

JULIUS EVOLA

~ SELECTED LETTERS ~



BERSERKER

BOOKS



LETTERS

[I]
Postcards to Alberto Cappa

July 1, 1918

I thank you infinitely for the letter received. It is good for the rest of us lost in exile up here³, to know that in the cities the younger generations have not left their arms in the most important battle, and that there is someone thinking about it. As for the newspaper, given the impossibility of transformation into *Pensiero ed Azione*, it cannot be thought about anymore, now, although certain funds are not lacking; setting up *ex novo* a newspaper imposes certainty in the life and triumph of the newspaper itself in the first place: that is, the possibility of disregarding, for at least ten months, success and failure; it would then require a certain "smokiness" of form (paper, titles, etc., etc.) which in these times requires not inconsiderable sums: all the more so if then

one had the intention (mine) to make reproductions of very modern paintings and also to bring in pieces of music. Secondly, there is the more important problem still, of organization: wasting time and energy and money on one of those local organuncles, to form the usual companion-hating and self-enclosed church like *Avanscoperta*, *Brigata*, even *Italia Futurista* etc. etc., I don't know if it is the case and what serious thing can come up. I do not intend at all to contribute to the stupid crumbling that has ruined the modern art of Italy. One would like to unify all the various Italian and even foreign groups: not editor but board of directors: no eternal father, but good comrades in the common cause. A fortnightly, with free collaboration in every language: lyrical aesthetics painting music philosophy and science (I come now to finish a discussion with a colleague of mine who is a professor of physics-don't be shocked-and half a futurist: how many beautiful fields of revolutions and destructions!). However, it would take a whole assiduous liaison: Marinetti group, Papini group, *Pages* and *Diana* trend, Tristan Tzara Casella Pratella Apollinaire. And all this is colossal, almost impossible. One is all bound up here to do what an ordinary engineer and clerk could do better than us. The friends of Italy don't care, the patriotic-sentimental rhetoric of the worst taste triumphs, the sewers spit out bourgeois romanticism and businessism at full throttle, and so on. And one may have to postpone the project until after the war, if one is still up. In a four months I will be back in Rome: I hope to move something and I am sure you and Flores will be my comrades.

For *Thought and Action* I was thinking of doing it as something preparatory, and at the same time a collection center: in March to begin to get some names that were by no means unknown and to nab them for the final paper. The 600 lira monthly would perhaps be exceeded, for that.

I no longer received your paper. Does it still come out regularly? Let me know how Riccardi's exhibition went and whether *Lo specchio dell'ora* futurista came out. Give me from time to time some news from Rome and you will truly have my best gratitude.

Greetings

Evola

I write in postcards due to momentary lack of stationery and stamps.

[II] Letter to Virgil Marks

[June 1919]

Dearest Marks,

Excuse the long silence due to the multiplicity and contradiction of vicissitudes that the will of the paper has brought me.

So:

1st Decided on the magazine. Editors I Flora and Jacob. Monthly in the 15-year summer from next fall.

2nd The first issues are premised on: a) By a declamation conference exposition of mine (Marinetti Balla Galli I Giuliani) to take place on July 1 at the Pichetti Hall; b) By a performance of a French work at the Valle that will take place before the end of the month and in which I have involved a large part of the Roman aristocracy; c) There was also a Casella concert, but it had to be postponed until November because of the late and exploited season.

3rd The newspaper costs 450 for 1,200 copies with clichés. I had to give up the idea of the *[illegible word]* because it required the establishment of a proper , which in our case, given the absence of any commercial possibilities, was ridiculous. In 16 p. issue it will cost 75 cents. About 500 subscribers are needed, or else it will not last very long. Place advertisements on the inside cover. Messaggerie Italiane for circulation want 50% on copies sold, so while staying with them for the first issues, we need to grab subscribers and subscribers: in order to have ease to take advantage of possible sympathies we will make three types of subscriptions, one "null," the others with progressive dues as "membership" and "member." So we organizers must do the impossible in this regard.

4th Contributors there are several insured: others would join, but want to be paid. Others will come after the first issues. The 1st issue will come out in the 1st^a fortnight of July, I hope. Send me right away a "prologue summary" article of your architectural theories and possibly also an illustrative drawing: tell me if I can use those very interesting sketches I possess. If you have significant and new things from friends, please send.

5th There was an erroneous discussion for the title, without concluding anything: perhaps it will be *Alpenrose* because it means nothing and in sound has something coldly stylized and elegant that can perhaps fit the character of the magazine. Again, if you have any good ideas, write immediately.

6th Collaborators insured Balla Bandinelli Binazzi Casella Ciarlantini Depero De Chirico De Pisis Fiumi Flora Folgore Galli Gavasci Giacobbe Marinetti Pagano Petroni Vergani Recchi Rosa Rosà Malipiero Savinio Vergani Onofri.

Let's hope well. Everything is now in the subscriptions: hold out until November: then comes to help the Casella concert, then of the theses and other events I have ideas of organizing this winter. In the meantime, let's hope for public interest and the effectiveness of true disinterested and serious originality. So write now: I will notify you in any case before the 1st issue goes to press.

Best regards

Evola

197 Corso V. Emanuele

Alpenrose contemporary art magazine

For dissemination [*unreadable word*] search listings.

I will immediately attach the addresses given after the 1st issue. The 1st issue combined with a sheet showing the possibilities of the magazine's existence based on interest and help of friends, will be sent as an essay and circulated as widely as possible.

[III]

Letter to Anton Giulio Bragaglia

Rome, 4.1.1960

Dear Bragaglia,

Thank you for your postcard and cordial remembrance.

I have already heard that you wanted to point out the contribution I already made, so many years ago, to "abstract art." Today it is in vogue, as Dadaism itself seems to be, and as of Zen we are becoming interested, like true boors and provincials, only because those of the American *beat generation* "discovered" it (I had first spoken about it in Italy in '42)⁽⁴⁾.

As for abstract art and similar manifestations, the important thing, in my opinion, is not to point out uninteresting "priorities" in themselves, but the fact of an obvious drop in level: back then, when I was dealing with them, they were manifestations that made sense not so much as "art" as a reflection of a given serious spiritual tension and certain experiences-boundaries. Today it is no more than a new convention, a craft, an industri^{a(5)}.

Properly, I am not "sick" in my legs: I am only prevented from walking by an external, traumatic factual cause, as a result of a wound sustained during the Battle of Vienna, 1945⁶. This is of but little importance to me, my essential activity is in no way disturbed, on the contrary, and as for the secular field, concerning the legs in particular I have no "sins of omission." There is some incidental inconvenience, such as that "the mountain not being able to go to the prophet, the prophet must go to the mountain," that is, that I can only meet those old and new friends who come to me to visit.

