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In German-speaking Europe, where it originated, Anthroposophy is one of the most successful esoteric movements of the modern era. Founded by Rudolf Steiner at the beginning of the twentieth century, Anthroposophy has established an impressive public reputation through its practical engagement in the fields of education, agriculture, medicine, and environmentalism.¹ While Waldorf schools and biodynamic farming are well-known in Germany and northern Europe, Anthroposophy has traditionally had a less robust presence in the southern regions of the continent. During Steiner's lifetime (1861–1925), its only significant southern foothold was in Italy, where a small but influential anthroposophist movement arose out of the Theosophical Society from 1910 onward.

Like Theosophy and other forms of esoteric spirituality, Anthroposophy often emphasizes its apolitical nature. The movement's history during the first half of the twentieth century, however, reveals a wide range of political involvements. Anthroposophy's complicated relationship with the Fascist regime in Italy provides a case study in the ambivalent interaction of esotericism and politics.² In particular, Anthroposophy embodied a contradictory set of racial and ethnic doctrines which held the potential to develop in different directions under specific political conditions. The encounter between Anthroposophy and Fascism can be seen as an instance of a larger contest between esoteric aspirations and political possibilities; anthroposophical race teachings were an effort to uphold a spiritual perspective within the contested terrain of modern racial thought, an effort which failed to take heed of its own political ramifications and thus left itself open to appropriation by a regime which recognized concrete affinities between esoteric precepts and authoritarian practices.

Italian anthroposophists' contradictory response to the rise of Fascism is embodied in the figure of Giovanni Antonio Colonna di Cesarò (1878–1940), a politician and nobleman known as "the anthroposophist duke" whose journal *Rassegna contemporanea* served as an important forum for early anthroposophical viewpoints. A proponent of colonialism and 'democratic imperialism,' Colonna adopted an interventionist stance in World War I and his journal took a "radical-nationalist" line.³ He was active in Italian politics from 1907 onward, with an anti-clerical and anti-socialist emphasis, forming a new political party in February 1922, *Democrazia Sociale*. Colonna did not have a consistent political ideology, and his party is sometimes seen as part of the center or moderate left, though his political

orientation in the wake of the World War tended toward the right.⁴ After the March on Rome, *Democrazia Sociale* provided crucial backing for Mussolini and assisted the rise of the Fascist regime.

Mussolini's government came to power in October, 1922, with the support of *Democrazia Sociale*, and Colonna served as a minister in Mussolini's cabinet until February, 1924. Colonna's party used the opportunity to acquire government posts for its clientele.⁵ While serving as an official of Mussolini's government, Colonna represented Italy at the re-establishment of the Anthroposophical Society in Dornach, Switzerland, under Steiner's direction in 1923/24. Anthroposophists elsewhere were divided over Fascism, and Colonna's support for the Duce eventually wavered.⁶ As Mussolini moved toward dictatorship, Colonna turned his back on politics and became a critic of Fascism. After his resignation in 1924, Colonna "was considered an antifascist and abandoned political life, dedicating himself exclusively to literary activity."⁷ The political police placed him under occasional surveillance in the latter half of the 1920s, generally viewing him as a reclusive aristocrat now uninvolved in politics who was critical of Fascism but unthreatening.⁸ In retrospect, Colonna said that he had never been a Fascist, but had admired Mussolini and sympathized with his movement.⁹

A similar ambivalence marked the development of Eugenio Curiel (1912–1945), a prominent figure in the antifascist resistance who was killed by Fascist soldiers in 1945. In the early 1930s, Curiel was deeply influenced by Steiner's teachings and was a committed anthroposophist from approximately 1932 to 1934. Near the end of his anthroposophical period, he joined the Fascist party and was attracted to the spiritual theories of Fascist philosopher Giovanni Gentile, before eventually joining the clandestine Communist party.¹⁰ Alongside Colonna, Curiel's ideological trajectory indicates the political volatility of anthroposophical engagement in the Fascist era. For other anthroposophists, however, Mussolini's state elicited neither enthusiasm nor opposition. Fascist police considered leading anthroposophist Giovanni Colazza "indifferent toward the Regime."¹¹ But Fascist campaigns against esoteric groups threatened Anthroposophy as well, indicating the suspicious official attitude toward occult tendencies.¹²

Fascist police reports on anthroposophist gatherings often noted the upscale social makeup of Italian Anthroposophy, in which aristocrats, doctors, lawyers, professors and the like frequently held leading positions. Anthroposophical events attracted relatively large audiences, and anthroposophist organizations maintained substantial memberships throughout most of the Fascist period, larger than theosophical groups.¹³

An anonymous police agent attending a meeting of the Italian Group for Anthroposophical Studies in Rome in 1935 found the featured lecture “rather abstruse”: “There is a little bit of everything: Theosophy and astral bodies, imprecise divinities and references to astrology, negation of the Darwinian theory of the evolution of species [. . .]”¹⁴ These reports did not include political criticisms of Anthroposophy, but in some cases overeager agents inflated the supposed threat posed by the movement. One confused report filed ten years after Steiner’s death expressed anxieties about Anthroposophy’s international character; writing in 1935, in the midst of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the agent asserted that Steiner was alive in Switzerland and had appealed to divine forces to intercede on behalf of the Ethiopian people against their Italian aggressors.¹⁵

Despite such charges, for most of the Fascist period anthroposophists experienced little persecution. In many cases, in fact, Fascist authorities were impressed by anthroposophists’ political reliability. The surviving files on Anthroposophy from the Fascist security services contain a variety of remarkably positive assessments.¹⁶ Throughout the 1930s, members of the Anthroposophical Society received approving evaluations emphasizing their “favorable sentiments toward the Regime.” Alcibiade Mazzarelli, a key figure in the development of Italian Anthroposophy, was commended for his “good political conduct.”¹⁷ In 1940 the Prefect of Milan reported that the local branch of the Anthroposophical Society was not politically suspect in any way.¹⁸ A 1941 report on the Anthroposophical Society branch in San Remo found that it “is not in disagreement with Fascist doctrine.”¹⁹ A comprehensive report from 1932 declared that none of the anthroposophical groups in Italy displayed any activities or attitudes contrary to the Fascist government.²⁰

In several instances anthroposophists were members in good standing of the Fascist party, the PNF. Luigi Andrea Calabrini, Secretary of the Italian Group for Anthroposophical Studies, joined the PNF in May 1921, a year and a half before Mussolini came to power.²¹ The founding Secretary of the Italian Anthroposophical Society, Ettore Martinoli, became a Fascist in July 1919.²² Even when they did not belong to the party, leading anthroposophists were sometimes considered pro-Fascist. A 1938 report on prominent anthroposophist Marco Spaini noted: “although not a member of the PNF, he has proven himself an admirer of the Duce and is positively disposed toward the Regime.”²³ Rinaldo Küfferle, an important anthroposophist author and publicist, was also a PNF member, but his detractors nonetheless accused him of insufficient commitment to Fascism.²⁴ Anthroposophist Luciano Chimelli, leader of the Italian biodynamic movement, was a regional official in the Fascist agricultural

apparatus and an outspoken admirer of Mussolini and Fascism, particularly its environmental programs.²⁵ According to Chimelli, “the climate created by Fascism” was especially hospitable to a biodynamic approach, with its anti-materialist orientation and its spiritual basis.²⁶

These pro-Fascist sentiments from high-profile anthroposophists were matched by a number of notably positive portrayals of Anthroposophy in semi-official Fascist organs. In 1930, the monthly illustrated companion magazine to Mussolini’s newspaper *Popolo d’Italia* published a decidedly sympathetic portrait of Anthroposophy, complete with a large photograph of Steiner.²⁷ In 1937, the hard-line newspaper *Regime Fascista* published a substantial interview with Albert Steffen, President of the Swiss-based Anthroposophical Society, suggesting a considerable degree of agreement between Anthroposophy and Fascism.²⁸ Such instances of mutual appreciation notwithstanding, relations between the Italian anthroposophical movement and various functionaries of the Fascist state became increasingly strained with the developing alliance between Italy and Germany from the mid-1930s onward. The Gestapo dissolved the Anthroposophical Society in Germany in November, 1935, and in April, 1936, Himmler signed a pact with the chief of the Italian police to cooperate in pursuing foes, thus setting the institutional backdrop for a shift in Fascist attitudes toward Anthroposophy.

