

## EDITORIAL

### *Leonardo and Ludovico*

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I was aware about Leonardo da Vinci since I was a kid, as maybe other of my age at that time. I was really impressed by his achievements but I think that the kids of our days are even more impressed taking into account that we have 'DaVinci Learning' TV channel now.

Leonardo was the person able to put together Science, Art and Theology in his works. Regarding Theology one must take into account that when he went in France, invited by King Francis I, he took with him only three of the pictures he made: 'La Gioconda', 'Saint John the Baptizer', and 'The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne' - two of them having an obvious religious theme.

I remembered about him, being in France as postdoc in June 2001 and visiting the Louvre and also the Castle of Amboise. Quite near to the Castle of Amboise is 'Le Château du Clos Lucé', where Leonardo lived his final years. It is assumed that he is buried in the Chapel of Saint-Hubert at Amboise Castle. At that time I used to attend the religious services of the Orthodox Church of France in Orléans. The priest there, Father Nectaire, had only few followers and for this reason he used to have services on almost all towns from the Loire valley each Sunday. One Sunday he had a service at Amboise and I asked him to make a memorial service for Leonardo. I bought a couple of bottles of Chianti and some Italian cookies for this purpose (just in case if you know how the Orthodox memorial services are). Chianti, because Leonardo was from Toscana. Some of the community members started to cry when the priest celebrated the service.

A few days after, I had a dream about Leonardo da Vinci. He was in a room looking like an alchemy laboratory and he had in front a thick opened book. He looked to me like Professor Albus Dumbledore to Harry Potter and he told: "From now on you'll teach/understand chemistry as I would do it". I realized this much later, because at that time I didn't knew about Rowling's book series.

As postdoc, I used to work at GREMI Orléans, on Plasma chemistry – hydrogen production, since January 2001 until July 2002. One of the aspects of our work regarded the modelling of the reactions from a glidarc reactor. It was a difficult job and I was also told by some colleagues (not only from France) that it might be even impossible to do it due to the complexity of non-equilibrium processes. But..., soon after my dream, we (me and my supervising Professor Jean-Marie Cormier) had a spark coming from an information received at the International Workshop on Non Extensive Thermodynamics and Physical Applications (NEXT 2001), Villasimius (Sardegna) - also Italy... The result was an article proposing a mechanism for the studied reactions [1]. The future will

prove if our mechanism is right or wrong, but until now the number of citations we received is encouraging.

In March 2001 I went, totally by chance, to Palavas-les-Flots – a small and picturesque village to the Mediterranean Sea. When I say by chance means that I didn't know that I shall arrive there. During my short visit I entered in the village's church - Saint-Pierre. From the entrance I remarked on the left a glass box with the body of a young girl. I was so impressed of her beauty that I remained a long time in my knees looking at her. Only when I left I read that there are the relics of Sainte Florence...

Even more, in August 2001 I received a grant in order to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Bioinorganic Chemistry [2], to which we applied since the beginning of 2001, and which was held in... Florence – the loved city of Leonardo.

In September 2003, I arrived for the first time in Istanbul, obviously to a conference (The 4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Pharmaceutical Chemistry) [3]. Totally by chance again we've been accommodated by the organizers at the Police Hotel, which is almost under the First Bridge over Bosphorus. We arrived at the hotel in the evening but next morning when I woke up and saw the bridge I remembered that in the years 1502–1503, Sultan Bayezid II solicited a design to Leonardo da Vinci, utilizing three well-known geometrical principles, the pressed-bow, parabolic curve and keystone arch, to create an unprecedented single span 240 m long and 24 m wide bridge for the Golden Horn, which would have become the longest bridge in the world of that time. Another version claims that Leonardo wrote to Bayezid: "I plan to build a suspension bridge across the Bosphorus to allow people to travel between Europe and Asia. By the power of God, I hope you will believe my words. I will be at your beck and call at all times. — Architect/engineer Leonardo da Vinci" (the letter is dated 3 July, but the year is not specified) [<http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2013/01/22/leonardos-bridge-part-2-the-bridge-for-the-sultan/>]. However, the ambitious design was not approved by the Sultan... Five centuries after the rejection of the project, the bridge is there and looks marvellous.

In 2006, when I used to be vice-president of the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology, we organised in Iasi the 11<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Science and Theology. I asked my colleagues from ESSAT to allow organising a special section on the conference devoted to the religious art restoration and conservation. I was told that this subject has nothing to do with the field of Science & Theology but I was allowed to organise a satellite workshop on this theme during the conference days, which was even sponsored by ESSAT. This satellite workshop has become in time ESRARC. And speaking about Leonardo, by chance or not, one of its editions was held in Florence...

