposizione dei diritti imperiali ed estensi sopra la città di Comacchio*; 1712), followed by *Antiquities of the House of Este* (*Antichità estensi*; 1717). Muratori understood that it was necessary, in order to study medieval Italian history, to tackle the critical knot of the historical role of the papacy (Neveu 1975, 279). He distinguished between the pope as the prince of the church and the pope as the sovereign of a state, and stated that the political choices of the pope could be openly questioned. This approach by Muratori was misinterpreted in the nineteenth century, when, for instance, the poet and man of letters Giosuè Carducci (1835–1907) wrongly considered his approach a precursor to the anticlericalism of the Risorgimento (Carducci 1900; Marchi 1998). Indeed, Muratori had ruled on a specific problem in favor of the Este family, but he was in no way hostile either to the temporal power of the pope or to the papacy itself. On the political-diplomatic front, Rome won in the dispute: the territories of Comacchio were returned to the Papal States in 1725.

Over the years, Muratori published extensive editions of sources and many historical works such as *Writers of Italian History* (*Rerum italicarum scriptores*; 1723–1751), *Italian Antiquities of the Middle Ages* (*Antiquitates italicæ Medii Aevi*; 1738–1742), and *Italian Annals* (*Annali d'Italia*; 1744–1749). The Società Palatina was created to support the publication of *Writers of Italian History*, and it was an important experiment in a kind of Italian "Republic of Letters" at a time when Italy was somewhat marginalized from the rest of European scholarship. After discovering the importance of medieval history in the "Comacchio Affair," Muratori concentrated on studying the fusion of the Romans and the barbarians. In his view, this topic was extremely

important for understanding both the origins of European civilization and the peculiarities of Italian history, physiognomy, and identity. Muratori emphasized that the cultural unity of Italy—a country that at the time was divided into a hundred cities—did not come from politics but from history, language, and religion. By suggesting this background of continuity, the historical works by Muratori profoundly influenced the Italians' civic consciousness (Cottignoli 1994, 97–110).

Although Muratori did not support the idyllic and mythologized vision of the Middle Ages that had great success at the beginning of the nineteenth century, he also strongly disagreed with the Enlightenment's negative interpretation. In Muratori, we can find a nonideological attention to the concreteness of history that originated in the importance he gave to sources and that, in the spirit of truth seeking, he inherited from Bacchini. According to Muratori, philology and erudition were not ends in themselves, but provided the instruments for building knowledge and prevented the historian from becoming a mere wordsmith. In Muratori's view, philological expertise, study of genealogies, knowledge of politico-diplomatic factors, and skills in juridical history were crucial for a well-rounded historiography.

Yet another field was required in order to complete historical knowledge: it is what Muratori called "philosophy," that is, the capacity to penetrate the events of the past by understanding the causes, effects, and connections among them. Only in this way, according to Muratori, was it possible to write a complete history of institutions and civilizations. In his historical research, Muratori thus overcame two widespread trends: "mere" erudition *and* the instrumental use of history. For instance, when he talked about the Catholic Church he avoided apologetic or controversialist attitudes, peculiar features of the historiography of the Counter-Reformation, and the use of history for purely polemical purposes, for example for a criticism of the church. He believed it was important to discern the true from the false in the church and its history, avoiding hypercriticism as exemplified in what Muratori considered to be the "sound criticism" of the Maurist monks. In this way, it was possible to avoid Pyrrhonian skepticism, which Muratori had condemned in his *On the Power of the Human*

*Imagination (Delle forze dell'intendimento umano; 1745)*. In short, he supported a constructive rather than a “destructive” criticism.

### Defending Reason

The French occupation of Modena (1702–1708) temporarily thwarted Muratori's research in the field of history and erudition, because of the impossibility of traveling and networking. During this period Muratori dedicated himself to cultural and literary projects, in particular two works with a Europe-wide horizon, *First Designs of the Literary Republic of Italy (Primi disegni della Repubblica letteraria d'Italia; 1703)* and *Reflections on Good Taste in Art and Science (Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto nelle scienze e nelle arti; 1708–1715)*, whose first volume was published in 1708. In the latter, Muratori discusses the real function of research, which can never be for personal profit, literary glory, or the increase of personal knowledge. The only authentic purpose of research is the search for truth and goodness. According to Muratori, even a bitter debate with one's opponents might be useful, provided that it springs forth from the “evidence of reason” (Vismara 2002, 2011).