In July, 1941, in the wake of the June campaign against occultism in Germany, the Fascist security services requested reports from regional police agencies regarding anthroposophical activities within their jurisdictions. Most provinces had no local branch of the Anthroposophical Society in their territory. Even in Rome and Milan, there does not seem to have been much anthroposophist organizational life in Italy at this point.²⁹ The Milan section of the Anthroposophical Society dissolved in December 1941, its assets confiscated by the state. Organized Anthroposophy did not entirely disappear; an October 1941 document submitted to the Fascist security services outlined the goals of the Anthroposophical Society, denying that Anthroposophy had any political content and declaring that its objectives were limited to the study of Steiner’s works and the cultivation of spiritual science as the antithesis to materialism. Its final sentence read: “All members are of the Aryan race.”³⁰

This last claim pointedly indicates the changed situation in Italy after the adoption of an official racist and anti-Semitic policy in 1938. Beginning in July of that year, Mussolini’s subordinates announced a significant shift toward open anti-Semitism as a core aspect of the regime’s ideology and practice. Legislative initiatives enacting a range of explicitly racist laws aimed against Italy’s Jews began in September 1938, intensifying steadily

until Mussolini's temporary overthrow in 1943.³¹ The Fascist race laws entailed a number of complications for anthroposophical activities. In 1939, zealous anti-Semites in the Fascist cultural bureaucracy mistook Steiner for a Jewish author and tried to have his works banned. His chief publisher, Laterza, pointed out that Steiner was not in fact Jewish, and Küfferle submitted a copy of Steiner's Aryan certificate to the Ministry of Popular Culture. The Ministry did not place Steiner on the list of prohibited authors until mid-1942, after pressure from their German colleagues, and declined to authorize re-printing of previously published works.³² Nonetheless, a wide variety of Steiner's publications and works by other anthroposophist authors were available throughout the Fascist period.

Publication difficulties were not the only repercussion the race laws had on organized Anthroposophy. Several leading Italian anthroposophists were of Jewish descent. Lina Schwarz was President of the Milan section of the Anthroposophical Society from 1933 onward and had translated anthroposophist works into Italian; she moved to Switzerland after the imposition of the race laws. Maria Kassapian was titular President of the Anthroposophical Society in Italy from 1931 onward and head of the Trieste branch of the Society.³³ Other Trieste anthroposophists came from Jewish origins as well. While Fascist authorities categorically affirmed their good political conduct, the presence of Jews appears to have played a role in the Trieste group's dissolution in September, 1938, in the immediate aftermath of the enactment of the racial laws.

Anthroposophist responses to the race laws were complicated by serious disagreements over anti-Semitism among Steiner's followers and widely divergent interpretations of his racial and ethnic doctrines. While anthroposophists like Colonna maintained a philosemitic stance, other anthroposophists adopted an aggressive version of anti-Semitism presented in spiritual vocabulary. Steiner's teachings about race seemed to support both views.³⁴ The wide spectrum of opinions reflected in esoteric approaches to racial and ethnic questions made it possible for assimilated Jews like Schwarz and Kassapian to occupy leading positions in anthroposophical organizations even as other anthroposophists enthusiastically greeted Fascism's anti-Semitic turn. In addition, some of the more vocal Fascist antisemites had supported anthroposophist endeavors for decades. The most prominent example is Colonna's colleague Giovanni Preziosi, a Fascist publicist and notorious antisemite with an abiding interest in the occult who strongly recommended to the Laterza publishing house that they publish Steiner's books in Italian translation.³⁵ Preziosi continued to support the publication of Steiner's works for many years.³⁶

Preziosi was the principal sponsor within the Fascist hierarchy of the

current of esoteric racism, a form of racist thought structured around conceptions of a racial spirit and racial soul.³⁷ While other types of racism privileged biological factors, esoteric racism centered on ostensibly spiritual aspects of race. One of its proponents, Alberto Luchini, was named head of the Race Office in the Ministry of Popular Culture in May 1941. Other esotericists sympathetic toward Anthroposophy also joined in Fascism's anti-Semitic campaign, such as Aniceto del Massa (1898–1975), a dedicated member of Mussolini's movement from the beginning.³⁸ A committed esotericist, by the early 1920s, he was a student of Steiner's spiritual science, and remained attached to Anthroposophy throughout his life.³⁹ Del Massa argued that Fascist Italy must go beyond "ordinary racism" to a "spiritual racism."⁴⁰ He insisted that the "Jewish virus" and the "Jewish spirit" must be "combated and eliminated."⁴¹ He was a fervent supporter of the Fascist military and its Nazi ally, rejecting "enemy propaganda" about "concentration camps" and praising "Nordic-Mediterranean Aryan values."⁴² With the backing of Preziosi and Luchini, Del Massa edited the journal *Il problema ebraico* (*The Jewish Problem*). In an article from the November, 1942, issue, "Preliminary Remarks for a Spiritual Conception of Racism," Del Massa elaborated "the spiritual foundations of the new racism, a racism of a specifically Italian character."⁴³ Expounding his esoteric conception of the "Jewish peril," Del Massa invoked the work of Austrian anthroposophist Ludwig Thieben as a penetrating analysis of the spiritual essence of Jewry.⁴⁴

Several prominent anthroposophists promoted a similar synthesis of spirituality and racism within a Fascist worldview. The most institutionally significant example was Ettore Martinoli, Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Italy. Martinoli (1895–1958) published extensively on spiritual themes and was an important collaborator of the "School of Fascist Mysticism."⁴⁵ His 1940 book on mysticism described Fascism as "a true movement of spiritual counter-attack" against materialism, proclaiming that "the principle of hierarchy" was a "necessary element of any human society based on spiritual foundations."⁴⁶ For Martinoli, "the Fascist revolution not only brought a new political-social order into the world, it also ushered in the beginning of a new civilization," one menaced by "Jewish-Masonic demo-plutocracy" which threatened the future of "the white race."⁴⁷

Apart from his anthroposophist activities, Martinoli took an energetic role in the racial campaign from 1938 onward. He was the founder and director of an influential anti-Semitic institute in Trieste, the Center for the Study of the Jewish Problem, established in early 1942.⁴⁸ In this capacity Martinoli worked closely with Preziosi and Luchini and with

Nazi representatives. The surviving records of his institute provide an illuminating example of esoteric racism in action.⁴⁹ The purpose of the Trieste Center was to pursue both propaganda activities and practical cooperation with local authorities. In a February 1942 letter to the Prefect of Trieste, Luchini explained that the Center was necessary because “more than any other city in Italy, Trieste is faced with the hostile presence of a mass of Jews and of a Jewish spirit” and was thus in special need of a correct “comprehension of the Jewish question.”⁵⁰

Martinoli made vigorous use of this assignment. The Trieste Center’s “study and propaganda” efforts were able to build on local traditions of conspiratorial anti-Semitism corresponding to Martinoli’s own views.⁵¹ These activities earned Martinoli praise for his “dynamism” in making the Center “an even more effective organ in the struggle against Jewry and its subsidiaries.”⁵² His essays depicted an elaborate “global Jewish conspiracy”:

