The Desert and the Rock: G.B. Vico's *New Science* vis-à-vis Eighteenth-Century European Culture

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In 1725, Vico expressed in a letter to Father Bernardo Maria Giacco his bitter disappointment for the cold reception given to his just published *New Science*.¹ Vico's eloquent epistolary prose, rich in Biblical metaphors, is a radical indictment of eighteenth-century culture. He describes Naples as a desert, a typically scriptural image (Ps. 102: 6; Luke 1: 80), since nobody seems to have noticed his masterpiece. Vico blames the "corrupt literary fashion," supposedly derived from France, for the failure of his *New Science* to attract any attention. To Vico this unfavorable intellectual climate has transformed not only Naples but also a considerable part of Europe, into a desert. Vico is surrounded by such a wilderness, but he feels secure in his isolation: he describes himself first as a "new man" ("io mi sento avere vestito un nuovo uomo"), using an expression applied by Saint Paul to designate mankind redeemed by Christianity (2 Cor. 5: 17; Eph. 4: 24; Col. 3: 10), and then as a hero who does not fear death and despises his rivals ("quest'opera mi ha informato di un certo spirito eroico, per lo quale non più mi perturba alcuno timore della morte e sperimento l'animo non più curante di parlare degli emoli"). Vico sees himself as being high above his contemporaries, since he considers himself chosen by Divine Providence to reveal a new truth. Like David (Ps. 27: 5; 40: 2), he was set by God on a "high, adamantine rock," destined to last forever ("Finalmente mi ha fermato, come sopra un'alta adamantina ròcca, il giudizio di Dio"). The Biblical images of the desert and the rock, used in this emotional letter, show that Vico himself was the creator of his own legend: the legend of a great genius, misunderstood in his own century, who neither learned from nor taught his contemporaries.

The myth of Vico's isolation from the republic of letters, fostered by his interpreters of the Risorgimento, was endorsed by the idealistic school of Croce, and was first challenged by Nicola Abbagnano, a distinguished historian of philosophy, in his edition of Vico's writings published in 1952.² According to Abbagnano, Vico is to be considered "una manifestazione integrante dell'illuminismo settecentesco," since he shares with Locke and Newton the intention to assess the possibilities of man. Vico's affinity with the representatives of the English Enlightenment clearly shows that his opposition to Descartes should be explained in the context of his own contemporary culture. Thus Abbagnano traced the program for future research which was to shed light on the links existing between Vico and the cultural life of the first half of the eighteenth-century, and, at the same time, was to lead to a new concept of the Enlightenment, broad enough to accommodate a thinker like Vico. This program still disturbs many scholars, because it obliges them to see Vico in a completely new light and to admit him into the *hortus conclusus* of Anglo-French Enlightenment. However, I believe that the course of studies, proposed by Abbagnano almost thirty years ago, is the best one that can be pursued in the interest of eighteenth-century scholarship. The only alternative would be to play down the figure of Vico by ignoring his many contributions to European culture, which cannot be done without betraying historical truth. In fact, Abbagnano's program has guided the research on Vico accomplished in the last decade under the aegis of the Centro di Studi Vichiani in Naples, directed by Pietro Piovani whose untimely death was a great loss to Vichian studies.³ Presently, the mist hiding Vico's position in the history of Western philosophy is vanishing, and the links connecting the *New Science* with the tradition of thought of the preceding, contemporary, and following periods are more and more clearly visible. As a consequence, the legend of Vico in the wilderness has almost disappeared, and the following facts have begun to emerge: (1) Vico's *New Science* has cultural components that belong to the Enlightenment; (2) Vichian ideas were funneled into European eighteenth-century culture through channels which have escaped the attention of scholars such as Croce and Nicolini.