In Muratori's thought, the defense of logic and the exaltation of reason appear repeatedly. In his view the study of logic is crucial because it enables one to understand the rules of reasoning and because it is an indispensable instrument for all the other disciplines of letters and sciences. He thought the critical approach, a skill mandatory for reasonable men and scholars, should be limited only in matters of religion and faith. In these two subjects, reason must be subordinated to authority, yet not be trampled by it. Even religious teachings, although partially inaccessible to reason, are not unreasonable. A fortiori in all the other subjects one must always submit books and authors to the test of reason (1708–1715, 107–9, 225–26; 1767 [1734, posthumous], 350). Muratori emphasized at all times the Christian appreciation of reason, and saw in it a root of a certain stream of (religious) Enlightenment from which the majority of Enlightenment thinkers, however, eventually detached themselves. In Muratori we do not find

the Enlightenment's absolute faith in reason that leads to rationalism; on the contrary, he was concerned about "the delirium of reason left to itself" (Falco 1960, 157).

In two works on this topic, *Reflections on Good Taste* and *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters* (*De ingeniorum moderatione in religionis negotio*; 1714), the author developed his idea on the nature and the goals of research by appealing to good taste (*buon gusto*) and moderation (*moderazione*). The goal of erudition is to show new truths and evidence in order to respond to "wise curiosity" and, above all, to expand the private and public good. Other works develop the topic of the common good in its various facets, emphasizing the importance of civic commitments on the part of scholars. Mario Rosa highlighted the strong presence of this topic even in the final part of Muratori's life, when he composed the last part of the *Italian Annals* (1749). In this late work, Muratori—who died in Modena the following year—shows a civic and religious consciousness, one capable of measuring itself against contemporary events and finding, in the tumultuous events of the first half of the eighteenth century, motivation for renewed commitment (Rosa 1997).

### Civic and Religious Commitment

The entire intellectual journey of Muratori is a crescendo of civic consciousness. In *The Defects of Jurisprudence* (*Dei difetti della giurisprudenza*; 1742) he refuses what we might call the "Pyrrhonism of jurisprudence," reaffirms the certainty of law, and describes concrete proposals for judicial reform. In the last years of his life, Muratori presented his thoughts on the responsibilities of governors in *On Public Happiness* (*Della pubblica felicità oggetto de' buoni principi*; 1749). His model for princes is the enlightened ruler, who has the duty to care for the welfare of his subjects according to the ideals of *utility* and *happiness*. These two words—crucial in the culture of the eighteenth century—occur frequently in Muratori's works. He disagrees with atheists and theists who think that happiness and the good order of the state can be reached regardless of religion, and in particular the



“true religion of Christ,” Catholicism. Muratori does not mythologize progress in terms of earthly happiness, but emphasizes the value of peace as “tranquility of order” (*tranquillitas ordinis*) and an ultimate longing for the everlasting kingdom (Vismara 2002, 2011).

One of the most renowned works of Muratori is *The Science of Rational Devotion* (*Della regolata divozione de' cristiani*; 1747), a pseudonymous book published during the last part of his life, in which we see the development of a decades-long intellectual path. From the beginning of his historical research, Muratori thought it was necessary to prune from religion the pagan remnants and distorted devotions that were encouraged by what he called “illiterate zeal.” He assumed that the tendency to accept cults of saints uncritically had produced bad effects; for the attempt to support the popular impulses resulted in the multiplication of relics and the excess of devotions. Severity and rigor in the matter of devotions were absolutely necessary. At the same time, according to Muratori, the historical criticism of devotions also has limitations: it is important to use criticism properly and to submit the results to the judgment of the Curia. In his view, it was right to contest what did not conform to truth and to “healthy piety,” but always in accordance with the church and its authorities. Muratori never abandoned this attitude of fidelity to Rome (Vismara 2011). For instance, while he was convinced the church would not proclaim a dogma of the immaculate conception, he asked the future cardinal, Fortunato Tamburini, to keep him informed in case it would be defined a dogma, so that he could speedily change his literary statements about this matter. Muratori’s opinions on this topic in *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters* attracted the attention of Roman censorship, but no concrete action was taken against the book (Vismara 2002).