Jewry does not carry out its Judaic conquests solely because of its innate love of money or its greed for profit or its subtle Hebraic commercial cunning, but in order to fulfill its conscious age-old plan for worldwide conquest and domination. Every Jew has in his blood the conviction, cultivated for millennia, that the Jewish people is entitled to, and will one day be given, dominion over the whole world and all of mankind.⁵³

This Jewish plot for “world domination” demanded constant watchfulness: “The conscience of our Aryan world must rouse itself in the face of these facts and not remain in its state of slumber regarding the Jewish problem, a slumber which allows Jewry to achieve its goals.” Blaming the world war on the Jews, Martinoli praised Mussolini as “the true historical adversary of the international Jewish conspiracy.”⁵⁴ Fascism was fighting “to liberate and purify the world” from the Jewish menace and thus pave the way for “a new humankind.”⁵⁵ Five years after the passage of the racial laws, Martinoli raged against “the Jewish plutocratic oligarchy” and its allies, “the liberal democratic regimes,” enemies of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.⁵⁶

In a section on “Judaism and Freemasonry” Martinoli invoked the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, warning that democracy and social equality threatened to turn “our race” into “a servant of Israel.” But all was not lost:

If it had not been for the providential arrival of those towering and super-human personalities, the Duce and the Führer, who succeeded in saving the two great peoples of Aryan civilization from the abyss, the Jewish plan would surely have been achieved.⁵⁷

Fascism held the key to "purification from Jewish servitude," and the strongest defense was "racism, which opposes itself to Judaism."

Racism has by now established itself in the center of the political, cultural, and ethical development of our century. With the achievement of Aryan racial consciousness, racism is erecting a barrier against Jewish domination, a barrier that is even more spiritual than political. Racism is also beginning to shape a continental European conscience, the only possible basis for an orderly and harmonious convergence of the peoples of Europe toward a unified civilization.⁵⁸

Thanks to "divine providence," the "titanic struggle" of Fascism and Nazism had rescued "the new Europe" from the clutches of international Jewry.⁵⁹ But vigilance was still required. In May 1942 Martinoli gave a lecture in Milan on "Jewry's efforts to conquer western civilization."⁶⁰ In June and July 1943 he gave a series of lectures in Trieste on "Judeo-Masonic influence in modern civilization."⁶¹ Into 1945 Martinoli continued to call for an intensification of the struggle against Jews, Masons, and hidden enemies of Fascism.

For Martinoli, commitment to Fascist mysticism and esoteric racism went hand in hand with anthroposophical principles. He published a lengthy article celebrating Steiner in Preziosi's journal in June, 1943, presenting Anthroposophy as the continuation of Fascism in spiritual form.⁶² Martinoli stressed "the perfect correspondence between Steiner's thought and the most basic tendencies of Fascism and National Socialism in the political, social, and spiritual camp."⁶³ In a section on Steiner's "critique of Judaism and of Masonic-plutocratic influence," Martinoli reported that Steiner "became well-known as an antisemite" due to his articles on "the Jewish question" from the 1880s and throughout his career: "In numerous lectures in the years 1917 and 1918, he directly confronted the influence of Jewish intellectualism within European civilization."⁶⁴ Martinoli concluded:

Rudolf Steiner was a true ideal precursor of the new Europe of Mussolini and Hitler. The aim of this essay has been to reclaim the spirit of this great modern German mystic for the movement—a movement not only political but spiritual—introduced into the world by the two parallel revolutions, the Fascist revolution and the National Socialist revolution, to which Steiner belongs as a true predecessor and spiritual pioneer.⁶⁵

In Martinoli's eyes, Steiner was the herald of a New Europe who decisively presaged Fascism and Nazism and provided a spiritual

foundation for anti-Semitic engagement.

He was not alone in these views. While Martinoli held a central position in the organizational life of Italian Anthroposophy during the Fascist era, in historical perspective he is overshadowed by a more renowned esoteric author: Massimo Scaligero, the foremost Italian anthroposophist in the latter half of the twentieth century. Scaligero (1906–1980) is today a celebrated spiritual figure, widely admired among anthroposophists in Italy and elsewhere, and enjoys a distinguished reputation in the esoteric milieu more broadly.⁶⁶ Latter-day admirers rarely take account of Scaligero's voluminous publications from the Fascist era, while both anthroposophical sources and scholarly sources deny his involvement in Fascist politics and in the racist campaign launched in 1938.⁶⁷ Others continue to defend his racial writings from the 1930s and 1940s.⁶⁸ Historians, in contrast, point to Scaligero as a major promoter of Fascist anti-Semitism.⁶⁹

Part of the controversy over Scaligero's early career involves his close relationship with Julius Evola, a pre-eminent figure in modern Italian esotericism whose own racial stance in the Fascist era is contested today. Evola (1898–1974) was the chief theorist of the esoteric current of racism and developed an extensive literature on the spiritual grounds for a racial re-orientation of Fascism.⁷⁰ Perceptions of his racial writings from the Fascist period remain divided.⁷¹ Evola advocated a "totalitarian racism" encompassing body, soul, and spirit.⁷² He held that limiting the view of race to the physical body alone was a Jewish deception, whereas an expanded understanding of race made it possible to confront the Jewish problem in its full breadth and recognize the true antithesis between the Jewish and Aryan spirit. Mussolini read Evola's book *Synthesis of the Doctrine of Race* in 1941, and for a time its arguments influenced the official line of the regime. Evola faced intense opposition from other Fascist functionaries, however; racists unhappy with the esoteric orientation complained to Mussolini that "occultists" were discrediting the racial cause.⁷³

Evola's relationship with Anthroposophy was strained. He published sharp criticisms of Anthroposophy as an esoteric system, but respected Colonna and Colazza and cooperated amicably with anthroposophists in the Ur group.⁷⁴ Despite strong disagreements with some of his teachings, Evola held Steiner in high esteem, considering him an initiate.⁷⁵ In *Synthesis of the Doctrine of Race*, Evola published two photographs of Steiner as a prime example of the Nordic racial type, praising him as representative of fine race features that reflect "spiritual insight" and the "solar element."⁷⁶ For much of the 1930s Evola was Scaligero's mentor, both politically and spiritually. According to his own testimony, Scaligero was a student of Anthroposophy all along, during his intensive early collaboration with

Evola: "I always felt connected to Steiner and his esoteric teachings."⁷⁷ Other sources agree that Scaligero was "a devoted Anthroposophist throughout his entire life."⁷⁸

In a 1931 essay, Scaligero praised "the Fascist spirit" as the bulwark against materialism and democracy, hailing Fascism as the bearer of "that luminous spirituality which is the principal characteristic of superior civilizations."⁷⁹ He envisioned a "fascist spirituality" in a front-page article in *Regime Fascista* in August, 1938.⁸⁰ His first article in Preziosi's journal was an homage to Evola.⁸¹ By 1943, he pointed in the same venue toward a synthesis of Evolian and anthroposophical esotericism.⁸² Beginning in 1938, Scaligero produced a stream of texts elaborating an esoteric style of anti-Semitic rhetoric with pronounced political implications, eventually amounting to nearly one hundred publications on racial topics. These works combined a "spiritual conception of race" with an aesthetic vision of cultural renewal as essential aspects of "the racist ethic."⁸³ His articles declared the Aryan race "the model of humankind," the race in which "the formative forces of the Divine most fully manifest their creative will."⁸⁴ Germany and Italy were the primary carriers of this spiritual destiny: "the victory of the totalitarian principle of Fascism and National Socialism by force of arms" would "restore to mankind the vision of the sacred and eternal."⁸⁵