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Despite Vico's assertion that his favorite authors were Plato, Tacitus, and Bacon, the inspiration of the *New Science* derives from

different, much more unorthodox sources: Locke and Spinoza, two thinkers who exerted a deep influence in the age of Enlightenment.⁴ Both were considered anathema in Vico's times, because their speculations appeared irreconcilable with Catholic dogmas. In view of this, Vico did not acknowledge his debt to Locke and Spinoza, but polemized against them from the superior viewpoint of his own philosophy. Yet his thought was based, although in an original way, on Locke's and Spinoza's systems, viewed against their respective backgrounds: empiricism asserted by Bacon for Locke, and the tradition of Renaissance philosophy founded on Plato and Neoplatonism for Spinoza. Vico played Locke against Spinoza, because he used the psychology of the former in order to demonstrate the insufficiency of the latter: Spinoza's pantheism and its Renaissance precedents appeared merely poetic and childish, when scanned with the intellectual tools provided by Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, translated into Latin by Richard Burridge (London, 1701 and Leipzig, 1709). Yet Vico did not intend to discard Spinoza and the Neoplatonic tradition: he simply projected Spinozism as a phase of the "ideal eternal history" (*N. S.*, paragraph 245), which he identified with barbarism. Primitive men, terrified by lightning, explained such a natural phenomenon by spontaneously creating the myth of Jove, pantheistically identified with nature. They were, thus, the unwitting assertors of the inductive method, founded on direct experience, which was later to be perfected by Bacon. The very progress made, particularly in England, by the empiricist school allowed Vico to measure the philosophic limits of the pantheistic *Weltanschauung* which, according to Bayle, had had its newest manifestation in Spinoza's thought.

Spinoza was not only the author of a pantheistic system, expounded in his *Ethica Ordine Geometrico Demonstrata*, but also the creator of modern biblical criticism in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. Vico had meditated not only on the former but also on the latter. There is no need to stress the influence of Spinoza's *Tractatus* on the *New Science* in this paper, since it was convincingly established by Croce in his pioneering book on Vico, and has been strongly asserted in a recent article by James C. Morrison.⁵ It would be simply foolish to harbor doubts about Vico's debt to Spinoza's *Tractatus* containing a methodology for the study of ancient traditions that could be equally applied to religious and secular studies. Spinoza's work was familiar to the Catholic theologians since Richard Simon had discussed it in his

epoch-making *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678), and had accepted its methodology, refuting only its errors.⁶ The popularity of the *Tractatus* in the eighteenth-century was assessed by Paul Vernière in a monumental study on the fortune of Spinoza in France.⁷ As far as the Neapolitan scene is concerned, I will mention just one example of the impact of Spinoza's critique of the Bible: the forbidden *Triregno*, written by Pietro Giannone, Vico's contemporary and enemy.⁸ We can therefore safely say that Vico's approach to the Homeric poems was influenced by Spinoza's approach to the Bible. However, it would be mistaken to view Vico's "discovery of the true Homer" (*N.S.*, Book 3) exclusively in the light of the *Tractatus* without taking into account other aspects of eighteenth-century scholarship, such as the dispute of the Ancients and Moderns, centered around the Homeric poems, the rise of a new school of medievalists, thanks to the concerted efforts of the Bollandists, of the Maurists, of Leibniz and of Muratori, or the reports of travellers in exotic lands which seemed to challenge the traditional values of Judeo-Christian civilization.

Implicitly challenging Paolo Rossi who has represented Vico as a scholar out of touch with the culture of his times, Eugenio Garin, in his masterly paper prepared for the Vico/Venezia Conference of 1978, has strongly asserted that the *New Science* should be interpreted in the light of eighteenth-century philosophy: "Vico, dal suo angolo napoletano, del resto non trascurabile centro di cultura e molto meno 'angioletto morto' di quanto credeva Gramsci, viveva, sia pure in forme bizzarramente personali, un'esperienza europea."⁹ Garin insists on the Anglo-French components of Vico's culture, which can be proved from his quotations and from the fact that he frequented the library of the great scholar Giuseppe Valletta (an important figure recently studied by Nicola Badaloni, Vittor Ivo Comparato, and Michele Rak), and was a friend of the philosopher Paolo Mattia Doria. Garin deals with the affinity existing between Vico and three prominent representatives of early eighteenth-century thought: Bayle, Shaftesbury and Mandeville. Shaftesbury who frequented the Valletta library as well as Doria's salon in Naples, appears to Garin particularly significant in the formation of Vico's *Weltanschauung*. Shaftesbury's neo-humanistic thought, which caught the attention of thinkers such as Leibniz, Diderot, Herder, and Goethe, was a response to various suggestions, such as Renaissance and Spinoza's pantheism, revisited through Bayle and Toland, and the interpretations of Greek myths, particularly the one about Hercu-