Sincerely reciprocating your good wishes,
with kind regards

yours
J. Evola

[IV]
Letter to Yves Poupard-Lieussou

Rome, December 7, 1964

Dear Lord,

I received your letter and thank you. I remember vividly your visit to Rome and our conversation.

Regarding the rare books of the early Dada period that I have reported to your Association, I have written precisely because there is no clear idea of their current commercial value here and because there are likely to be people in your Association's circle of friends who are interested in having them. For this reason, I cannot propose prices; but I would be grateful if, following a brief investigation, you could give me an overview of the situation. Only in case of a favorable offer would I part with these books.

In my letter, of which you will certainly be aware, I also mentioned three paintings, the only ones remaining from that period (up to 1922), all others having been sold in the solo retrospective held in Rome last year. For one of these remaining paintings, a gallery in Paris (Gallerie Chalaire? I am not sure of the name, which I was told by phone) had reserved a preliminary reservation at the Italian gallery (La Medusa, of Dr. Bruni). But then it gave no hint.

In principle, in case of a favorable offer, these paintings could also be sold. It should be noted that the three paintings exhaust all that remains of my contribution as a painter to the Dada movement and early abstract art. Aside from their "historical" value, the fact that four of my books (metaphysics, critique of civilization, etc.) have already been published in French, and a fifth will be in 1965, is a great advantage: my name is beginning to be known in a fairly wide French circle, which may draw someone's attention to those unique documents of the old Evola painter^{e(7)}.

It goes without saying that if her contacts could lead to a sale (of books or paintings), she could always count on a percentage.

Please accept, dear sir, the expression of my warmest sentiments.

J. Evola

J. Evola
Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197
Rome

PS. I also had 2-3 kilograms. of magazines and pamphlets from the Dadaist period, but I sold them last year to one of my Italian publishers, who had shown a special interest in essⁱ⁽⁸⁾.

[V]

Letter to Yves Poupard-Lieussou

Rome, February 3, 1965

Dear Lord,

I received your letter, and I regret that I cannot prepare for you a text on *Dada and the magazine Bleu*. About this magazine-which was not published in Rome and of which only two or three issues came out, I think-I know nothing more. There was an exchange of letters with Messrs. Cantarelli and Fiozzi, who I believe were the editors, who participated with me in a Dadaist exhibition in Rome in 1922 or 1923, but whom I never met in person.

After that I never heard from them again. And that was it.

Thank you for the information about how much these rare dada works, which I would have been willing to sell in principle, might fetch. The question is that the prices you have indicated to me are very low, even compared to what you

could get here. If by any chance an admirer should come along and make a better offer, please let me know.

Black and white photographs exist of the paintings (which, however, do not render the subject well). However, it is necessary to consider that the market price for works of this type here, given their date - 1919-'21 - and thus their "historical" value, is not less than the price of Lire 500,000.

Please accept, dear sir, the expression of my warmest sentiments.

J. Evola

Letters to Girolamo Comi (1927-1962)

▪

Dear Baron,

Thank you very much for your beautiful book which comes to add to the series these aristocratic works of yours. I will read it and have it read like the others.

I wrote to your sister but 't received a reply yet. I am well, working. I have a beautiful atelier where I spend long peaceful hours. Greetings to all friends Prati, Onofri etc.

Regards to the Lady and a kiss to the little girl
Greetings

Evola

At the end of June I will be in Italy Fiera di Primiero (Feltre)⁽⁷⁾.

[II]

Capri, October 1, 1932

J. Evola

Did you see that? You ended up on postcards like Pastonchi and Bertacchⁱ⁽⁸⁾
(see overleaf) Ruggero Orlando

[III]

Rome, April 3, 1934

Dear Comi,

Thank you for the articles. I have read them and find them suitable. It's just that they are too short, so I will have to combine them as two parts of one piece of writing, also to able to match you the fee of an article^{o(9)}.

Make more, keeping only in mind the length, which you can calculate by making an equivalence of your writing with a line from the newspaper. I welcome your rapprochement to the Christian faith (I hope I can read: *Catholic*). You know well that, from our point of view, pending better adherence to a tradition, even if it is only religious, already means something^{a(10)}.

With cordiality believe me

His
J. Evola

April 5

Lesia D'Amato sent more drafts. They seem to me to be very correct. Do I retain them or should I send them to you^{e(11)}?

[IV]

Ortisei, August 4, 1934

Dear Comi,

can I beg you to send me everything you have ready (articles, pieces, etc.) here?

That is: Ortisei (Bolzano) mail stop.

This, however, *immediately*. If it is ever sent a few days late, let me know in the meantime by postcard. I would like to have here by the 12th in order to use the page of 1⁶⁽¹²⁾ as well.

Cordially

You
r
Evola

[IV]

Capri, October 16, 1934

Dear Comi,
what happened
about you?

Also about the article, which you had mentioned, I haven't heard anything more. If it is ready, send it now, or send it as soon as it is ready.

Here I will stay a couple more months Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

Villa Vuotto
Capri

[VI]

Vienna, January 10, 1935

Dear Comi,

Thank you for your letter and good wishes.

You may have seen that two of your articles—ⁱ⁽¹³⁾—came out on the last page. They were very poorly placed, but it was a contingency, before which the editors did their own thing.

About the second piece of writing, I did not think it was suitable for *Regime*, only because the repeated dealing with the function of the "poet" and polemicizing around it fits poorly into the directive of the page. You can deal with more general and universal topics as you did in your other writings. And adjust for a normal length (one and a half columns) as well.

Frankly, if you didn't tell me about it, your "Catholicism" I wouldn't even notice. One can safely agree with much of what you write, without such prejudices coming into question at all. Your need not only to talk about your "conversion" but even to explicate loving... proselytism—^{o(14)}—seems a bit peculiar to me. In my regard, for the "conversion" that matters, for the one that is an indelible fact of essence and not of feeling or religious faith, I am fine - exactly - for thirteen years—ⁱ⁽¹⁵⁾. For the other "conversion" nothing would be easier: I would only need to "limit" and "veil." And it is well possible that if I don't happen to end up in lands, where traditions of another kind and breath retain their strength and offer practical foundations, and if I don't decide to take the proper path to become a ... *Führer* or an impresario of juvenile homes, for more seriousness and calm practicality of life I may very well be a "convert," one day not far off.

I will be here for another couple of months, so I am afraid I will not attend your conference. As for mine, I am not thinking of it at all, it connects with returning Rome, which does not appeal to me, finding here an environment in every respect more interesting and exciting.