The rightful role of the "Aryan peoples" was "world conquest and the consolidation of colonial hegemony," which required "the absolute absence of Semitic contamination."⁸⁶ Scaligero consequently endorsed Nazi Germany's "decisive racist campaign."⁸⁷ Through a "resurrection of the spiritual values of race," Italy would achieve "the diffusion of a Fascist spirituality throughout the world."⁸⁸ Scaligero viewed "anti-Judaism as anti-materialism," casting the Jews as representatives of "sub-human Ahrimanic forces."⁸⁹ Freemasonry, Bolshevism, England, and the United States were all pawns in "the secret Jewish plan," part of "the occult struggle of the Elders of Zion" against Fascism and Nazism.⁹⁰ He thus championed Hitler's call for "a united Aryan front against Jewry."⁹¹ The "essential objective of racist doctrine" must include not only "eugenic and sanitary regulations" but also the promotion of "racist consciousness" so that "people do not merely welcome the results of the racist campaign passively, but become conscious collaborators in this campaign." Genuine racism combined "cosmic" and "biological" elements, and a "totalitarian racist praxis" must integrate the physical and the spiritual. Citing Nazi race theorists as a model, Scaligero endorsed racial "selection" in order to achieve "the purification of the hereditary protoplasm" as well as purification of the spirit.⁹² He called for "the elimination of the Judaic virus and the biological re-integration of

Aryan ethnic values” as an essential part of “the heroic task of the spirit within the racist campaign.”⁹³ With the proper spiritual-racial approach, “the Jew can be easily recognized and eliminated.”⁹⁴

Addressing ongoing debates within the racist camp, Scaligero appealed for integrating “spiritual racism and biological racism,” arguing that there was no real opposition between the two.⁹⁵ He grounded this approach in anthroposophist principles, explaining that the proper integration of the biological and the spiritual

takes on a definite doctrinal form in the work of Rudolf Steiner, who recognizes in the two one-sided experiences of the human soul the two principal powers that obstruct evolution and the spiritual development of man and assume symbolic form in the figures of Ahriman and Lucifer. The most complete racist synthesis is therefore provided by the conception of three entities which constitute the human being: spirit, soul, body.⁹⁶

This integrated approach required “preventative measures” which would “not be simply of a eugenic, biological, sanitary nature,” but also of a “spiritual nature.” “Science of the spirit, science of the soul and science of the body must come together in order to enable an authentic and complete racist praxis.”⁹⁷ Scaligero elucidated this vision in a 1942 essay entitled “For a Comprehensive Racism,” outlining a synthesis of biological and spiritual racism. Only this “integral racism” could illuminate “the path of true spiritual ascent.”⁹⁸

Scaligero’s writings had a noticeable impact on Fascist racial discourse.⁹⁹ Even the Duce was familiar with Scaligero’s publications and positively disposed toward his spiritual perspective. In August 1938 Scaligero wrote an appreciative note to Mussolini’s secretary in response to the “favorable opinion expressed by the Duce about some of my articles,” and sent Mussolini “a new article of mine regarding the race problem.”¹⁰⁰ He faced difficulties in mid-1943, when Mussolini was deposed and the Badoglio regime took power for six weeks, eventually signing an armistice with the Allies. German troops then occupied central and northern Italy and established the Italian Social Republic or RSI, better known as the Republic of Salò. The sole police file on Scaligero consists of a single page from the Badoglio interregnum, produced just days before the Nazi occupation. It indicates that Scaligero continued his Fascist activities even when they were officially out of favor.¹⁰¹ He continued to publish in Fascist organs under the RSI and was arrested and imprisoned as a Fascist sympathizer after the Allies entered Rome in 1944.¹⁰² Scaligero went on to play a prominent role in neo-fascist circles after 1945 as one of the principal proponents of an

esoteric line.¹⁰³ Anthroposophy received considerable attention within the neo-fascist milieu.¹⁰⁴

Unlike Scaligero, Martinoli came to hold a high position in the Fascist racial bureaucracy after 1943 and played an active role in preparing the way for the Nazi deportation of Italian Jews in the holocaust. In 1942 Martinoli and his Center for the Study of the Jewish Problem were given access to the municipal registry office in order to identify and tabulate Jewish residents of Trieste.¹⁰⁵ The Center compiled a list of Jews in Trieste between August 1942 and July 1943. Martinoli's efforts impressed the German consul, who submitted an extremely positive report to the foreign ministry in Berlin in November 1942, highlighting the Center's access to municipal statistics and its contribution to intensified surveillance of Jews. The report noted Martinoli's anthroposophist orientation.¹⁰⁶

The data collected by the Trieste Center yielded tangible results when German forces occupied the city in September 1943. Thanks in part to Martinoli's longstanding ties to German officials, his institute was able to survive the Badoglio interlude even though the Center for the Study of the Jewish Problem was officially suppressed by Badoglio's government.¹⁰⁷ A local SS officer commended Martinoli for his assistance in the "struggle against Jewry and Freemasonry."¹⁰⁸ Under German occupation the city became a center of Nazi efforts to extend the 'Final Solution' to Italy. Round-ups of Trieste's Jews began in October 1943, and the city was declared free of Jews in January 1944. Martinoli and his Center served an instrumental function in facilitating execution of the German plans.¹⁰⁹

Even with Trieste emptied of Jews, the ostensible threat had not abated. Martinoli continued to oversee his institute, re-named the 'Center for Race,' calling in February 1944 for intensified efforts against the "internal front" of Jewish influence within the Fascist camp itself.¹¹⁰ He was promoted to a national-level position in the RSI apparatus in spring 1944, becoming Chief of the Division of Press and Propaganda in the newly created 'General Inspectorate for Race' headed by Preziosi.¹¹¹ The Inspectorate broadcast the doctrines of esoteric racism during the waning days of the Fascist regime. While Jews remained its primary target, Preziosi extended its tasks to collecting information on "the activities of Freemasonry, plutocracy, and occult political forces."¹¹² Martinoli supervised the Inspectorate's propaganda department until the final defeat of Fascism. Among other tasks, he co-authored a handbook designed to confront "the Jewish-Masonic conspiracy."¹¹³ Here he delineated both the "defensive" task of "preserving the Race from contamination" and the "positive" task of "reconstructing the values of the Italian race, values which are not just biological but above all spiritual."¹¹⁴ According to Martinoli, "The defense

of the race aims to immunize the people against biological pollution of their blood” through “separation of people of Aryan race from non-Aryan racial elements,” primarily “Jews and those of mixed race deriving from cross-breeding with Jews.”¹¹⁵ Through purification and racial selection, racism represented the key to spiritual renewal. In late 1944 the General Inspectorate for Race distributed a list of recommended texts for raising racial consciousness, with a notable esoteric emphasis, including works by Preziosi, Evola, and Scaligero.¹¹⁶ Martinoli was arrested after the RSI’s downfall. In 1946 he was convicted of collaborating with the Nazis and participating in the leadership of the anti-Semitic campaign, was sentenced to ten years, and was amnestied in 1950.

Although anthroposophists sometimes disdain politics as irredeemably part of maya, the world of illusion, Steiner’s followers have historically been involved in a broad range of political causes. Fascism was no exception. A number of Italian anthroposophists were antifascists, and several leading members of the small anthroposophical community in Italy were Jews who fell victim to the Fascist racial campaign. Other anthroposophists participated wholeheartedly in the racist agitation, advocating an esoteric variant of anti-Semitism. In a few instances Steiner’s followers publicly supported both Fascism and National Socialism. Some Fascist officials, meanwhile, obstructed and harassed anthroposophist activities. Despite prominent anthroposophist participation in the post-war neo-fascist milieu, the little-known history of anthroposophists in Fascist Italy does not yield unambiguous conclusions. During the two decades of Mussolini’s reign, different anthroposophists and different Fascists made conflicting choices about the relationship between esotericism and politics, finding significant room for both compatibility and incompatibility, just as Steiner’s followers drew divergent lessons from his racial and ethnic teachings and his broader esoteric philosophy. In historical perspective, the political profile of Anthroposophy in the Fascist era remains unresolved.