les. Garin interprets Vico's *New Science* as a synthesis of Shaftesbury's optimistic and Bayle's and Mandeville's pessimistic views. Garin's interpretation appears even more convincing if we keep in mind the political orientation implicit in Vico's *New Science*. In the great duel fought between the followers of the Stuarts and the assertors of the so-called "Glorious Revolution," Vico showed an unmistakable sympathy for the English parliamentary system, and attributed the intellectual progress of England to its love of freedom, an opinion in harmony with political Gothicism.¹⁰

Rossi recently challenged this interpretation of Vico's *New Science* as an original development of issues debated in England and on the continent in the age of the Enlightenment.¹¹ Garin promptly and appropriately replied to these objections.¹² In his article, Rossi refers to his previous studies on Vico, including *I segni del tempo*, a book published in 1979. This work contains an attack against Sir Isaiah Berlin, who does not believe in the legend of Vico in the wilderness, and rightly admonishes that ideas "travel without labels."¹³ We should therefore study the *New Science* in a broad European context, considering not only the authors explicitly quoted by Vico, but also those whose influence is clearly present in his writings. This is apparently what Rossi himself does in the first part of *I segni del tempo*, where he traces the history of evolutionary theories in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century, dealing with authors such as Hooke, Woodward, Wotton, Stillingfleet, Hale, Burnet, Boyle, Newton, Descartes, Fontenelle, Bayle, Leibniz, Whiston, Keill, D'Holbach, Voltaire, Buffon, Diderot, and Hutton. Rossi stresses the importance of this intellectual movement that challenged the Biblical vision according to which the history of nature is parallel to the history of mankind. He underlines the fact that Vico attacked Thomas Burnet's epoch-making *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1681) in the first edition of the *New Science* (1725). Vico's disparaging remark on Burnet is taken by Rossi as a proof that the Italian philosopher did not understand the fundamental change in the concept of man taking place in his own times because he was isolated from the most vital streams of contemporary culture. Rossi, therefore, strongly attacks Nicola Badaloni who maintained that Vico drew inspiration from Burnet but was wise enough to reject the extreme position of the *Sacred Theory of the Earth*.¹⁴ I would like to contribute a footnote to this tangle of polemics by proving that Vico did not reject

Burnet because he was out of touch with his contemporaries, but for the opposite reason.