Send therefore as soon as you can of the other—^{o(16)}. And with cordiality believe me

J. Evola

Wien
Mahlerstrasse 13

[VII]

Bad Ischl, April 20, 1948

Dear Comi,

I got yours - an unexpected letter that really gave me a joy. I am glad to have had this sign of life from you, to know that you are there, that you have happily come through the stormy period and that, in every sense, you feel you are on the line of recovery. Of your attention I am grateful. I have been able to see that the material destructions today are not so great, as those of character, even among "friends," that one can hardly recognize us as the same beings as before. Of all the more precious to me are the few exceptions.

I don't quite remember that I wrote to Gabbriellⁱ⁽¹⁷⁾ about my things. As a chronicle there was first a very interesting period with almost cinematic glimpses and by col. Lawrence^{e(18)}. From the end of it, I set out to exasperate the trials that I had already here and there, at other times, begun in the Alps¹⁹, in the sense of asking-through a methodical exposing myself to danger-how far, instead, "one" wanted me to go "beyond." This in a sense, which, minus a certain nuance, in the terms, of the particular tradition to which you have recently leaned⁻²⁰, would be expressed as "thy will be done." Instead, as you know, neither occurred, but rather something that I would call a bad joke, if faith in a deep sense that lurks in any event, a sense that cannot always be deciphered down here⁽²¹⁾, would not forbid me.

In any case, my affair-even if I were to remain like this forever (which is not ruled out)-spiritually means no more than what a broken wheel was in one of my cars. A positive side of it is the further confirmation for me of calmness and intangibility for which exclusion from any "secular" and external activity means more or less nothing. And if I had the sense, that I was required, if I saw the possibility of grafting my internal possibilities into superindividual spiritual action, really nothing there would be changed. But - I think, unlike you - I see only a world of ruins, where only a kind of front of the catacombs is possible, for which I already believed I was giving what was essential I could give. So in front of me I see nothing but a gray space: neither real actions, but a surviving having to face situations, which I wouldn't know how to call trials, but which fall under small empirical concerns.

For you know that I have never had any thought of organizing a bourgeois-type *home for myself*; I have only an old mother, whose years (if not even months) of life are contactⁱ⁽²²⁾ and organizing an existence in a way that conforms to my status,

prevented, it is not easy in Italy, my personal resources being minimal and all but destroyed by inflation, my "pure" activity certainly not being able to provide a basis, and my "applied" activity being out of time (as "fashions" are, my ideas can only remain those of a Metternich or a De Maistre). Thus it is not at all clear what will happen of me in this contingent order. We shall see.

For the immediate side I am very grateful for your proposed concern. For repatriation the thing can be done automatically through the consulate. You say you know the president of the Red Cross. He is Zanotti Bianco²³. I too got to know him in the old days and we had many friends in common. The old acquaintance has now been reminded of him by a Mrs. Orazi, to whom, he promised to do everything possible for me. But so far nothing has materialized. In essence, it would be a matter of arranging, through the C.R., that on coming to Italy, I be received in a truly specialized neurological clinic, to see if any new cure is found in Italy (my case is atypical and such that unless an expert is found who, literally, devotes himself to it, nothing will come of it⁽²⁴⁾); after this attempt, possibly, a short period in a sanatorium because in the long lying, lack of air and poor nutrition, tuberculosis symptoms have also manifested themselves. If you want and can take an interest in this regard in Zanotti's acting proactively, I will of course be grateful.

That settled, there will be time to make my own private arrangements and, in the meantime, we can decide on departure, which would now be more than opportune ^{a(25)}. Everything here is still in shambles; there is a shortage of medicines, we live as in the worst period of wartime rationing in Italy, and so on. But I cannot move before things in Italy are clear in the sense indicated. If you permit, my brother²⁶ will be able to relate to you: he is a person who gives himself every thoughtfulness but is spiritually completely foreign to me, and there are reasons why under no circumstances could I live with him.

Wanting to devote two more words to this *lands-à-terres* order, if anything comes from the alchemist Gabbrielli, it will be more than welcome ^{a(27)}; and also - if this is not excessively indiscreet - if from time to time the opportunity should arise for you to send within the limits of that small package "sample without recommended value," as some friends do, some product of your lands, here I am at the point, to have to struggle even with certain low functions because eating what is found and repeated uninterruptedly (things made of flour and equivocal stuff in American boxes - vegetables, fruits, eggs, fresh meat, almost not even a shadow) costs me every time a real overcoming, like a real medicine

The only happy thing I heard from downstairs is that my books are all sold out, that there is strong demand for them, so now the reprinting of the main ones of them is being prepared--preparing the new integrated text and *set up to date* has been, in recent times, my main occupation^{e(28)}. There are also proposals for foreign language ^{a(29)}. Even when the front separated us my last book *The Doctrine of Awakening* came out in Bari. I do not know whether you have seen it and whether the freedom granted to you by the particular religious tradition to which you have adhered might make you interested in it. This could perhaps be the case, at least, for the last chapter, where the demands formulated for a line of pure "asceticism" and pure transcendence should present a value independent of any particular and conditioned viewpoint. But even in this plan, having done as much as I could do, I would have preferred to close the game....

I do not know to what extent I can share your feeling of a "revival." It seems to me rather the times of the "abyss calls the abyss" ³⁰(have you by any chance seen Guénon's latest work *Le monde du nombre et les signes des temps* [*sic* ¹⁽³¹⁾? I judge it to be fundamental). In any case, I will be glad to hear more about your activities, the "Academy" and the journal you mention, and your plans³². Me, I must now close this long letter by apologizing for writing in pencil -- if not, I would have had to get up and type, which arouses various reactions of these good nerves of mine also "liberated" and, it seems, organized out of all control from above...

With warm cordiality and every good wish

Yours
J. Evola

c/o Graf [*sic*] v. Bracoren^{s(33)}
Hans Bauer, Bad Ischl

Perhaps it would be good if, on receiving this, you would send me two lines note to let me know that it has been received. The mail is still not quite regular.

[VIII]

Cuasso al Monte, August 31, 1948

Dear Comi,

For about two weeks I have been in Italy again. C.R. organized the trip very well, and it was almost twenty hours by car in two days with

An overnight stay in Bolzano.

I am now in a sanatorium north of Varese, a couple of kilometers from the Swiss border (Lake Lugano). In more ways than one, things are better here than in the Austrian clinic where I was: I mean, on the material side.

However, the more or less idyllic ideas, that the change of place, of climate, of geophysical conditions would have a decisive action on the intervening complication of a very stubborn pleurisy, which has lasted almost four months, have not been confirmed. On the contrary, right here, now, a decisive worsening has occurred. The temperature in the last few days has risen to forty degrees, and since the organism has been busy for so long with such shenanigans I am forced to send reinforcements to the line of internal defense and the line of guard, to prevent any infiltration of disguised organic repercussions.

This is a particularly tedious handicap, because it is, after all, a complication with respect to the fundamental fact, which is that of the legs. And I would have liked Zanotti Bianco's interest, which you also effectively advocated, to focus precisely on the line of a forwarding to a neurological clinic with some really competent specialist willing to study the case thoroughly. Hopefully, the one thing will not impede the other.