Muratori never concealed his ideas on devotion; they were an almost ever-present leitmotif in his thought. There are many nuances in devotions. True piety and true devotion should have a christological and Trinitarian horizon: God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the proper object of devotions. Muratori criticized the small devotions (what he calls *devozioncelle*) that he considered excessive and almost fanatical, but he never criticized devotions per se. On the contrary, he repeatedly affirmed that one of the duties of a good priest is to

promote devotions in a proper way, and in particular christocentric ones (1747). He was not against external religious manifestations per se, provided that they did not conflict with authentic religion and civic duties. In short, he was in favor of an interior religious renewal, the practice of a "civic Catholicism," and at the same time a deeper evangelization of society (Rosa 1999, 124ff.). In this way he suggested a concrete, balanced, and practical proposal for the reform of the church, inaugurating "the age of Muratori," as it has been called by some scholars, that coincided with the papacy of Benedict XIV (1740–1758) (Rosa 1969).

Muratori, in his writings, always sees the reform of church and society as a concrete action and not as a theoretical problem. He concludes his treatise *Reflections on Good Taste in Art and Science* with the sentence, "One's knowledge is measured by one's activity" (*Tantum scit homo, quantum operatur*) (Falco 1960, 139). In *On Public Happiness* he proposes the inventor of the stocking handloom as the model of a "great philosopher." In Muratori's view the impetus for reform always requires a commitment to concrete daily life and the value of the human person (Falco and Forti 1964).

Praxis prevails over theory, the latter being considered useless if not realized in actual achievements. Although Muratori is in no way opposed to theoretical reasoning, in his view concrete application is not a complementary, but rather a necessary, component for establishing the validity of any theoretical system. Truth, however, is for him always superior to utility, and determines usefulness, not vice versa. He emphasizes the value of concreteness especially at the end of *Reflections on Good Taste*, in *On Perfect Italian Poetry (Della perfetta poesia italiana; 1706)*, and in *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters* (Vecchi 1968).

It is also noteworthy that Muratori was a devout and active pastor. He accompanied the Jesuit Paolo Segneri the Younger (1673–1713) on his missionary work and devoted his energies to offering the sacrament of confession. From this experience, he was able to handle the difficult work of being a parish priest in a disreputable area on the outskirts of Modena. He had no intention of living the life of an ivory-tower intellectual, but primarily concerned himself with the particular needs of his flock.

## The Protestant World

Muratorì came into conflict on various topics with Angelo Maria Querini, O.S.B. (1680–1755), a leading figure in the Italian literary and ecclesiastical world. Despite initial hostilities related to a discussion about the decrease in the number of holy days of obligation, the two were able to agree on what has at times been improperly called “the ecumenical question.” It would better be described as peaceful, nonpolemic dialogue between denominations. Both men proved to be sensitive to rapprochement with the Protestants. Muratorì was especially concerned with Marian devotion and how it was viewed by Protestants. In his opinion, excessive Marian devotions, which he considered not necessary for salvation, were mistakes that created further difficulties for a successful dialogue with Protestant Christians (Lehner 2011, 176–77). Muratorì’s concessions to Protestantism were indeed the most criticized aspect of his *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters*. Both Querini and Muratorì were trained under Benedetto Bacchini. At that time in intellectual circles there was openness to dialogue with the rest of Europe, even if Muratorì’s Italian contacts were the most influential and relevant for him (Rosa 1994, 96–97). The correspondence network he maintained with non-Catholic intellectuals promoted respect for Christians of other confessions and encouraged attempts at confessional reconciliation. Muratorì’s relationship with the pastor and scholar Jacob Brucker (1696–1770) is one such example; intellectual exchanges soon became a friendship. Originally, Muratorì had even intended to dedicate *The Faults That Occur in Religion* (*De naevis in religionem incurventibus*; 1749) to Brucker (Kraus 1975).

Muratorì insisted that Protestants be treated respectfully and charitably, and not antagonistically or dismissively. He expressed these sentiments clearly in his letter to Querini on 4 February 1749, as well as in other letters of that same year that mentioned the problem of the “peace of the church.” Behind the call to avoid excesses in Marian devotion there was also a warning not to scandalize the Reformers, keeping them from converting. The ultimate purpose of this moderation

and charity was to invite Reformers to return to the Catholic Church. In Muratori, there was no indifferentism or leveling of the different Christian confessions—unlike in many contemporary currents of thought that found the origin of all the different churches in natural religion. He never doubted the superiority of Catholicism, but distanced himself from both superficial irenicism and the notion of tolerance.