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Rossi's reconstruction of the history of evolutionary theories is heavily dependent on well-known Anglo-American studies such as Don Cameron Allen's *The Legend of Noah*, John C. Greene's *The Death of Adam*, and Martin J.S. Rudwick's *The Meaning of Fossils*. Rossi does not dedicate much space to the Italian side of the story, although he does not fail to stress the importance of such scientists as Agostino Scilla, Antonio Vallisnieri and Anton Lazaro Moro. In my opinion, the validity of Rossi's conclusions on Vico is shaken by his scanty treatment of the attitude of Italian scientists toward Burnet and his theory of geological evolution. A quick look at Burnet's fortune in Italy will show that Vico was by no means isolated from his contemporary scientists in his aloof attitude toward the *Sacred Theory of the Earth*. In fact, as soon as this book appeared, it seems to have aroused a great interest in the scientific circles of Italy. In 1686, Lorenzo Bellini expressed his admiration for the first two books of Burnet's work in a letter addressed to Marcello Malpighi: "Il mio cuore è il Burnezio, né io ho letto mai fantasia più nobile della sua, né più dottamente e nobilmente condotta."¹⁵ Malpighi was eager to see the second part of the *Sacred Theory of the Earth*: "Non vedo l'ora, ch'il Sig. Brunetio dia alla luce l'altra parte, perché non si può negare ch'egli non sia un grand'ingegno."¹⁶ But, when the book became better known, the solidity of its foundations was questioned. In 1703, Giacinto Cestoni expressed his skepticism about the evolutionary theories intended to explain the presence of fossilized shells on mountain tops: "E certi filosofanti dicono sopra di esse di belle cose ridicole, cioè che anticamente vi arrivasse il mare, chi che vi fussero delle città distrutte, e chi procedute dal diluvio, et altre ciancie."¹⁷ This severe judgment was written by Cestoni in a letter addressed to Vallisnieri who rejected Burnet's theory in his treatise *De' corpi marini che su' monti si trovano* (1721), and maintained that "il mondo sia sempre stato come ora veggiamo, con i suoi monti, con le sue valli e con i suoi fiumi."¹⁸

Luigi Ferdinando Marsili was prompted by the discussions aroused by Burnet's work to study the sea. The result of his inquiries was the *Histoire physique de la mer* (1725), a book that is considered a landmark in the early history of Oceanography. However, Marsili did not entertain a high opinion of the *Sacred Theory*

of the Earth, since he declared that a real knowledge of the structure of the earth would show how unreliable all books hitherto published on that subject were: "On détruiroit par là certainement bien de sotises, dont on a composé des volumes sous diferens titres, et par lesquelles on veut nous persuader que la forme du monde a été entierement changée par le Déluge."¹⁹ Indeed, Marsili preferred to follow the Bible, and, as stated in a letter addressed to Vallisnieri in 1725, he believed that "non fece il Diluvio quelle tante rovine nel globo della terra, esaggerate da molti, che danno a gli altri ed a se stessi ad intendere che ogni materia si disciogliesse, né pur salvi rimanendo i metalli."²⁰ Another prominent figure of Italian culture, Scipione Maffei who was in touch with Vallisnieri, studied the fossilized fishes existing in the territory of Verona, but confessed in a letter to La Condamine that contemporary evolutionary theories did not satisfy him: "Chiunque sopra ciò ha scritto, ha potuto far pompa del suo ingegno e del suo sapere, ma per verità niuna delle molte opinioni appaga, e niuna ve n'ha per anco, contro la quale non militino insolubili difficoltà."²¹ Last but not least, Giovanni Bianchi (Janus Plancus) published a treatise on shells, *De conchis minus notis* (first printed in 1739 and reprinted in 1760), where he disparages the *Sacred Theory of the Earth* and sides with the defenders of the Holy Scripture.²² This panoramic view of Burnet's fortune in Italy should be sufficient to prove that Vico was not isolated from the most vital intellectual trends of his own times in dismissing the "capricciosa risoluzione della terra immaginata da Tommaso Burnet."²³

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The interpretation of the *New Science* as a typical product of the Enlightenment allows us to view Vico as an original philosopher who developed Locke's thought in the field of social and anthropological sciences. Indeed, the Vichian system is to be considered Italy's most important contribution to the philosophy of the Enlightenment. But how was such a contribution received in the eighteenth-century? The problem of Vico's fortune is strictly linked to the problem of Vico's interpretation. When the *New Science* was considered the germ of nineteenth-century historicism ("il secolo decimonono in germe," as Croce asserted in his influential essay),²⁴ scholars were prevented by that very assumption to see any links between the development of the Enlightenment and Vichian thought. Any reference to Vico made by his contemporaries appeared nothing but a proof that Vichian philosophy