The first impression about the life of the new Italy, as I could get it from a few newspapers and from the style of those here, is that of a particular turbulence. A psychoanalyst would suggest that these are people who, repressed in their sex lives, need to "unload" on another plane. As for "positions," the most decent ones seem to me to be those of MS ^{II(34)}, but solely because they deny the other parties without exception and are dry nannies for the "liberators" of both the Western and Eastern blocs. But on the positive side, they do not go one step beyond the quagmire either.

I am afraid that you still owe me a letter informing me a little from near on the sphere of your activities and endeavors and purposes. To know about this would interest me greatly. Rather than of returning to the "homeland," I now have the sense of having come to a foreign land: I can count on the tips of my fingers, and, I fear, of only one hand, the people with whom, here, now, being still alive and present, I can have contact.

Thank you, once again, for what you have done for me and, therefore, do not eclipse yourself in the hermetic Apulian remoteness.

With warmest cordiality

Yours
J. Evola

CRI Sanatorium Room 2
Cuasso al Monte
(Varese)

[IX]

Bologna, January 8, 1948 [*sic* ^{l(35)}]

Dear Comi,

I haven't heard anything more directly from you, but my brother told me that you repeatedly inquired about my things, so I thank you for your kind interest.

To give an account, however, I must say that the four months I spent already in Italy were worth almost as much as deaths and that the situation now, especially from a medical point of view, is even worse than in Austria.

Where I had first been, near Vares^e(³⁶), was a health resort essentially for chest diseases, chosen for me mainly to get little better in the general way.

For the past two months I have been transferred, as you know, to Bologna, on the CR's own initiative, without any special intervention. Now this is a former military hospital, a collection center for veterans and amputees, where a badly organized disorder reigns and everything more or less drifts. There are two professors with a certain name in bone and orthopedic surgery-and this is the field from which, after all, the place derives its name "Putti Center." But, for everything else, there is neither competence nor will to do. There is a lack of a properly neurological section, in this regard there is only a consultant who in my regard limited himself to the simplest and most primitive diagnosis-with no others who, after this cursory examination, "follow up" the case and make an effort for real therapy. Even in the field of side complications, which begin to occur in a chain after the ceased pleurisy, I have to waste my forces of indifference and remaining natural resistance to supplant a real assistance of more or less novice doctors, who only show up from time to time. In the administrative and food sector, too, things are chaotic; think of the fact that, enthroning themselves, "internal committees" of sick communists have been formed, who are busy in their own way, and for utmost concern they have the hindering and supplanting of the religious sisters, who are the only ones who give themselves some trouble with food for the needs of those who are really in need (indeed, I wanted to send you, in this regard, a

report for possible forwarding, in recent days things having reached such a point that the sisters had to resign in protest-which the director, out of fear and not knowing how to impose himself on others, accepted).

Toward the end of the year my brother showed up here, and it became apparent how little sense there is in my staying here.

But what I have heard generally about hospitals and clinics is depressing. It is not appropriate to interest Zanotti afresh before a place has been identified in which, in my case, something can be expected: that he will then take an interest in my transfer at a stroke. It is now a specialized neurological clinic and a preliminary to interest his manager, to get a sense of whether or not he will take my case to heart. But it seems that this is like a white fly, that in Italy no one does anything about anything and that even named specialists only get busy in private clinics where they can make money.

In any case, my brother will make attempts to do so, and if you, possibly, have any chance to help him, I will be very grateful.

Sorry about all this "Job's message." I send you simultaneously the book of an Alsatian: *De l'unité transcendante des religions*^{s(37)}. The style is a bit heavy. If you have time and desire to see it, I would be interested to know your impression.

In cordial friendship

Yours
J. Evola

CRI Hospital No. 46
"Putti Center," Ward 3b Bologna

[X]

Bologna, March 30, 1950

Dear Comi,

Already for some time contact has been lost again. That from Cuasso I moved to Bologna, however temporarily, of that I think, however, I have already informed you.

About ten days ago I "dropped in" to Rome, after many years, to resume various contacts and to see several people. I also phoned you, having had

Of course nice to see you again. But no one responded, so I suppose you reside in Lucugnano these days.

I then returned again to Bologna, because a material basis still has to be arranged to make it possible for me to leave this clinic, where I am on an assisted-living basis, and to live privately in my former *pied-à-terr^{e(38)}*, certainly not suitable, in its present form, for my condition, which has remained more or less the same. Out of sheer conscience I have consulted a couple of specialists in Rome as well, without getting any special light.

A long time ago I received, as your last sign of life, a copy - the first - of *Alber^{o(39)}*. Didn't any other issues of that magazine come out? I believe that of books of mine that came out in new editions the publisher, at my instruction, sent you copies. Meanwhile, I also began to write ethical-political articles in *dextr^{a(40)}* newspapers.

On one point, which will seem singular to you, I would like to question you. I know that you have estates over there and, I believe, also an oil mill^{o(41)}. Now there is a very good, distinguished friend of mine, a lawyer and former writer, who given the times, after an attempt in Argentina, has gone into commerce and precisely, now, into the big oil business. He is a person of the breed that is now almost lost, basically honest and generous, who greatly helped me - the name is avv. comm. Guido Cavalluccⁱ⁽⁴²⁾. If you had free allotments of your products, the thing I think could useful to one and the other, because, I repeat, you would hardly know how to find more trustworthy people. So, if you think, let me know.

And also tell me something about yourself and your business. At what time are you habitually in Rome? The trip having been less inconvenient I had supposed, it is well possible that I will make an appearance there again, further on.

As you are well aware, Zanotti Bianco is no longer at CRI-an impossible environment for those who want to pull straight; the person who replaced him in the presidency is something of a rubber object, pullable on all sides and without character (so is the information). It is unfortunate, even for what may possibly concern my affairs in the unclear future.

So, I'm waiting for two lines and with cordiality believe me.

Yours
J. Evola

"Putti Center" Clinic
Ward 3b
Bologna

[XI]

Rome, 28.XII.1958

Dear Comi,

Since our last contact, even simply epistolary, some time has passed. I can hardly imagine it, but it is already ten years, for that was when you kindly took an interest in my repatriation through the Red Cross in 1948!

I had long ago something of the Tree editions, then nothing else. Peculiar thing, solely from the good literary liquorist, Gabbrielli, I knew from so long as something about you. At his suggestion, a few times I tried to call you, at the apartment in Rom ^{a(43)}; but no one answered the phone.

Gabbrielli also passed me the small volume of recent poems on the subject Ev ^{a(44)}. He then told me about various contingencies you have been struggling with lately ^{e(45)}.