Yet the very ambivalence of the anthroposophist experience under Fascism calls attention to a central dilemma in the intersection of esotericism and politics. The Fascist regime presented advocates of spiritual renewal with unanticipated challenges that revealed the limits of an ‘un-political’ ideal. Anthroposophy aimed to transcend the shortcomings of established scientific, religious, and political frameworks while positing spiritual realities as more important than merely external material conditions. This stance led to neglect of the surrounding social context and its contradictory exigencies, rendering Steiner’s followers amenable to the objectives of an authoritarian state. While not representative of the anthroposophist movement as a whole, the actions of Martinoli, del Massa

and Scaligero are a stark indication of “the distorting and harmful effects of viewing political events through an occult prism.”¹¹⁷ Even for these figures, however, the goal was to revitalize spiritual culture and redeem a fallen world. The history of esoteric entanglement in fascist politics shows that high-minded aspirations can be put in the service of pernicious ends when the concrete details of political context are not attended to, no matter how benevolent the reasons and no matter how noble the motives. In this sense, the ambiguous record of Anthroposophy in Fascist Italy carries lessons for the past and the present as well.

Notes

1 Introductions include Geoffrey Ahern, *Sun at Midnight: The Rudolf Steiner Movement and Gnosis in the West* (Cambridge: Clarke, 2009); Heiner Ullrich, *Rudolf Steiner* (London: Continuum, 2008); Helmut Zander, *Anthroposophie in Deutschland: Theosophische Weltanschauung und gesellschaftliche Praxis 1884–1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).

2 There is little literature on Anthroposophy in Fascist Italy. For a sympathetic but informative treatment see Michele Beraldo, “Il movimento antroposofico italiano durante il regime fascista” *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 14 (2002), 145–79. Broader context can be found in Marco Pasi’s excellent overview “Teosofia e antroposofia nell’Italia del primo Novecento” in G.M. Cazzaniga, ed., *Storia d’Italia Annali 25: Esoterismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), 569–98. Additional material, not always historiographically reliable, is available in Gianfranco de Turrís, ed., *Esoterismo e Fascismo: Storia, interpretazioni, documenti* (Rome: Mediterranee, 2006). For a fuller analysis of the themes examined here see my recent dissertation, “Between Occultism and Fascism: Anthroposophy and the Politics of Race and Nation in Germany and Italy, 1900–1945” (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2010).

3 Lina Ferraresi, “Radicalismo antigiolittiano ed imperialismo democratico—Profilo politico della ‘Rassegna contemporanea’ (1908–1915)” in Fausto Fonzi, ed., *Roma tra ottocento e novecento: Studi e ricerche* (Rome: Istituto di Scienze Storiche, 1981), 237–90.

4 Cf. Danilo Veneruso, *La vigilia del fascismo: Il primo ministero Facta nella crisi dello stato liberale in Italia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1968), 39–40, 246–51.

5 Adrian Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy, 1919–1929* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 101–02, 138–40; Renzo De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista: La conquista del potere 1921–1925* (Turin: Einaudi, 1966), 506–

09. Colonna's position was Postal Minister.

6 For an early negative assessment see Karl Heyer, "Mussolini über den Faschismus" *Anthroposophie*, September 14, 1922, 5–6. An admiring portrait of the Duce by Emil Leinhas can be found in *Anthroposophie*, July 13, 1930, 217–18; an enthusiastically positive account appears in Johannes Hemleben, "Mussolini" *Die Christengemeinschaft*, June 1928, 91–92.

7 Ferraresi, "Radicalismo antigiolittiano ed imperialismo democratico," 242.

8 See his political police file in the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome (hereafter ACS): ACS Pol. Pol. b. 320 fasc. pers. Colonna di Cesarò.

9 "I am not a Fascist and never have been. I was an admirer of Mussolini and sympathized with the movement he created. I now understand that I deluded myself and that my own views are incompatible with some of his political conceptions. This explains why I am not one of those who at every opportunity praise Mussolini, right or wrong, just as I am not one of those who condemn a priori everything that Fascism does, merely because it is Fascism that does it." Colonna quoted in Michele Beraldo, "Il duca Colonna di Cesarò, ministro antroposofico" in de Turris, ed., *Esoterismo e Fascismo*, 238.

10 Cf. Nando Briamonte, *La vita e il pensiero di Eugenio Curiel* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1979), 20–26, and Mario Quaranta, "La formazione filosofica di Eugenio Curiel" in Lino Scalco, ed., *Eugenio Curiel nella cultura e nella storia d'Italia* (Padova: Programma, 1997), 67–98.

11 Questura di Roma, March 26, 1931, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

12 On Fascist efforts against esotericism see Dana Lloyd Thomas, "Il Tempio assalito: Introduzione allo studio della campagna antiesoterica nell'Italia fascista" *Politica Romana* 5 (1999), 253–300, and "La teosofia nell'occhio della polizia politica" in Romano Canosa, *I servizi segreti del Duce: I persecutori e le vittime* (Milan: Mondadori, 2000), 89–98.

13 See the Rome police reports on Colazza's lectures on "Anthroposophy and occult medicine" from 1935 through 1938 in ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317. A 1931 report from the General Directorate for Public Security titled "Oggetto: Movimento Antroposofico" estimates roughly one hundred anthroposophists in Rome alone at the time, in addition to sizeable groups in Milan, Trieste, and elsewhere. Theosophist groups were considerably smaller; a 1932 report from the Prefect of Genoa estimates only about twenty participants total at the national Theosophical Congress: ACS PCM 1931–33 14.3.4696 Società Teosofica Italiana.

14 Questura di Roma, "Gruppo italiano di studi antroposofici," May 2, 1935, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

15 ACS Pol. Pol. b. 1307 fasc. pers. Steiner Rudolf.

16 The largest archival source is the file on Anthroposophy compiled by the General Directorate for Public Security in the Interior Ministry, ACS MI/DGPS Div. Aff. gen. e ris., Associazioni G1, b. 28 f. 317: Società

Generale Antroposofica con Sede in Dornach (Svizzera), containing materials from 1931 to 1942; the unnumbered documents are sorted into sub-files by geographical location.

17 Prefettura di Arezzo to DGPS, February 26, 1932, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

18 Prefettura di Milano to DGPS, December 26, 1940, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

19 Memorandum from Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, January 16, 1941, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

20 DGPS memorandum, August 5, 1932, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

21 Questura di Roma, March 26, 1931, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

22 See the August 7, 1931 application to the Interior Ministry signed by Martinoli on behalf of the Società Antroposofica d'Italia, boasting of his service to the Fascist movement and regime, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

23 Questura di Imperia to DGPS, December 4, 1938, ACS Pol. Pol. b. 1292 fasc. pers. Spaini Marco.

24 See the anonymous complaints from 1935 and 1936 in ACS Pol. Pol. b. 692 fasc. pers. Kufferle Rinaldo; cf. Küfferle's letter to the editor in *Regime Fascista*, October 5, 1938, 3, identifying himself as a Fascist.

25 Cf. Luciano Chimelli, *Della lavorazione del terreno* (Pergine: Luigi Torgler, 1941); Chimelli, *Del governo dei concimi organici* (Trent: Edizioni Mutilati e Invalidi, 1942). The German biodynamic periodical *Demeter* extolled Fascism for rescuing the Italian landscape: Aldo Pavari, "Die Wiederbewaldung des Appennin" *Demeter*, February 1940, 13–17.

26 Chimelli, "Prefazione all'edizione italiana" to Giovanni Schomerus, *Il metodo di coltivazione biologico-dinamico* (Pergine: Luigi Torgler, 1934), xx. According to anthroposophist Enrico Pappacena, *Di alcuni cultori della Scienza dello Spirito* (Bari: Andriola, 1971), 169, Chimelli's "devotion and dedication to Anthroposophy were absolute."

27 Innocenza Cappa, "Leuritmia e Rodolfo Steiner" *La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia*, February 1930, 48–49.