was completely misunderstood. This attitude is attested by Croce and Nicolini's *Bibliografia vichiana* (1947-1948), a work of great erudition, vitiated by its premise, that is, Croce's view of Vico as the precursor of his own idealistic philosophy. Now that we consider the *New Science* no longer as a work opposed to the eighteenth-century culture, but as a masterpiece of continental Enlightenment, we are in a better position to dispel the mist that has always surrounded Vico's fortune in his own time. A new, almost unexplored continent lies before us, and we are eager to know more and more about it. In breaking new ground for a better knowledge of the reception of the *New Science* in the eighteenth-century, we contribute to a less parochial concept of the Enlightenment which appears no longer as an exclusive dialogue between English and French philosophers but as a European intellectual phenomenon. The work to be done in this direction is a task that is going to absorb the energies of various generations of scholars. However, I believe that the principal lines of the picture have already emerged, and that future studies will not change them substantially. I will therefore conclude this paper with a glance at the fortune of Vico in the context of the Enlightenment, as it appears from recent studies.

Among Vico's works, his *Autobiography* enjoyed the most widespread reputation.²⁵ It circulated in its original form (quite shorter than in modern editions), as it had been printed in Angelo Calogerà's *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici* (1728). It was preceded by Giovannartico di Porcia's "Progetto ai letterati d'Italia per scrivere le loro vite," an essay that projected on Vico's *Autobiography* Porcia's strong attacks against the French school of criticism, the contemporary educational system founded on Latin and Scholasticism, and the supporters of the so-called Ancients. In view of this, one can easily understand why Vico's thought appeared suspicious to progressive as well as to conservative intellectuals of his own times. However, the prestige of Calogerà's periodical where Vico's *Autobiography* was originally published, opened many doors to it, and conditioned the fortune of the philosopher for many years after his death, in Italy as well as in Germany. The sketches of Vico's intellectual life that appeared during the age of the Enlightenment are all founded on the *Autobiography*. Prominent among them is the entry on Vico in Christian Gottlieb Jöcher's *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon* (1750-1751), a lengthy and detailed abstract from the *Autobiography*, containing a reference to Vico's "ideal eternal history," the core of the *New Science*. Jöcher's

summary in German of the *Autobiography* is important to scholars interested in Vico's fortune, because the *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon* was familiar to figures such as Hamann and Herder. Yet it escaped the attention of Croce and Nicolini. Abstracts from Vico's *Autobiography* appeared in other reference works, such as Johann Heinrich Zedler's *Grosses vollständiges universal Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste* (1732-1750), Filippo de Fortis' *Raccolta delle vite e famiglie degli uomini illustri del Regno di Napoli* (1755), and the Italian edition of Nicolas François Joseph Eloy's *Dictionnaire historique de la Médecine: Dizionario storico della Medicina* (1761-1765).

It is still an open question whether the popularity of the *Autobiography* contributed to the diffusion of the *New Science*. But we can safely say that three areas of eighteenth-century culture were affected by Vichian ideas: Scotland, Spain, and France. In Scotland, Thomas Blackwell, a classicist of the Marischal College, Aberdeen, initiated an influential primitivistic trend in Homeric studies, blending together Vico's views and those expressed by Gianvincenzo Gravina in his *Ragion poetica* (1708).²⁶ In Spain, Lorenzo Boturini laid the foundations of Pre-Columbian studies, interpreting ancient Mexican civilization in the light of the *New Science*.²⁷ In France, Vichian philosophy was considered as the forerunner of Rousseau's ideas, as appears from an anonymous note on the Duni-Finetti polemic, published in the prestigious *Journal Encyclopédique* of June 1768: "Jean-Baptiste Vico a été le premier qui dans ses *Principi di scienza nuova* a osé prétendre qu'originellement les hommes vivoient exactement comme les bêtes. L'homme le plus fécond en paradoxes, l'éloquent M. Rousseau de Genève a étendu cette idée, et toutes celles qu'il a trouvées éparses dans beaucoup d'Auteurs, et qu'il a rassemblées dans son discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes."²⁸ The link existing between Vico and Rousseau was also pointed out in the *Gazette littéraire et universelle de l'Europe*, printed at Lausanne in August 1768: "Jean Bapt[iste] Vico dans ses *Principi di Scienza nuova* et l'éloquent Mr. Rousseau de Genève dans son discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes, ont prétendu qu'originellement les hommes vivaient exactement comme les bêtes."²⁹ Even the *Mercure de France* of October 1768 held the same view on the relationship between Vico and Rousseau: "C'est Jean-Baptiste Vico qui, le premier, a imaginé que les premiers hommes avoient vécu long-tems dans un état brut et grossier qui ne les distinguoit en aucune maniere des bêtes. M. Rousseau, dans son discours sur l'origine et les

fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes, voulut prouver que c'étoit l'état naturel de l'homme."³⁰ In fact, Rousseau had been in touch with the prominent bibliophile Camille Falconet who had in his Parisian house both Vico's *Autobiography* and the second edition (1730) of the *New Science*.³¹

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NOTES

- 1 G.B. Vico, *Opere*, ed. F. Nicolini (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1953), pp. 117-19. On Giacco cf. F.F. Mastroianni, "Un amico di Giambattista Vico nella storia dei Cappuccini di Napoli," *Studi e Ricerche Francescane*, I (1972), 91-122, 165-265; M. Rak, "Storia di un 'avallo' filosofico: Vico, B.M. Giacco e l'ordine cappuccino," *Bollettino del Centro di Studi Vichiani*, III (1973), 164-69.
- 2 G.B. Vico, *La Scienza Nuova e Opere scelte*, ed. N. Abbagnano, 2. ed. (Turin: UTET, 1966), pp. 22-23.
- 3 On Piovani cf. E. Garin, "Il filosofo morale," *Giornale Critico della Filosofia Italiana*, Series V, Vol. I, No. 2 (May-August 1981), 153-67; F. Tessitore, "Il maestro," *Ibid.*, 168-77; Id., "La bibliografia vichiana di Pietro Piovani," *Bollettino del Centro di Studi Vichiani*, XI (1981), 5-12.
- 4 For further details see G. Costa, "Vico e Locke," *Giornale Critico della Filosofia Italiana*, XLIX (1970), 344-61; Id., "Vico e il Settecento," *Forum Italicum*, X (1976), 10-30.
- 5 B. Croce, *La filosofia di Giambattista Vico* (Bari: Laterza, 1965), pp. 181-82; J.C. Morrison, "Vico and Spinoza," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XLI, No. 1 (January-March 1980), 49-68.
- 6 P. Auvray, "Richard Simon et Spinoza," in *Religion, érudition et critique à la fin du XVII siècle et au début du XVIII* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), pp. 201-14.
- 7 P. Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française avant la Révolution* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), II, *passim*.
- 8 *Illuministi italiani*, I, *Opere di Pietro Giannone*, eds. S. Bertelli and G. Ricuperati (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1971), pp. 581-92.
- 9 E. Garin, "Vico e l'eredità del pensiero del Rinascimento," in *Vico oggi*, ed. A. Battistini (Rome: Armando, 1979), p. 77. An English translation of this paper appeared in *Vico: Past and Present*, ed. G. Tagliacozzo (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1981), Part I, pp. 99-116.
- 10 G. Costa, "Vico's Political Thought in His Time and Ours," *Social Research*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Autumn 1976), 612-24.
- 11 P. Rossi, "Chi sono i contemporanei di Vico?," *Rivista di Filosofia*, LXXII, No. 1 (February 1981), 51-82.
- 12 E. Garin, "Le citazioni di Vico," *Giornale Critico della Filosofia Italiana*, Series V, Vol. I, No. 3 (September-December 1981), 380-86.
- 13 P. Rossi, *I segni del tempo: Storia della terra e storia delle nazioni da Hooke a Vico* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1979), p. 13. Cf. I. Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (New York: Viking, 1976), p. 140-41n.
- 14 Rossi, *I segni del tempo*, pp. 133-35. Cf. N. Badaloni, *Introduzione a G.B. Vico* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1961), p. 389.
- 15 *The Correspondence of Marcello Malpighi*, ed. H.B. Adelman (Ithaca-London: Cornell U.P., 1975), III, p. 1220. On Bellini (1643-1704) cf. *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, ed. C.C. Gillispie (New York: Scribner's, 1970-1980), I, pp. 592-94.