In the course of his life, Muratori constantly affirmed the need to relieve Catholicism of the burdens that might distract the faithful from an authentic relationship with God, while at the same time not to yield in any way to the Protestant marginalization of external devotion. Since his earliest works, Muratori rejected the notion that only interior prayer was valuable and, for instance, countered the critiques of Protestant theologians through a discussion of the decoration of holy buildings, as in *On the First Christian Churches* (*De primis christianorum ecclesiis*; 1771 [1694, posthumous]). He wanted to demonstrate the legitimacy of the use of images that dated back to the origins of Christianity.

In chapter four of *On Public Happiness*, he affirmed that the true basis for peaceful coexistence in any state is Catholicism, not Protestantism. In works such as *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters*, “Letter Written on Behalf of an English Catholic” (“Lettera scritta a nome di una inglese cattolica ad uno inglese protestante”; 1767 [1734, posthumous]), and *The Ancient Roman Liturgy* (*Liturgia romana vetus*; 1748), several anti-Protestant points of debate emerged in matters concerning the Eucharist. The third part of the final version of the *Liturgia romana vetus* is a small treatise dedicated to the Eucharist with an anti-Protestant goal, and it aroused some criticism in Germanic lands. G. G. Ramaggini (1715–1779), secretary to the Olmütz bishop F. J. von Troyer, while considering this work “useful” for responding to the Protestants, criticized Muratori’s use of overly harsh language, which sounded offensive. Muratori certainly intended to stay open to interpersonal dialogue but was unyielding in terms of dogma. His *Letter Written on Behalf of an English Catholic* effectively shows this in how the author responded to the critiques of John Tillotson (1630–1694), the archbishop of Canterbury whose

works were produced in numerous editions. Muratori's tone is gentle, but he never concedes on doctrinal points.

### Echoes in Europe

Muratori's view spread far in the intellectual and cultured circles of Europe—at times independently of direct knowledge of his works—but this success did not always bring with it a widespread agreement with his ideas.

Without dwelling on the situation in France, which has received excellent scholarly treatment (Waquet 1989), it is worth noting Muratori's debt to the Maurist monks; this relationship was an opportunity for intellectual exchange, but it did not spread knowledge of all his works in France. Explicit quotations and references to Muratori's work are rather rare in great authors such as Montesquieu and Voltaire. However, both the *Mémoires de Trévoux* and the *Journal des Savants* published reviews of Muratori's oeuvre, and one major work, *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters*, was published under a pseudonym in Paris (1714). According to Dupront, there were, on a deeper level, close relationships between Muratori and French culture, and he considers Muratori's thought to be a sort of "incubator" of the Enlightenment (Dupront 1976, 13).

In seventeenth-century Austria and Germany, Muratori's works were well known both in their original Italian and in several German translations. Among others, *On Christian Charity* (*La carità cristiana*; 1723), and especially *The Science of Rational Devotion*, went through numerous editions. Muratori's intellectual exchange with the German world, which began during his years in Milan and which continued later (Marri and Lieber 2010), was vibrant; his exchanges with Leibniz on historic-genealogical research provide an example. In many cases, it was Muratori himself who strongly desired these contacts, and he was helped to find them by Domenico Brichieri Colombi (1716–1787) in Vienna and by other correspondents. Some interpretations of Muratori's thought, especially as regards the regularization of devotions, at times had rigorist and Jansenist nuances (Zlabinger

1970; Garms-Cornides 1975) with intellectualistic overtones (Rosa 1999). However, it is clear that Muratori never embraced the Jansenist movement (Stella 2006, 1:34). Several Jesuits used the accusations of Jansenism as an excuse to attack him. Far from being Jansenist, Muratori increasingly embraced a positive, very moderate view of humanity, for which the Jansenist Costantino Rotigni (1696–1776) accused him of being a Molinist (Vecchi 1955; Solé 1975). Nevertheless, the legend that Muratori was a Jansenist spread into the nineteenth century and could still be found in the first studies of A. C. Jemolo in the early twentieth century (Burlini Calapaj 1997). The inspiration that contemporary rulers drew from Muratori (regarding the reduction of the number of holy days of obligation, among other points) has been well-studied (Zlabinger 1970, 112–53; Schöch 1995). Particularly under Emperor Joseph II (1780–1790), Muratori's ideas were often distorted. The same happened in Hungary, where the tendency to exaggerate the influence of certain ideas of Muratori under the impetus of Josephinism is well documented (Szauder 1975, 147). A similar phenomenon occurred elsewhere. Scipione de' Ricci (1741–1810), the famous bishop of Pistoia and Prato, required his parish priests to read *The Science of Rational Devotion*, but it is difficult to find substantive connections between Muratori and Scipione given the enormous difference in the political and religious context in which they lived. Even some of Muratori's book dedications—such as those to Johann Philip von Lamberg, Prince-Bishop of Passau; to A. J. von Dietrichstein, archbishop of Salzburg; and to Cardinal F. J. Troyer—do not so much attest to a real intellectual affinity with these personalities as to his own desire, or that of his friends, to circulate his works as widely as possible (Garms-Cornides 1975; Burlini Calapaj 1997, 168–71).