28 Rinaldo Küfferle, "Colloquio con Steffen" *Regime Fascista*, December 12, 1937, 5.

29 Questura di Roma to DGPS, October 23, 1941, ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317, reported that the Rome branch of the Anthroposophical Society had only 15 members by this time.

30 See the unsigned October 24, 1941 document beginning "Lo scopo della Società Antroposofica": ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

31 For context see Stefano Luconi, "Recent trends in the study of Italian anti-Semitism under the Fascist regime" *Patterns of Prejudice* 38 (2004), 1–17; Joshua Zimmerman, ed., *Jews in Italy under Fascist and Nazi Rule, 1922–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005);

Michele Sarfatti, *The Jews in Mussolini's Italy: From Equality to Persecution* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

32 Giorgio Fabre, *L'Elenco: Censura fascista, editoria e autori ebrei* (Turin: Zamorani, 1998), 287, 367–69.

33 The Società Antroposofica d'Italia was founded in Trieste in January 1931 with Kassapian in the office of President, but all of the paperwork was prepared and submitted by the Secretary, Ettore Martinoli, also from Trieste. See the application, statutes, and related documents in ACS MI/DGPS G1 b. 28 f. 317.

34 Cf. Helmut Zander, "Anthroposophische Rassenlehre: Der Geist auf dem Weg durch die Rassengeschichte" in Stefanie von Schnurbein and Justus Ulbricht, eds., *Völkische Religion und Krisen der Moderne: Entwürfe "arteigener" Glaubenssysteme seit der Jahrhundertwende* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 292–341; Zander, "Rudolf Steiners Rassenlehre: Plädoyer, über die Regeln der Deutung von Steiners Werk zu reden" in Uwe Puschner and Ulrich Großmann, eds., *Völkisch und national: Zur Aktualität alter Denkmuster im 21. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2009), 145–55; Peter Staudenmaier, "Race and Redemption: Racial and Ethnic Evolution in Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy" *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 11 (2008), 4–36. On Steiner's teachings about Jews compare Staudenmaier, "Rudolf Steiner and the Jewish Question" *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 50 (2005), 127–47, and Ralf Sonnenberg, ed., *Anthroposophie und Judentum* (Frankfurt: Inf03, 2009).

35 Daniela Coli, "Religione e occultismo nella 'casa editrice di Croce'" *Passato e Presente* 1 (1982), 162–69.

36 Daniela Coli, *Croce, Laterza e la cultura europea* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1983), 219–21. For background on Preziosi see Maria Teresa Pichetto, *Alle radici dell'odio: Preziosi e Benigni antisemiti* (Milan: Angeli, 1983); Luigi Parente, Fabio Gentile, and Rosa Maria Grillo, eds., *Giovanni Preziosi e la questione della razza in Italia* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2005); Romano Canosa, *A caccia di ebrei: Mussolini, Preziosi e l'antisemitismo fascista* (Milan: Mondadori, 2006).

37 Cf. Mauro Raspanti, "I razzismi del fascismo" in Centro Furio Jesi, ed., *La menzogna della razza: Documenti e immagini del razzismo e dell'antisemitismo fascista* (Bologna: Grafis, 1994), 73–89; Raspanti, "Le correnti del razzismo fascista" in Anna Capelli and Renata Broggin, eds., *Antisemitismo in Europa negli anni Trenta* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2001), 238–51; Michele Sarfatti, "Il razzismo fascista nella sua concretezza: La definizione di 'ebreo' e la collocazione di questi nella costruenda gerarchia razziale" in Alberto Burgio, ed., *Nel nome della razza: Il razzismo nella storia d'Italia 1870–1945* (Bologna: Mulino, 1999), 321–32; Francesco Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza": Politica, ideologia e immagine del razzismo fascista* (Turin: Einaudi, 2008), 76–103.

38 See his autobiographical account, Aniceto del Massa, *Pagine*

esoteriche (Trent: La Finestra, 2001), 28–29.

39 Ibid., 44, 75, 90–94.

40 Del Massa, *Cronache: Uomini e idee* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1941), 26. The book's opening pages refer to Steiner and Anthroposophy.

41 Del Massa, *Razzismo Ebraismo* (Verona: Mondadori, 1944), 11, 15.

42 Del Massa, "Rinasce un esercito" *L'Ora*, July 30, 1944, 4–7.

43 Del Massa, "Premesse per una concezione spirituale del razzismo" reprinted in Enzo Collotti, ed., *Razza e fascismo: La persecuzione contro gli ebrei in Toscana 1938–1943* (Rome: Carocci, 1999), 22–23.

44 Del Massa, *Razzismo Ebraismo*, 66, citing Ludwig Thieben, *Che cos'è l'Ebraismo* (Milan: I.T.E., 1937), the Italian translation of Ludwig Thieben, *Das Rätsel des Judentums* (Düsseldorf: Pflugschar-Verlag, 1931).

45 On the School of Fascist Mysticism cf. Daniele Marchesini, *La scuola dei gerarchi. Mistica fascista: storia, problemi, istituzioni* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976) and Tomas Carini, *Niccolò Giani e la Scuola di Mistica Fascista 1930–1943* (Milan: Mursia, 2009). For an example of its publications on race see Enzo Leoni, *Mistica del razzismo fascista* (Milan: Scuola di Mistica Fascista, 1941).

46 Ettore Martinoli, *Funzione della mistica nella rivoluzione fascista* (Trieste: Trani, 1940), 45, 56. See also Martinoli, "In tema di formulazione di una nuova sintesi spirituale" *Tempo di Mussolini*, January 1941, 1058–67.

47 Martinoli, *Funzione della mistica nella rivoluzione fascista*, 14, 19.

48 On Martinoli and the Trieste Center for the Study of the Jewish Problem cf. Silva Bon, *Gli ebrei a Trieste 1930–1945: Identità, persecuzione, risposte* (Udine: Goriziana, 2000), 255–64, 294–302; Giuseppe Mayda, *Ebrei sotto Salò: La persecuzione antisemita 1943–1945* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1978), 45–50; Carlo Ventura, "Il centro fascista di Trieste per lo studio del problema ebraico" *Trieste: Rivista politica* 8 (1961), 20–23; Dario Mattiussi, "Il PNF a Trieste 1938–1943" in Annamaria Vinci, ed., *Trieste in guerra: Gli anni 1938–1943* (Trieste: Istituto regionale per la storia del movimento di liberazione nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1992), 11–29.

49 The richest source of primary documents is a file in the Archivio di Stato di Trieste (hereafter AST), Prefettura di Trieste Gabinetto (1923–1952) b. 484 f. 318: Centro per lo Studio del Problema Ebraico. The documents are not numbered. At his post-war trial Martinoli claimed that he burned the Center's archive in 1945.

50 Luchini to Prefect of Trieste, February 25, 1942, AST Prefettura di Trieste Gabinetto (1923–1952) b. 484 f. 318. Trieste had the third largest Jewish community in Italy, and the largest proportional to overall population.

51 See the anonymous submissions from early 1938 denouncing "occult forces" and the prevalence of "Jewish power" and "Masonic Jewry" in the city: AST Prefettura di Trieste Gabinetto (1923–1952) b. 363: 219–

223.

52 June 17, 1943 report from Dr. Hermann Carbone to Ministry of Popular Culture, AST Prefettura di Trieste Gabinetto (1923–1952) b. 484 f. 318.

53 Martinoli, “L’importanza di Trieste per l’ebraismo internazionale” *La Porta Orientale*, June 1942, 106–10.

54 *Ibid.*, 107, 109.

55 Martinoli, “Gli impulsi storici della nuova Europa e l’azione dell’ebraismo internazionale” *La Vita Italiana*, April 1943, 355–64.

56 *Ibid.*, 359.