- 16 *The Correspondence*, III, p. 1224. On Malpighi (1628-1694) cf. *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, IX, pp. 62-66.
- 17 G. Cestoni, *Epistolario ad Antonio Vallisnieri*, ed. S. Baglioni (Rome: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1940-1941), II, pp. 452-53. On Cestoni (1637-1718) cf. *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, III, pp. 180-81.
- 18 A. Vallisnieri, *De' corpi marini che su' monti si trovano, della loro origine e dello stato del mondo avanti 'l diluvio, nel diluvio e dopo il diluvio* (Venice: D. Lovisa, 1721), p. 65. On Vallisnieri (1661-1730) cf. *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, XIII, pp. 562-65.
- 19 L.F. Marsili, *Histoire physique de la mer* (Amsterdam: Aux dépens de la Compagnie, 1725), Preface. On Marsili (1658-1730) cf. *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, IX, pp. 134-36.
- 20 A. Vallisnieri, *Opere fisico-mediche stampate e manoscritte* (Venice: S. Coleti, 1733), II, p. 361.
- 21 S. Maffei, *Della formazione de' fulmini* (Verona: G.A. Tumermani, 1747), p. 117. On Maffei (1675-1755) cf. *Dizionario critico della letteratura italiana*, ed. V. Branca (Turin: UTET, 1973), II, pp. 463-66.
- 22 *Jani Planci Ariminensis de conchis minus notis liber* (Venice: Pasquali, 1739), p. 76. On Bianchi (1693-1775) cf. *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 10 (1968), pp. 104-12.
- 23 G.B. Vico, *Principj di una scienza nuova intorno alla natura delle nazioni*, Vol. I, ed. T. Gregory (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo e Bizzarri, 1979), p. 75.
- 24 Croce, *La filosofia*, p. 226.
- 25 G. Costa, "An Enduring Venetian Accomplishment: The Autobiography of G.B. Vico," *Italian Quarterly*, XXI, No. 79 (Winter 1980), 45-54.
- 26 G. Costa, "Thomas Blackwell fra Gravina e Vico," *Bollettino del Centro di Studi Vichiani*, V (1975), 40-55; Id., "Due studi recenti sul primitivismo settecentesco," *Ibid.*, X (1980), 146-50.
- 27 G. Costa, "A proposito del rapporto Vico-Boturini," *Ibid.*, IX (1979), 133-40.
- 28 *Journal Encyclopédique* (June 15), 1768, Vol. IV, Part 3, 149. Cf. B. Croce and F. Nicolini, *Bibliografia vichiana* (Naples: Ricciardi, 1947-1948), II, p. 882. The author of the passage quoted above might be Frédéric-Emmanuel Grundwald who reviewed foreign books for the *Journal Encyclopédique*: cf. *Le Journal Encyclopédique et la Société typographique: Exposition en hommage à Pierre Rousseau (1716-1785) et Charles-Auguste de Weissenbruch (1744-1826)* (Bouillon: Weissenbruch, 1955), p. 21. On the role of the *Journal Encyclopédique* in the context of the Enlightenment cf. G. Charlier and R. Mortier, *Le Journal Encyclopédique (1756-1793)* (Paris: Nizet, 1952).
- 29 *Gazette littéraire et universelle de l'Europe* (August 8), 1768, Vol. II, 92.
- 30 *Mercure de France* (October 1768), Vol. I, 131.
- 31 G. Costa, "Vico, Camille Falconet e gli Enciclopedisti," *Bollettino del Centro di Studi Vichiani*, III (1973), 147-62.