In Spain, Gregorio Mayáns (1699–1781) was one of the main promoters of Muratori's work because he shared, as reflected in their correspondences, Muratori's interests in church reform and commitment to historical research. An engaged and valued figure in the Spanish intellectual world, Mayáns played an important role in the transmission of Muratori's thought; for example, he favored the distribution of *On the Moderation of Our Cleverness in Religious Matters*. Nevertheless, some of Mayáns's works show that the two did not hold the same

positions on several issues. Unlike Muratori, Mayáns was a supporter of anti-Jesuitism, regalism, and episcopalism, and he had a deep-seated aversion to the Roman Curia (Mestre Sanchis 1979, 618–50). Likewise, Nuncio Enrique Enríquez was a friend and admirer of Muratori, but the political and religious environment of the time made their mutual differences clear. Some positions expressed in Muratori's *On Moral Philosophy* (*Della filosofia morale*; 1735) were brought on charges before the Spanish Inquisition, but nothing came of them thanks to the nuncio's intervention. Muratori's hostility to the "blood vow" in favor of the immaculate conception and his skepticism that it would turn into official dogma aroused considerable negativity in Spain, where devotion to the immaculate conception was very popular (Mestre Sanchis 1975, 192; Appolis 1966, 32–33). The *Science of Rational Devotion*, which had been translated into Spanish in 1763 with some omissions, also generated a vibrant debate.

### Muratori and His Times

Muratori had many faces. Some people considered him a forerunner of the Enlightenment, and others made of him a nineteenth-century "liberal Catholic." Yet as noted by Mario Rosa, it is difficult to place him in a fixed interpretive system. Since the beginning of his public life, Muratori's identity was clear but unique. Later, thanks to new relationships, reflections, and contacts, he constantly revised his theories following experience and reason, but without substantial changes. There is a line of thought that connects his various works and creates a profoundly unified picture; such basic continuity has been adequately brought to light by several scholars (e.g., Vecchi 1975; Falco 1960).

If one accepts the questionable idea that the eighteenth century is truly defined by rationalism and anti-Catholic Enlightenment thinkers, Muratori stands apart in his faithfulness to Rome and his understanding that reason is brought to perfection only through authentic faith. He placed the new culture within the realm of Catholic-Christian thought. He showed an understanding of the Catholic

tradition that distinguished him from Jansenists, who were convinced of the “eclipsing of truth” in the church, as well as from many Enlightenment figures, and some eminent members of the Catholic *Aufklärung*.

Muratori has often been considered an authoritative point of reference in the Catholic *Aufklärung*. His holistic approach favoring a unification of political, cultural, and religious concerns exerted significant influence. It seems certain that the attention to the Enlightenment of some Italian Catholic thinkers matured in Muratori's wake. The difference in personalities and contexts, however, often led to an ultimate distortion of Muratori's thought and to the use of its components to construct something totally different (Rosa 1999). Muratori's thought merged with the “Christian philosophy” of the late eighteenth century, which was based on a positive regard for reality and was directed more toward socioreligious inquiry than political theology. “Christian philosophy” opened the way for further developments in the nineteenth century, especially as regards “social doctrine.” Charity, a critical term in Muratorian religious thought, was interpreted with a radically Christian meaning far from nineteenth-century philanthropy; but at the same time, the importance Muratori gave to the concrete aspects of the virtue of charity is symptomatic of the age and shows a clear consciousness of social needs.

In a moment of intense reflection and great change, Muratori's thought seemed intensely willing to open the Catholic world—within the clear boundaries of post-Tridentine Catholicism—to cultural and social issues using a language that was new for the church of the eighteenth century. In many respects, Muratori also made significant social contributions that were sometimes advanced for the period. For example, his *The Defects of Jurisprudence* had a great influence on the process of codification in Italy, and in it, Muratori gave exceptional emphasis to the progress of the sciences.

