



Re-thinking, Re-making, Re-living Christian Origins

Edited by Ivan Foletti, Manuela Gianandrea,
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with the collaboration of Sabina Rosenbergová



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If there is one constant in the history of Christianity and especially of the Western Church, it is its deep desire to be connected with its own past. From the perspective of the *longue durée*, it might even be possible to state that a meditation on Christian origins was a common and widespread response used throughout history in the face of each great moment of crisis within the Church. In those situations, the rhetoric produced by the Church was always aimed at emphasizing a desire to return to these mythical roots, the ideal community, a pure and radical Christianity. The question underlying this book is the way in which this desire for the past provides the occasion to re-live, re-think and re-create Christian origins. More precisely, the crux of our work is to understand how this desire can transform and rewrite the past both in materiality – with restorations of ancient monuments – and in ideas – writing history. In this book, the main focus of attention is dedicated to three key moments, corresponding more or less to three crucial episodes in the history of the Catholic Church in the modern era. The first of these three is the Reformation and subsequent Counter-Reformation, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Second comes the moment in which the Catholic Church lost its temporal power during the Unification of Italy and the “spiritual” reaction culminating with the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). Lastly is the period before and after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), which can be considered the most significant reaction of Catholicism towards modernity.

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