This year, the ninth edition of ESRARC was organised in Romania. By chance, or not, back in Iasi, where was the first humble satellite workshop. To quote from the editorial of symposium's proceedings book: "When it was taken the decision, largely supported by my colleagues from the Technical University

of Iasi, to organise the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Symposium of Religious Art Restoration and Conservation at Iasi I remembered the slogan of EURO 96: *„Football comes home’*. In that case England was, after a long time, the host of an international football tournament. Now, our slogan is *„ESRARC comes home’!*” [4] I received critics when I decided to make t-shirts with this logo, for our students attending the symposium, but to my surprise they were much appreciated in Romania and abroad and I regretted not making as many as the entire number of participants. We’ll try to solve it for the next edition, when the logo will be *‘ESRARC comes to Prague’*.

We were happy to meet again at the symposium our friends from Italy, Slovakia, Norway, Spain and Germany, which regularly attend and support our actions.

At this edition of ESRARC the Scientific Committee was also granting for the first time the ‘Daniel Mareci’ Award for young researchers, in the loving memory of our colleague which was so devoted to the symposium and especially to the research problems raised by the corrosion of religious artefacts.

But who is Ludovico? Ludovico Galleni was coming from another city of Italy, which was a rival of Florence during the Middle Ages – Pisa. He was professor of General Zoology and of Environmental Ethics at the University of Pisa and of Science & Theology at Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose ‘N. Stenone’ Pisa. Professor Galleni was a member of the Council of ESSSAT, of the European Advisory Board of the Center of Theology and Natural Sciences of Berkeley (California), co-ordinator of the section of Biology of the International Research Area on Foundations of Sciences (IRAFS) of the Pontifical University of Lateran, and he was nominated as founding member of the ISSR (International Society of Science and Religion). He won the Templeton in Science and Theology courses awards for two years and he was invited as visiting professor at different universities from Italy and abroad.

Professor Galleni has an important written contribution in the academic field being also member of the Advisory Board of the journals ‘Studies in Science and Theology’ and ‘Rivista di Biologia - Biology Forum’. But more important to me, Ludovico was one of the first members of the Editorial Board of EJST.

I met him for the first time at an ESSSAT conference. I appreciated from the beginning his vivid and warm spirit. He was one who supported the organising of ESSSAT conference for the first time in a country outside EU – Romania. Ludovico agreed to help me on starting EJST but he told me: “Journals are very expensive and I think that hardly a Science and Theology journal will receive enough money from subscriptions in order to survive. But if you succeed, you are welcome because local journals are desperately needed.” He was right, it was and it is very difficult to survive, but we had the opportunity to make more than a local journal of Science & Theology. Ludovico also proposed me to start a ‘Latin Journal in Science and Theology’ publishing articles in Neo-Latin languages (Spanish, Italian, etc.): “Take into consideration that [only] Spanish is spoken as a primary language more than English is!”.

Later on Ludovico succeeded together with Professor Lucio Florio to develop this project, which has become 'Quaerentibus' [<http://www.quaerentibus.org/>]. In the next issue of this journal you will be able to find three articles remembering Ludovico.

Professor Galleni has helped a lot by writing, reviewing, recommending articles for EJST and promoting the journal everywhere. When he came to ECST in 2006 in Romania he asked me: "How is with the journal?" I answered: "Is ok. I think we are on the good road." "Yes, but who doesn't sleep nights think how to solve problems and do better for EJST?" replied Ludovico. I was amazed. He knew it... somehow...

I received the last e-mail from Professor Galleni in May 2015, which ends with: "With my best wishes for the future..." At the end of 2016, Ludovico passed away "of the cancer against which he had been fighting along two years"...

During the last time, but not only, my editorials are quite sad. Maybe we are too old and a new generation working on Science & Theology has to spring out? I think it has already sprung and Ludovico has his incontestable merits on this.

Finally one may ask, but which is the link between Leonardo and Ludovico? They are both from Italy? Yes, but not only this. In fact, I think that Einstein is right and there are no insurmountable differences in time or space for two persons to interact each other if they really want it. For me, in time with Leonardo and in space with Ludovico.

Taking into account that this is the first and the last editorial I'm writing for EJST in 2017, I use this opportunity and wish you the best for 2018.

**Dr. Iulian Rusu**

## References

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