To have a sign of life, I would be pleased. For my part, there is nothing specifically new and interesting. The sharpening of the legs has only been worthwhile in limiting some profane activities, while on the intellectual and spiritual plane I continue the action of before -- insofar as the conditions of this decomposed world permit -- at positions in every respect unchanged.

A *Metaphysics of Sex of* mine came out recently, a fairly large book, already quite absorbed by personal audiences, despite an unnatural conspiracy of silence in the press. I wonder if by some liminal consonances with the subject Eva might interest you. Actually, I don't have any more free copies, but I might find a way to get the publisher to put out another one.

Already for some time I had been planning to write these lines to you. Now I have an opportunity to also wish you the best of luck with the new cycle -- and, again, if you give a sign of life, I will be pleased.

Very cordially

Yours
J. Evola

197 Corso Vittorio Emanuele

[XII]

Rome, 10.II.1959

Dear Comi,

I got yours, and I am pleased with the resumption of contact.

Then also came *The Tree*, for which I thank you, which I scrolled through and also passed on to friends who knew about the initiative but did not know where to find the magazine here. I see that you are always trying to reconcile poetry with higher content. I don't know to what extent this can succeed today, given the existential waning, for centuries, of the natural soil on which something decisive in that direction could ripen, beyond the individual. Moreover, I do not see you, in the magazine, in del all good company. Even the busy gentleman Vittorio Vettori appears there ...⁴⁶

Hopefully the publisher did not just chit-chat, assuring that he sent you my *Metaphysics of Sex* as I had begged him to, after you mentioned that the book might interest you. If it has arrived you will be able to have a look at it. And that having happened, writing about it, eventually, will not represent anything burdensome for you. I, of course, am not a "review hunter." I take note of the fact that, for various reasons (and also various "myths"), the so-called big press strictly ignores me. This, however, does not bring a great ; there is now an audience of mine--indefinable but real--that despite every conspiracy silence is interested in my books, so they are equally sold to the extent ... desirable by publishers, and indeed even reprinted.

I do not think it is the case to over-dramatize what it takes to stand up to certain contingencies; when a certain limit is not exceeded, the habit of a certain detachment, preserved even in an intensive regime and profane experience, without social spiritual or metaphysical implications, is enough (on the other hand, in my particular case, there is nothing affecting the essential activity, for the non-essential there is help due to the fact, of having almost no "sins of omission"); for certain human types these are mere "police measures," and they are far from drawing from this either reason for crisis or for particular "victories."

Your mention of St. Lawrence, with a kind of equivalence of presuppositions "as long as they act," I don't think responds to your exactly expressed thought, because it would end up in a rather trivial pragmatism. A fact, even a non-normal one, including a "miracle," in itself means nothing. For example, levitation can be produced either in a *medium*, or in a saint, or in a savage sorcerer, or in an initiate. In each case, the essential, symbolic content is essentially different: the fact, in itself, is almost nothing and can only *épater le bourgeois*. Celsus took it in this sense, speaking very much from above, against Christians, for their supposed use of miracles as a means of "conversion" ⁴⁷. Remember also the Buddhist distinction between the "noble" (symbolic) miracle and the "non-noble" miracle. But these are things you know very well.

It seems to me that in earlier times at certain times you thought that fascist oppression was the cause of material, social and cultural malaise. Now the oppression has blown up -- and you can see that it has come out of it... Does this cue have relations to your vicissitudes in agriculture-industry, taxation and the like...

If you are interested, I will also get you my stuff that is gradually coming out. Coming up for this year are an entirely new presentation of Lao-tze's Tao-tê-ching, a little work on the *Golden Verses* of Pythagoras (really, made to order, I sympathize only a little with Pythagoreanism), an essay on the doctrines of "heroic realism" of the early Jünge^{r(48)}.

Be well and don't fail to show up sometimes.

Very cordially, in ancient friendship

Yours
J. Evola

[XIII]

Rome, August 19, 1962

Dear Comi,

After your welcome visit this winter, which I hoped would have been followed by a second one-a resumption of contact after a good group of years that don't seem like one at all-I heard nothing more directly from you.

I hope that you have gradually recovered, because, if I must be honest, I have been rather struck by that state of yours of a depression that seems to me to have a purely physical or psycho-physical undertone, so more or less profane⁴⁹. I think in that regard it would be essential that you have someone close by who has energizing power, acting especially by example. And I regret that circumstances do not make our frequent contacts possible. But perhaps this has already been overcome.

At the time, the publisher Scheiwiller, to whom, by the way, I had already referred your name, told me that following your request he sent you my latest book, *Riding the Tiger*. I hope that you have received it, and that you have had, or will have, the opportunity to take a look at it, not causing it to end up like that other book of mine, *Metaphysics of Sex*, which, as you told me, had gone into the hands a friend of yours even before I could bring attention to it.

These days I finished a new book, which I may have mentioned in our interview, which is a kind of history of the genesis of my writings, from the very first

period of avant-garde art up to the present with an *aperçu* on my activity of more than four decades: especially as a guide or document, the biographical element being of course almost nonexistent, restricted to only hints that may explain one or another situation and indicate certain contingent "conditionalities."

One reason I am writing to you is, also, to ask if, with your most vivid imagination as a poet, you did not have some title to suggest, having some allusive power. The theme of a "way" has presented itself to me, but without my being able to articulate it in a set adaptation^{o(50)}. For some suggestions, if you come up with something, I would be grateful.

However, I will be glad to hear from you. With
many cordial and sincere good wishes

Yours
J. Evola

Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197
Rome

Letters to Gottfried Benn (1934-1955)

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[I]

Gurgl, July 20, 1934⁵-

Very clear doctor,

Since you have repeatedly shown a cordial interest in my labors, I would like to inform you of the following.

As she knows, my book *Revolt Against the Modern World* is about to be published in German by Deutsche Verlagsanstalt^{t(6)}. -

Some friends, among others Mr. Vorwerk⁷, had-proposed to me a translator other than Mr. Bauer. I, however, was morally obligated to Mr. Bauer, since he, with the utmost disinterest, was the first to help make my ideas known in Germany. Moreover, Mr. Bauer himself had already taken the initiative to propose to the Deutsche Verlagsanstalt the translation of my book.

The translation is now almost completed, and since it is of the utmost importance to me to expound as exactly as possible the ideas represented in my book, I would like to ask you if you could have the time and opportunity to submit the manuscript of the translation for revision, intervening also, if necessary, with corrections and proposals, of course only as regards the German linguistic form. I take the liberty of addressing myself to her, by virtue of the absolute competence that in my judgment she possesses on these matters, and of her very great knowledge and intelligence of the traditions to which I refer^{o(8)}.

With my warmest regards

His ever devoted
J. Evola

Until the last days of this month Obergurgl, Pension Fender Ötztal.