Muratori's thought was the result of the rational and harmonious combination of various elements. Maintaining a link with the past was a clear priority and is particularly relevant to the inheritance of the Council of Trent. Muratori praised the council and some of its successful achievements, such as those brought about by Borromeo



tradition that distinguished him from Jansenists, who were convinced of the “eclipsing of truth” in the church, as well as from many Enlightenment figures, and some eminent members of the Catholic *Aufklärung*.

Muratori has often been considered an authoritative point of reference in the Catholic *Aufklärung*. His holistic approach favoring a unification of political, cultural, and religious concerns exerted significant influence. It seems certain that the attention to the Enlightenment of some Italian Catholic thinkers matured in Muratori’s wake. The difference in personalities and contexts, however, often led to an ultimate distortion of Muratori’s thought and to the use of its components to construct something totally different (Rosa 1999). Muratori’s thought merged with the “Christian philosophy” of the late eighteenth century, which was based on a positive regard for reality and was directed more toward socioreligious inquiry than political theology. “Christian philosophy” opened the way for further developments in the nineteenth century, especially as regards “social doctrine.” Charity, a critical term in Muratorian religious thought, was interpreted with a radically Christian meaning far from nineteenth-century philanthropy; but at the same time, the importance Muratori gave to the concrete aspects of the virtue of charity is symptomatic of the age and shows a clear consciousness of social needs.

In a moment of intense reflection and great change, Muratori’s thought seemed intensely willing to open the Catholic world—within the clear boundaries of post-Tridentine Catholicism—to cultural and social issues using a language that was new for the church of the eighteenth century. In many respects, Muratori also made significant social contributions that were sometimes advanced for the period. For example, his *The Defects of Jurisprudence* had a great influence on the process of codification in Italy, and in it, Muratori gave exceptional emphasis to the progress of the sciences.

Muratori’s thought was the result of the rational and harmonious combination of various elements. Maintaining a link with the past was a clear priority and is particularly relevant to the inheritance of the Council of Trent. Muratori praised the council and some of its successful achievements, such as those brought about by Borromeo

radically different view of reason denying faith. Although Muratori used the eighteenth-century categories of “usefulness” and “happiness,” he did not forget the importance of the afterlife.

If compared with the intellectual perspectives of other representatives of the Catholic *Aufklärung*, Muratori’s was broader. His cultural understanding derived some of its ideas from the Enlightenment, which at this time still showed its Christian origins.

Muratori’s view of “reasonable Christianity” is itself an expression of the Christian background of a part of the Enlightenment thought. At the same time, it is an indication that conscious Christian thinkers and some representatives of the Enlightenment could engage in dialogue.

### Bibliography

- Appolis, Émile. 1966. *Les jansénistes espagnols*. Bordeaux: Sobodi.
- Battistini, Andrea. 1994. “‘Il gran profitto’ delle ‘verità dissotterrate’: Le ragioni di Muratori autobiografo.” In *Il soggetto e la storia: Biografia e autobiografia in L. A. Muratori*, 1–23. Florence: Olschki.
- Bertelli, Sergio. 1960. *Erudizione e storia in Ludovico Antonio Muratori*. Naples: Nella Sede dell’Istituto (italiano per gli studi storici).
- Bonfatti, Rossella. 2010. *L’“erario” della modernità: Muratori tra etica ed estetica*. Bologna: CLUEB.
- Burlini Calapaj, Anna. 1997. *Devozioni e “regolata divozione” nell’opera di Ludovico Antonio Muratori: Contributo alla storia della liturgia*. Rome: CLV.
- Carducci, Giosuè. 1900. “Di Lodovico Antonio Muratori e della sua raccolta di storici italiani dal 500 al 1500.” In L. A. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, edited by Giosuè Carducci, vol. 1, part 1, xvii–lxxi. Città di Castello: S. Lapi.
- Cottignoli, Alfredo. 1994. *Studi sul Muratori storico*. Bologna: CLUEB.
- De Martino, Giulio. 1996. *Muratori filosofo: Ragione filosofica e coscienza storica in Lodovico Antonio Muratori*. Naples: Liguori.
- Dupront, Alphonse. 1976. *L. A. Muratori et la société européenne des pré-lumières: Essai d’inventaire et de typologie d’après l’“Epistolario.”* Florence: Olschki.
- Falco, Giorgio. 1960. *Pagine sparse di storia e di vita*. Milan and Naples: R. Ricciardi.
- Falco, Giorgio, and Fiorenzo Forti, eds. 1964. *Opere di Lodovico Antonio Muratori*. Milan and Naples: R. Ricciardi.