57 *Ibid.*, 360. According to Martinoli, “Jewry and Masonry are behind all of the liberal, democratic, egalitarian, and leveling movements, behind everything that is subverting the traditional European world and dragging both Europe and America into the present chaos.” (361)

58 *Ibid.*, 363.

59 *Ibid.*, 364, referring to Mussolini and Hitler as the “two men of genius” who have “saved Aryan civilization.”

60 Report on Martinoli’s lecture “L’ebraismo alla conquista della civiltà occidentale” in ACS SPD/CO b. 1144 f. 509485.

61 Bon, *Gli ebrei a Trieste*, 263.

62 Martinoli, “Un preannunziatore della nuova Europa: Rudolf Steiner” *La Vita Italiana*, June 1943, 555–66. The article includes substantial quotations from Steiner.

63 *Ibid.*, 562.

64 *Ibid.*, 562. Several of the lectures Martinoli refers to are available in Rudolf Steiner, *The Challenge of the Times* (Spring Valley: Anthroposophic Press, 1941); original edition: Steiner, *Die soziale Grundforderung unserer Zeit* (Berlin: Philosophisch-Anthroposophischer Verlag, 1921).

65 Martinoli, “Un preannunziatore della nuova Europa,” 566.

66 The current catalogue of the Anthroposophic Press describes Scaligero as “a contemporary Italian spiritual master who has drunk deep from Western and Eastern traditions. Equally at home by direct experience with Western philosophy and psychology, Western esotericism (Rosicrucianism, Templarism, and Anthroposophy) and Eastern meditative practice (Zen and Tibetan Buddhism), Scaligero created a body of work that will continue to influence spiritual seekers well into the new millennium.” In 2006 the Italian Anthroposophical Society held a conference in Trieste in honor of Scaligero.

67 The standard Anthroposophist biography in Bodo von Plato, ed., *Anthroposophie im 20. Jahrhundert: Ein Kulturimpuls in biografischen Porträts* (Dornach: Verlag am Goetheanum, 2003), 695–96, claims that Scaligero “was never politically involved, and certainly not involved in fascist politics.” Massimo Introvigne, “Scaligero, Massimo” in Wouter Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 1038–39, claims that Scaligero was “occasionally counted,

after World War II, among those intellectuals who supported Fascist anti-Semitism. Actually Scaligero was not particularly interested in Fascist politics at that time, although he later wrote, in the 1960s, several books criticizing Marxism and counted among his students several young right-wing intellectuals." Scaligero himself insisted in his autobiography that he was never involved in politics and tried to intervene against the racist campaign; cf. Massimo Scaligero, *Dallo Yoga alla Rosacroce* (Rome: Perseo, 1972), 92–97. Even here Scaligero maintained: "I still believe the same things about race that I believed back then." (96).

68 Cf. Marco Rossi, *Esoterismo e razzismo spirituale: Julius Evola e l'ambiente esoterico nel conflitto ideologico del Novecento* (Genoa: Name, 2007), 118–27, and the series by Andrea Federici, "Massimo Scaligero e la maya politica" in *Graal: Rivista di scienza dello Spirito*, 2004 through 2008.

69 Examples include Pichetto, *Alle radici dell'odio*, 87–89, 93–94, 135–39; Cassata, "La Difesa della razza," 8, 81, 91, 110–12; Roberto Maiocchi, *Scienza italiana e razzismo fascista* (Florence: La nuova Italia, 1999), 266, 278, 286, 305; Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, *L'Italie fasciste et la persécution des juifs* (Paris: Perrin, 2007), 287, 384, 516, 543–44.

70 His publications include Julius Evola, *Tre aspetti del problema ebraico* (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1936); Evola, *Il mito del sangue* (Milan: Hoepli, 1937); Evola, *Indirizzi per una educazione razziale* (Naples: Conte, 1941); Evola, *Sintesi di dottrina della razza* (Milan: Hoepli, 1941); Evola, "Razza e cultura" *Rassegna Italiana*, January 1934, 11–16; Evola, "La guerra occulta: Ebrei i massoni alla conquista del mondo" *La Vita Italiana*, December 1936, 645–55; Evola, "Über die metaphysische Begründung des Rassegedankens" *Europäische Revue*, March 1940, 140–44.

71 For a detailed justification see Rossi, *Esoterismo e razzismo spirituale*. A thorough critical account is available in Dana Lloyd Thomas, *Julius Evola e la tentazione razzista* (Brindisi: Giordano, 2006). Historical analyses include Francesco Germinario, *Razza del sangue, razza dello spirito: Julius Evola, l'antisemitismo e il nazionalsocialismo, 1930–43* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2001); Francesco Cassata, *A destra del fascismo: Profilo politico di Julius Evola* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2003); and the chapter "Julius Evola and spiritual Nordicism, 1941–1943" in Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 154–75 and Paul Furlong, *Social and Political Thought of Julius Evola* (London: Routledge, 2011), 113–33.

72 Evola, "Razzismo totalitario" *Rassegna Italiana*, December 1938, 847–53.

73 Raspanti, "Le correnti del razzismo fascista," 243; Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 173.

74 Cf. Evola, "Che cosa vuole l'antroposofia di Rudolf Steiner" *Ignis*, July 1925, 185–96, revised as "Critica dell'Antroposofia" in Evola, *Maschera e volto dello spiritualismo contemporaneo* (Turin: Bocca, 1932), 79–93. For retrospective adjustment of his views see Evola, *Il cammino del cinabro*

(Milan: Scheiwiller, 1963), 69, 125–26. For context see Marco Rossi, “L'avanguardia che si fa tradizione: l'itinerario culturale di Julius Evola dal primo dopoguerra alla metà degli anni trenta” *Storia contemporanea* 22 (1991), 1039–90. An anthroposophist review of Evola's work, including both praise and criticism, can be found in Johannes Leibl, “Deuter der Vorzeit—Propheten des Unterganges” *Das Goetheanum*, April 18, 1943, 122–23.

75 Evola, *The Hermetic Tradition* (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1995), 111, 207.

76 Evola, *Sintesi di dottrina della razza*, 275–76.

77 Scaligero, *Dallo Yoga alla Rosacroce*, 79.

78 Introvigne, “Scaligero, Massimo,” 1039. Scaligero's followers sometimes date his decisive turn to Steiner to the late 1930s or 1940; cf. Fausto Belfiori, ed., *Massimo Scaligero: Il coraggio dell'impossibile* (Rome: Tilopa, 1982).

79 Massimo Scaligero, “Pericolo di un mito contemporaneo” *Critica Fascista*, July 15, 1931, 268–69. The article cites Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century* and Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*.

80 Scaligero, “La scuola della gerarchia” *Regime Fascista*, August 14, 1938, 1.

81 Scaligero, “La saggezza ‘antimoderna’ e il suo significato nella cultura fascista” *La Vita Italiana*, July 1937, 62–74.

82 Scaligero, “Scienza dello Spirito contro sovversivismo occulto” *La Vita Italiana*, March 1943, 256–60. Like most of his work, the article does not name Evola or Steiner explicitly.

83 A representative passage reads: “Fascism is creating the possibility of a new era in which we see a revival of beauty, wisdom, and a new poetry, together with creative thought, the rainbow-colored freshness of images and actions that are not contaminated by rhetoric; this creative sense of culture, as style and way of life, constitutes one of the essential principles of our racism.” Scaligero, “La razza e lo spirito della Rivoluzione” *La Vita Italiana*, May 1939, 601–05.

84 Scaligero, “Limiti alla comprensione del problema razzista” *La Vita Italiana*, September 1941, 255–63.

85 Scaligero, “Funzione occidentale della nuova civiltà romano-germanica” *La Vita Italiana*, February 1941, 152–57; cf. Scaligero, “Missione dello spirito nell'ordine nuovo” *Augustea*, March 16, 1942, 176–77.