[III]

Ortisei (Dolomites), Aug. 9, 1934

Very clear doctor,

I wish to tell you all my gratitude and to attest how much I am obliged to you for your letter of July 27-which I only now receive-and for your very kind intention to review the German translation of my work.

I assume that the first half of the translation, which I provisionally revised, has already been delivered by Mr. Bauer to the Deutsche Verlagsanstalt. It, therefore, can be made available to him by Dr. Kilper. It goes without saying that any changes in it would be accepted by me a priori. During my short stay in Berlin I was not able to gain sufficient experience to get a precise idea of the situation in your country with regard to the values of which we are the exponents ⁱ⁽⁹⁾. Even the latest political events, which took place at the end of June—~~o(10)~~, do not seem to have an unambiguous meaning. After all, I am more and more convinced that those who want to defend and realize without compromise of any kind a spiritual and aristocratic tradition unfortunately have no room left, today and in the modern world; unless one thinks solely of elitist work. Therefore, my *Revolt* has a more pessimistic, more solitary and secluded setting than in *Imperialism pagan* ^{o(11)}.

It is likely that in the fall I will happen to set foot in Germany again. In that case, I would be much obliged if you would offer me the opportunity for an exchange of views and a longer conversation between us. I would be very much obliged. I will be on the road again in a few days. I reserve the right to write to you again from Capri, where I will be staying a little longer in September.

With renewed, cordial thanks, and the expression of my devoted friendship.

His
J. Evola

[III]

Vienna, March 17, 1935

Distinguished Mr.

Dr.!

I read the article that she so amicably wished to devote to my book, and I would like the senses of my deepest gratitude^{e(12)} to reach her.

To find men who show an understanding of the ideas we profess, as you do, is a very rare thing, and it is only supreme consolation this age holds for us.

I also had confirmation of how advantageous it would be, in order to the effectiveness of the "traditional" method, if I, in expounding it, had a poetic ability, suggestive in style, such as you possess. Yet our efforts certainly converge in a single, invisible front.

Once again, dear Mr. Dr., my heartfelt thanks. In spiritual communion,

His ever devoted
J. Evola

[IV]

To Mr. dr. Gottfried Benn
Bozenerstraße, 20
Berlin-Schöneberg (West
Germany)

Rome, September 13, 1955

Distinguished Sir,

We have not been in touch for a long time. However, it is likely that she still remembers my name: we even met in person in Berlin.

In the period prior to World War II I had little opportunity to hear about you and your activities. Only recently have I learned of her more recent literary achievements, and the address to which I am now writing to you I obtained precisely from a review of one of her writings that appeared in an Italian newspaper.

For my part, I would be happy to be able to reconnect with our old relations. If this is possible, I would be grateful if you would let me send some of your new

publications. I could then get an idea of her current intellectual orientations. In return-in case this is of any interest to her-I can have her send you a book of mine, *The Mystery of the Grail*, which also appeared last year in German^{a(13)}. In Italy, I have also published other books, and there is also a French and an English translation of my *Doctrine of Awakening*¹⁴. I have always remained on my old positions, as far as my intellectual orientation and prevailing interests are concerned. The last war gave me a spinal cord injury, which deprived me almost completely of the use of my legs: a contingency to which, however, I do not attach much importance. In any case, I would be very glad to hear from you. In the meantime, sending you my best regards, I remain

His devoted
J. Evola

J. Evola
Corso Vittorio Emanuele, 197
Rome

Letters to Wilhelm Stapel, Ernst Jünger and Armin
Mohler (1933-1953)

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[I]
Letter to Wilhelm Stapel

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Rome, 9/9/1933

Dearest Dr. Stapel!

Forgive my late reply to your friendly letters of July 7 and 19. In truth, I have just returned to Rome from Tyrol and my entire correspondence has been waiting here for two months.

Thank you very much for kindly accepting my contribution¹⁸ and sending me your book, which I will read immediately with much interest¹⁹. As for me, on the other hand, you will soon receive a copy of the German translation of my book *Pagan Imperialism*, which will be coming out these very days. I would be particularly grateful if my paper-as I already had occasion point out to you-appears in the September issue. Perhaps you could be so kind as to send it to me, not to my Roman address, but to Capri (poste restante), in the province of Naples? This address is also to be considered valid for the honorarium. Just tomorrow I am leaving for Capri, where I will stay until October 10. Regrettably, I am unable to tell you whether Balbo has Jewish ancestry. This does not detract from the fact that his hometown - Ferrara - is full of Jews. But, as you well know, in Italy the Jew is not so differentiated and easy to recognize by blood and spirit as in Germany. Balbo is only to be counted among those fascist hierarchs who have little sympathy for the Church and Have a purely "military" mentality.

As far as oceanic transflight is concerned, in my opinion all this can be traced back to those "modern" children's games that constitute the rhetorical "Luciferian" deformation of true heroism and power.

With best memories and cordial greetings - also to your kind lady - believe me, dearest Mr. Doctor,

His faithful
Julius Evola

[II]
Evola-Mohler correspondence

[II.I]

To Mr.
Baron Julius Evola
c/o: "Nation Europa" editorial
office P.O. Box 200
Coburg

Wilflingen, 3/9/51

Dearest Mr. Baron,
late last year I published a book on the Conservative Revolution in Germany from 1918 to 1932 (see the appendix), in which I try trace the basis of the revolt against the world of liberalism. Although only Germany is mentioned in this book, nevertheless there are many debts to your works *Pagan Imperialism* and *Revolt against the Modern World*, which I also pointed out. I would therefore like to send you a copy, in case you should not already own one. Could you write me a few lines, telling me whether I can afford to send you the book and, if so, at what address I can reach you?

With great esteem greets you

His faithful
AOS.

[II.II]

1(24)

Rome, 23/XI/1951

Dear Mr. Doctor!

Many thanks for your letter of 3/9, to which I can only now reply. Actually, I had already promised myself to write to your editor, my old friend Mr. Vorwerk, who wanted to resume contact with me and had already kindly sent me his work. However, what prevented me from doing so was an absurd fact. At the end of May I was arrested and only a couple of days ago I was

fully exonerated. I had resumed, completely unchanged, my cultural-political activity, and apparently, because of my ideas, a secret "fascist" group had been formed among the young and old fighters, which unfortunately also committed nonsense: for example, bombs were planted in front of the U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of the Interior. So, the idea was to make myself "morally" guilty of these actions, although in practice I had not the slightest knowledge of such "activism," let alone any idea of inspiring it. Now this ended in a favorable sense for almost all the defendants^{il(25)}.