- Flammini, Giuseppe. 2006. *Gli "Anecdota Graeca" di Ludovico Antonio Muratori e l'indagine filologica all'alba del secolo XVIII*. Macerata: EUM.
- Garms-Cornides, Elisabeth. 1975. "In margine alla relazione L. A. Muratori e l'Austria." In *La fortuna di L. A. Muratori*, 247–57. Florence: Olschki.
- Golinelli, Paolo. 2003. *Benedetto Bacchini (1651–1721): L'uomo, lo storico, il maestro*. Florence: Olschki.
- Kraus, Andreas. 1975. "Lodovico Antonio Muratori und Bayern." In *Bayrische Geschichtswissenschaft in drei Jahrhunderten: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, 212–32. Munich: C. H. Beck.
- Lehner, Ulrich L. 2011. *Enlightened Monks: The German Benedictines, 1740–1803*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Marchi, Gian Paolo. 1998. "Un confronto ineludibile: Scipione Maffei e Ludovico Antonio Muratori." In *Scipione Maffei nell'Europa del Settecento*, edited by Gian Paolo Romagnani, 363–97. Verona: Cierre.
- Marri, Fabio, and Maria Lieber. 2010. *La corrispondenza di Lodovico Antonio Muratori col mondo germanofono: Carteggi inediti*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Mestre Sanchis, Antonio. 1975. "Muratori y la cultura española." In *La fortuna di L. A. Muratori*, 173–220. Florence: Olschki.
- . 1979. "Religión y cultura en el siglo XVIII español." In *Historia de la Iglesia en España*, edited by Antonio Mestre Sanchis, 583–743. Madrid: BAC.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. 1963. "Bacchini, Benedetto." In *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 5:22–29. Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana.
- Muratori, Lodovico Antonio. 1706. *Della perfetta poesia italiana*. Modena: Bartolomen Soliani.
- . 1708–1715. *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto nelle scienze e nelle arti*. Part 1, Venice: Luigi Pavino, 1708. Part 2, Colonia (Naples): per Benedetto Marco Renaud, 1715.
- . 1712. *Piena esposizione dei diritti imperiali ed estensi sopra la città di Comacchio*. Modena: n.p.
- . 1714. *De ingeniorum moderatione in religionis negotio*. Paris: apud Carolum Robustel.
- . 1717. *Delle Antichità estensi*. Modena: nella Stamperia ducale.
- . 1723. *La carità cristiana in quanto essa è amore del prossimo*. Modena: Bartolomeo Soliani.
- . 1723–1751. *Rerum italicarum scriptores*. Mediolani: Ex Typographia Societatis Palatinae in Regia Curia.
- . 1735. *Della filosofia morale esposta e proposta ai giovani*. Verona: Angelo Targa.
- . 1738–1742. *Antiquitates italicæ Medii Aevi*. Milan: Ex Typographia Societatis Palatinae in Regia Curia.