86 Scaligero, “Omogeneità e continuità della razza italiana” *La Difesa della Razza*, June 5, 1939, 38–40.

87 Scaligero, *L'India contro l'Inghilterra* (Bologna: Il Resto del Carlino, 1941), 49.

88 Scaligero, *La Razza di Roma* (Tivoli: Mantero, 1939), 195.

89 *Ibid.*, 214.

90 Scaligero, “Il giudaismo contro Roma” in Alberto Luchini, ed., *Gli ebrei hanno voluto la guerra* (Rome 1942), 21–28.

91 Scaligero, "Fronte unico ario" *La Difesa della Razza*, February 20, 1941, 21–24.

92 Scaligero, "Coscienza del sangue" *La Difesa della Razza*, August 20, 1942, 4–6.

93 Scaligero, "Compito eroico dello spirito nell'azione razzista" *La Vita Italiana*, September 1939, 327–33.

94 Scaligero, "La razza italiana e la guerra" *La Difesa della Razza*, May 5, 1941, 16–19.

95 Scaligero, "Razzismo spirituale e razzismo biologico" *La Vita Italiana*, July 1941, 36–41. "There is no reason for any antithesis between spiritual racism and biological racism; the one cannot have meaning except in harmonic relationship and complementarity with the other. Such an antithesis risks reviving the obsolete dualism of spirit versus matter [which is] a fundamental characteristic of the Jewish race [. . .] The synthesis of spirit and life is the profound characteristic of the Aryan race: to revive the world of the senses with spiritual forces, and attain the spiritual worlds through experience of the sensible world—this is the universal law for Aryan man and has always been the foundation of the great civilizations. Wherever these contrary conceptions are in conflict, after the coming of Christ, it is possible to identify the opposition of the Aryan spirit to the Jewish spirit." (36)

96 *Ibid.*, 37. Scaligero then invoked Evola's racial theory, presenting it as compatible with Steiner's work.

97 *Ibid.*, 38.

98 Scaligero, "Per un razzismo integrale" *La Vita Italiana*, May 1942, 428–34.

99 See e.g. Giacomo Acerbo, *I fondamenti della dottrina fascista della razza* (Rome: Ministero della Cultura Popolare, 1940), 83; Salvatore De Martino, *Lo Spirito e la Razza* (Rome: Signorelli, 1940), 58–59; "Bibliografia sulla Civiltà del Fascismo" in *Dottrina Fascista*, May 1942, 382–87.

100 Handwritten note from Scaligero to the Segreteria Particolare del Duce, August 19, 1938, enclosing an unidentified article, ACS SPD/CR (1922–43) 480/R b. 146 f. 402: 10750; notations from the secretariat staff indicate the article was given to Mussolini.

101 The unsigned memorandum dated Rome, September 6, 1943 describes Scaligero's "advanced Fascist sentiments," his racial publications, and his contacts with German officials, and says that he is still conducting "skillful propaganda on behalf of Fascism." ACS Pol. Pol. b. 1223 fasc. pers. Scaligero Massimo.

102 Scaligero was imprisoned by the Allies from June to November 1944. According to his autobiographical account, he was arrested because of his frequent visits to the German embassy in Rome, which he claims were part of his unstinting efforts on behalf of the anthroposophical movement; cf. Scaligero, *Dallo Yoga alla Rosacroce*, 101.

103 On Scaligero's involvement in neo-fascist politics cf. Nicola Rao,

Neofascisti: La destra italiana da Salò a Fiuggi nel ricordo dei protagonisti (Rome: Settimo Sigillo, 1999), 39–40, 74–75; Adalberto Baldoni, *La Destra in Italia 1945–1969* (Rome: Pantheon, 2000), 340–43, 354–56; Nicola Rao, *La fiamma e la celtica: Sessant'anni di neofascismo da Salò ai centri sociali di destra* (Milan: Sperling & Kupfer, 2006), 49–50, 82–84; Antonio Carioti, *Gli orfani di Salò: Il "Sessantotto nero" dei giovani neofascisti nel dopoguerra, 1945–1951* (Milan: Mursia, 2008), 71–72, 88, 99–102, 139, 175.

104 See Carioti, *Gli orfani di Salò*, 71–72, 88; Rao, *Neofascisti*, 39; Arianna Streccioni, *A destra della destra: Dentro e fuori l'MSI, dai FAR a Terza Posizione* (Rome: Settimo Sigillo, 2000), 63–64, 209; Piero Vassallo, *Le culture della destra italiana* (Milan: Effedieffe, 2002), 90–92, 128; Luciano Lanna and Filippo Rossi, *Fascisti immaginari: Tutto quello che c'è da sapere sulla destra* (Florence: Vallecchi, 2003), 20, 153–56. The subsequent generation of this tendency was represented by anthroposophist and far-right activist Enzo Erra; cf. Franco Ferraresi, ed., *La destra radicale* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1984), 17–19, 194–96; Piero Ignazi, *Il polo escluso: Profilo storico del Movimento Sociale Italiano* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1998), 41–44, 77–78, 116–19, 246–47; Francesco Germinario, *Da Salò al governo: Immaginario e cultura politica della destra italiana* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2005), 64, 89–90, 95–99; Giuseppe Pardini, *Fascisti in democrazia: Uomini, idee, giornali (1946–1958)* (Florence: Le lettere, 2008), 76, 102–03, 124; Enzo Erra, *Steiner e Scaligero: Due maestri, una via* (Rome: Settimo Sigillo, 2006).

105 See the correspondence from August and September 1942 in AST Prefettura di Trieste Gabinetto (1923–1952) b. 484 f. 318. Martinoli had previously served as president of the supervisory board of the municipal registry office.

106 Ventura, "Il centro fascista di Trieste per lo studio del problema ebraico"; Mayda, *Ebrei sotto Salò*, 45–46.

107 In a February 9, 1944 letter to the Trieste Prefecture in AST Prefettura di Trieste Gabinetto (1923–1952) b. 484 f. 318, Martinoli affirmed that "the Center remained continuously functional throughout the Badoglio period."

108 Quoted in Michael Wedekind, *Nationalsozialistische Besatzungs- und Annexionspolitik in Norditalien 1943 bis 1945* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2003), 358.

109 Cf. Wedekind, *Nationalsozialistische Besatzungs- und Annexionspolitik*, 358–61; Mayda, *Ebrei sotto Salò*, 46–47; Bon, *Gli Ebrei a Trieste*, 257–62.

110 See the Trieste Center's report "Propaganda nemica—ebraismo—fronte interno" warning against "groups of Jews, plutocrats, and spies" inside the party, ACS RSI SPD/CR b. 24 f. 166: 268–281.

111 "Elenco dei funzionari e del personale dell'Ispettorato Generale per la Razza" ACS RSI PCM b. 4 f. 3096.

112 Draft statutes for Ispettorato Generale per la Razza, ACS RSI PCM b. 4 f. 3096. Preziosi's September 20, 1944 memorandum to Mussolini in

the same file boasts of Martinoli's achievements at the Trieste Center for Race.

113 Ispettorato Generale per la Razza, *Centri Italiani per la Razza: Ordinamento delle attività* (Bergamo: Cattaneo, 1944), 4.

114 *Ibid.*, 7.

115 *Ibid.*, 10.

116 Mauro Raspanti, "L'Ispettorato generale per la razza" in Michele Sarfatti, ed., *La Repubblica sociale italiana a Desenzano: Giovanni Preziosi e l'Ispettorato generale per la razza* (Florence: Giuntina, 2008), 130. Martinoli's 1943 article on Steiner in Preziosi's journal quoted Scaligero and cited Evola as a champion of Steiner.

117 Bernice Rosenthal, "Political Implications of the Early Twentieth-Century Occult Revival" in Rosenthal, ed., *The Occult in Russian and Soviet Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 392.