You may be interested to know that during the hearing, for which the best names in the Italian ~~or(26)~~-bar were activated, your book was also discussed. Indeed, it was to show how neither I, nor this newly formed movement, had the slightest intention of rebuilding the "Fascist Party," and that, on the contrary, the whole thing - as already my past activity in Italy and Germany - was to be framed within a Conservative Revolution.

It follows from this how I am already familiar with your excellent book and have read it with great interest. Indeed, I believe that it may be of particular importance for the new German generation in particular, so that it may become aware of tendencies which are not to be identified with National Socialism and which - as you rightly point out - are relevant again today, because of the recurrence of contingencies similar to those post-1918, and which are not at all influenced by the unhappy past. Your research is excellent; in it I found names of old friends of whom I do not know who is still alive...*

Where I completely disagree with her is in what concerns the exposition of her *Weltanschauung*. I think you refer too much to Nietzsche and the concept of immanence, whereas in my view the premises of every conservative and traditional position are metaphysical dualism top-down hierarchical order. You are well aware that in *Revolt* I set out these theses in some detail. Of the book, moreover, a new updated edition in Italian has come out in recent months.

Of course I would be glad to discuss this with you in depth, but I don't know where yet. Mr. Vorwerk had thought of the Italian magazine *Europa Nazione*, which unfortunately ceased publication after the second issue. At the moment I have only national pages available, but they are not very suitable for a proper comparison. However, I want to see what can come out of it; I would be pleased to keep in touch with you and, if you read Italian, send you some material from among my new publications.

If you should happen to write to Mr. Vorwerk, please greet him for me and let him know of the impediment that has arisen in the meantime. I will

I will write myself as soon as possible.

That during the war things did not go particularly well for me and that, because of a wound, I can barely walk and even sit for a couple of hours, perhaps Mr. Vorwerk already knows à²⁷.

I congratulate you again on your work and extend my warmest regards.

His faithful
Julius Evola

* Do you know, for example, anything about my friends Baron von Gleichen and Professor Carl Schmitt, and where it would be possible to reach them?

[II.III]

27/11/51

Dear Mr. Baron,

I was enormously pleased to receive your letter of 23/11! Both of your books translated into German, as well as some scattered papers in German journals that I was able to obtain, have long been among the most cherished materials in my possession. In particular, I was pleased that you took the trouble to write to me in German. Now, I understand French and English, but unfortunately not Italian (which is why it would not be possible for me to read the Italian texts you would like to send me).

I am very sorry that the course of events has physically tested her. I was not aware of it, just as I knew nothing about its fate since about 1935, and I don't even know if my editor Friederich Vorwerk is aware of it. In any case, I will show him his letter. He will then surely be able to list most of the contact details of his old German friends, possessing an extraordinary knowledge of things and people on the subject of the Conservative Revolution. That my book came out for his publishing house is certainly no accident.

However, Carl Schmitt's and Heinrich von Gleichen's contact details I can pass on to him myself. The former is a friend of my father's, while with the latter I am in epistolary contact:

- 1) Mr.
Prof. Dr. Carl Schmitt

Brockhauserweg 10
(21b) *Plettenberg II* / Westfalen

2) Heinrich Freiherr von Gleichen (20b)
Gross-Schneen near Göttingen

I also showed his letter to Ernst Jünger, whose secretary I am here in Wilflingen. He also belongs, since the 1930s, to your readership. He would be very interested in hearing it again.

That my book was used during the trial as evidentiary material in his favor is one of the finest achievements so far for me. Moreover, the book has already been discussed in Italy in detail in *Il Borghese* (Milan) of August 1, 1951. However, I could not read this review.

That you disagree with the thesis supported in my book was clear to me. I would be pleased if we could discuss it sooner or later. In January I will be for about two weeks a guest in Florence of Mr. André Germain²⁸, whom you may know. If it is somehow possible for me, I will come and visit you in Rome. Is there any possibility of finding you in Rome in January?

With best wishes and greetings

His faithful
Armin Mohler

[II.IV]

Rome, 6/II/1952

Dear Mr. Doctor!

Following what you had written to me in your letter of 27/XI last year, I thought I would be able to see you in Rome in January. I gather that perhaps you have postponed your planned trip to Italy.

I wrote a basically expository paper on his book, which I forwarded to the *Italian Review*, a journal with which I have collaborated before and which now naturally flies the American flag^{a(29)}. However, it has been pointed out to me that the subject is in principle a source of interest and so I await final confirmation.

Many thanks for the addresses of Prof. Schmidt [*sic*] and Herr von Gleichen. I have written to both of them, without, however, getting a reply so far. Of Prof. Schmidt I have received only the special edition of one of his essays. I

contacts with Mr. Vorwerk, however, have been restored. It would be convenient if his publishing house could give to printings a book of mine, of which the manuscript of a German translation is already available. It could certainly still be of interest to many German circles today: it is entitled *The Mystery of the Grail and the Ghibelline Tradition of the Imperator*^{a(30)}. Mr. Vorwerk tells me, however, that his publishing house is full for this year and that they should try again next year.

It is interesting that you work with Ernst Jünger. We had several mutual friends, and we were supposed to meet. Unfortunately, no opportunity arose in the past - or, rather, it was postponed several times. Now our paths - I have reason to believe - have gone somewhat separate. I appreciate Jünger, in fact, up to the *Marble Cliffs*. As for his later works, I must say that they do not convince me too much. However, I am not familiar with *Heliopolis* -- although I hear it should be coming out soon in Italian translation^{a(31)}. To Jünger (the former) I have devoted a chapter contained within a forthcoming book, *Riding the tiger*^{e(32)}.

I hope to hear from you, and perhaps to meet you here in person. However, between March and April it is most likely that I will not be in Rome, but in Bologna.

With best regards

His faithful
Julius Evola

P.S. Would it possibly be possible to somehow find a copy of Jünger's *The Worker*?

[II.V]

15/3/52

Dear Mr. Baron,

returning from Italy, I find his letter dated 6/2. It is a pity that it did not reach me sooner. I waited for your nod to find out whether a visit from me would be agreeable to you, and since until my departure in January I had heard nothing from you, I did not dare to visit you unannounced. After reading from your letter that your state of health would allow you to receive me, I greatly regret to

not having done so. I hope to return to Italy soon, in which case I will knock on his door.¹⁽³³⁾

I am very pleased that you have written an article about my book, because I expect much more from an analysis from your pen than from a casual reviewer. It will also be the first analysis done by one of the very supporters of the Conservative Revolution.

Carl *Schmitt* (please be careful to spell his name with *-tt* and not with *-dt*, he is very touchy about it) was certainly pleased to receive a sign of his life. In the fall he spent a week here in Wilflingen, and on that occasion I showed him your letter. He spoke at length about her, in a very animated way. Unfortunately, he is in a very unfortunate situation. His wife died a year ago, and he is living alone in an attic, with no secretary and no money.