- . 1742. *Dei difetti della giurisprudenza*. Venice: Giambattista Pasquali.
- . 1744–1749. *Annali d'Italia*. Milan (Venice): Giambattista Pasquali.
- . 1745. *Delle forse dell'intendimento umano*. Venice: Giambattista Pasquali.
- . 1747. *Della regolata divozione de' cristiani*. Venice: Giambattista Albrizzi. Translated as *The Science of Rational Devotion* (Dublin: James Byrn, 1789).
- . 1748. *Liturgia romana vetus*. Venice: Jo. Baptistae Pasquali.
- . 1749. *De naevis in religionem incurventibus*. Lucac: Ex Typographia Benediniana.
- . 1767 (1734, posthumous). "Lettera scritta a nome di una inglese cattolica ad uno inglese protestante." In *Opere*, 4:345–432. Arezzo: per Michele Bellotti.
- . 1771 (1694, posthumous). "De primis christianorum ecclesiis." In *Opere*, 13:32–67. Arezzo: per Michele Bellotti.
- . 1872 (1721, posthumous). "Intorno al metodo seguito nei miei studi." In *Scritti inediti*, part I, pp. 1–31. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli.
- Neveu, Bruno. 1975. "Muratori et l'historiographie gallicane." In *L. A. Muratori storiografo*, 241–304. Florence: Olschki.
- Petruzzi, Paolo. 2010. *La "regolata" religione: Studi su Ludovico Antonio Muratori e il Settecento religioso italiano*. Assisi: Cittadella.
- Plongeron, Bernard. 1969. "Recherches sur l'Aufklärung catholique en Europe occidentale." *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 16:555–605.
- . 1970. "Questions pour l'Aufklärung catholique en Italie." *Il pensiero politico* 3:30–58.
- Raimondi, Ezio. 1989. *I lumi dell'erudizione: Saggi sul Settecento italiano*. Milan: Vita e Pensiero.
- Ricuperati, Giuseppe. 2003. "Muratori, Lodovico Antonio." In *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, edited by Alan Kors et al., 3:103–4. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rosa, Mario. 1969. *Riformatori e ribelli nel '700 religioso italiano*. Bari: Dedalo.
- . 1994. "Un 'médiateur' dans la République des Lettres: Le bibliothécaire; In *Commercium Litterarium*." In *La communication dans la République des Lettres, 1600–1750*, edited by Hans Bots and Françoise Waquet, 80–99. Amsterdam and Maarsse: Apa-Holland University Press.
- . 1997. "Rileggendo Muratori tra politica e storia." In *Politica, vita religiosa, carità: Milano nel primo Settecento*, edited by Marco Bona Castellotti, Edoardo Bressan, and Paola Vismara, 3–41. Milan: Jaca Book.
- . 1999. *Settecento religioso: Politica della Ragione e religione del cuore*. Venice: Marsilio.

- . 2009. *La contrastata ragione: Riforme e religione nell'Italia del Settecento*. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.
- Scandellari, Simonetta. 2004. "Las relaciones españolas de la obra de Ludovico Antonio Muratori." *Analecta Malacitana* 1:117–40.
- Schöch, Nikolaus. 1995. "Der Streit zwischen Angelo Maria Querini und Antonio Muratori um die Reduktion der Feiertage." *Antonianum* 70:237–97.
- Solé, Jacques. 1975. "Éthique chrétienne et anthropologie: Du pessimisme de Pierre Nicole à l'optimisme de Muratori." In *L. A. Muratori e la cultura contemporanea*, 353–59. Florence: Olschki.
- Soli Muratori, Gian-Francesco. 1756. *Vita del proposto Lodovico Antonio Muratori*. Venice: Giambattista Pasquali.
- Stella, Pietro. 2006. *Il giansenismo in Italia*. Vol. 1, *I preludei tra Seicento e primo Settecento*. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.
- Szaunder, Jozsef. 1975. "La fortuna dei trattati della Carità cristiana e della Regolata divozione in Ungheria nel '700." In *La fortuna di L. A. Muratori*, 143–50. Florence: Olschki.
- Vecchi, Alberto. 1955. *L'opera religiosa del Muratori*. Milan: Edizioni Paoline.
- . 1968. "Tradizione e teologia nel Muratori." *Studia Patavina* 15:263–89.
- . 1975. "L'itinerario spirituale del Muratori." In *L. A. Muratori e la cultura contemporanea*, 181–223. Florence: Olschki.
- Venturi, Franco. 1969. *Settecento riformatore*. Vol. 1, *Da Muratori a Beccaria*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Viola, Corrado. 2009. *Canonici d'Arcadia: Muratori, Maffei, Lemene, Ceva, Quadrio*. Pisa: ETS.
- Vismara, Paola. 2002. "Muratori 'immoderato.'" In *Cattolicesimi: Itinerari sei-settecenteschi*, edited by Paola Vismara, 29–61. Milan: Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana.
- . 2011. "Entre romanisme et antiromanisme: L'œuvre historique de Lodovico Antonio Muratori." In *Histoires antiromaines: Antiromanisme et critique dans l'historiographie catholique (XVIIe–XXe siècles)*, edited by Sylvio De Franceschi, 87–114. Lyon: Edité par l'équipe Religions, Sociétés et acculturation (RESEA) du Laboratoire de Recherche historique Rhône-Alpes.
- Waquet, Françoise. 1989. *Le modèle français et l'Italie savante: Conscience de soi et perception de l'autre dans la République des lettres (1660–1750)*. Rome: École Française de Rome.
- Zlabinger, Eleonore. 1970. *Lodovico Antonio Muratori und Österreich*. Innsbruck: Kommissionsverlag der Österreichischen Kommissionsbuchhandlung.