Ernst Jünger was also pleased by your interest. In addition to this letter, his *Heliopolis* will reach you by registered mail. *The Worker*, however, is completely out of print; we ourselves possess only an archival copy. However, the publisher Klostermann in Frankfurt wants to make a new edition soon. Jünger's present-day positions are evident from *Beyond the Line* and *The Rebel's Treatise*. I am sending you both writings in case you are not familiar with them and are interested. You have a very strong influence on current developments in Germany. Heidegger and Jünger have found each other.

I am very curious about his new books *The Mystery of the Grail and the Ghibelline Tradition of Empire* and *Riding the Tiger*, which I hope to read in German soon. Too bad Vorwerk cannot print them this year. Like all publishers who have no printing press of their own and no American patrons to support their capital, he has to fight hard to be able to sell the few things he publishes.

Always hoping to one day meet you in person, I wish you well in your work

His faithful
AOS.

Along with this letter: 1 Heliopolis as a registered print.

[II.VI]

Rome, 1/VI/1952

Dear Mr. Doctor!

Many thanks for your letter of 15/3, which I have been able to read only in the last few days; I have been out of Rom^{a(34)} for about two months and the entire correspondence (including Jünger's work, for which I thank you from the bottom of my heart) has been waiting for me here. Similar to the late reply to your first letter, I took time even now before writing to you. At that time I first wanted to find out *whether* a discussion around your book had been accepted by the *Italian Review*. Now I waited until it was published to send you the whole file (combined with the page from *il Borghese*, where the book is also mentioned). However, all of this seems to be

possible only toward the end of the month. This is more of a *compte-rendu*.

The idea of a Conservative Revolution forms the core of a new political book of mine, soon to be published, entitled *Men and Ruins. Contributions for an antidemocratic^{o(35)} thought*. I have written it primarily for the new generation, uniquely-seems to be somewhat fascinated by these issues here with us. Only the quistion of an editor who is up to the task and courageous remains to be settled.

Of Karl [sic] Schmitt I unfortunately heard nothing more; I had even begged him to send me his work on Donoso Corte^{s(36)}, myself being in the process of dealing with this author, with a view to his "modernization"³⁷. Instead, I received a letter from Baron von Gleichen, unfortunately leaking a certain discontent.

I wanted to thank Ernst Jünger for the kind dedication of the book. I did not do so in order not to get lost in conventional quistions -- I would like the first *direct* contact with him not to be trivial, but meaningful and enlightening. I am not familiar with the later writings you mentioned, *Beyond the Line* and *The Rebel's Treatise*, and I would gladly read them. As for a discussion of *Heliopolis*, we will have to wait for it to appear in an Italian edition - which should be in preparation from the publisher Longanesi. As I already mentioned to you, in my opinion what is relevant again today are Jünger's early positions. I am planning to write an article about them, in the next few days, for the new national newspaper in Rome *Il Secolo*, which is headed by Prince Valerio Borghese, a well-known militant figure during World War II.

Of course, it would not have been necessary to wait for confirmation from me to visit me when he went to Rome. Now, from a physical point of view I have no impediment other than not being able to walk, which spiritually is for me comparable to the broken wheel of a car.

If it is possible for you, try to influence by subtle means Vorwerk in the publication in Germany of my book on the Grail-if not this, at least next year. The difficulties in which the German publishing field finds itself I

are known, but, all in all, this is not a large volume, and the book will surely find its own circle of readers.

With best regards

His
Julius Evola

[III]

Evola-Jünger correspondence

It has already been mentioned in the introduction to the epistolary exchange between Evola and Mohler how the Roman philosopher and Ernst Jünger never actually met. This is evident from the letters found in the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach, which stop at 1953. Whether then, between that date and 1974, the year of Evola's death, Jünger visited the philosopher in his apartment in Corso Vittorio Emanuele, will most likely remain an unresolved question, there being no trace of such an event either in the diaries and letters of the German writer or in the writings of the Roman traditionalist. To be ruled out at any rate are the "visits" of the already paralyzed Evola to Germany of which Jünger will speak in 1986 in the *Secolo d'Italia*, urged by Gennaro Malgierⁱ⁽³⁸⁾. Leaving behind these biographical notes, it will be more pertinent to dwell on the other "missed encounter," one concerning Evola's intention to translate *Der Arbeiter* - "the worker" or "l'operaio," as it was later rendered in Italian. Jünger seems to oppose Evola's proposal rather sharply, as he would actually like to go back over the text and make it more adherent to the changed context of postwar Germany (recall that the book was first published in 1932). For this reason, he suggests that Evola address other works, one of which is *Beyond the Line*. In expressing this desire, he calls into question Martin Heidegger, with whom - it will be recalled from a passage contained

In Mohler's last letter-he "found himself."

Now, granted that Heidegger was immediately influenced by the theses contained in *The Worker*^{o(39)}, it will be worth noting a passage contained in the long epistolary between the latter and Jünger, in which *Der Arbeiter* constitutes, moreover, a recurring theme: "You know from our first conversation on the way to Stübenwasen, how important this work is for me. Yet *Beyond the Line* is perhaps the embryo for a new version of *The Worker*, both in style and in dimension "⁴⁰.

Not a rejection *tout court*, then, but the choice of works more adherent to the development of his own thought within the new Germany. The Roman philosopher would deal on several occasions, especially in essays and articles, with the works pointed out to him by Jünger, but he would do so always adopting a somewhat critical perspective and denouncing a regression in the general vision of the German, to whom he ultimately imputes a "dangerous" humanistic drift, far from the positions of "heroic realism" and the ideals of the "absolute person." Whether the interruption of the brief epistolary relationship between the two was also due to these than benevolent criticisms of the "second" Jünger? It is certainly unfortunate that Evola did not have the opportunity to read *Eumeswil*, which came out three years his death in 1977, in which he would perhaps have found the ideals of the "first" Jünger reincarnated in the figure of the anarc^{a(41)}.

One final note about the ambivalent relationship between the two. In his reply to Evola, Jünger inserts a *postscriptum*, in which he states that he read and appreciated Ennio Flaiano's *Tempo di uccidere*, perhaps also because of the setting so close in some respects to his *Ludi africani*. How would Evola have received this very positive assessment of a work so full of *pietas* and commiseration for his own and others' fate?

[III.I]

Rome, 17/XI/1953

Dear Sir!

My name should be known to you, since-probably through Dr. Mohler-I received a specimen of *Heliopolis* with dedication not long ago and also because in the Reich we had many acquaintances in common-for example, Prof. C. Schmitt and Baron Von Gleichen.

I have long followed his work with particular interest and have often had occasion to refer to his works. Of these, those from the early period, say up to the *Marble Cliffs*, are properly close to me. And it is in this regard that I take the liberty of addressing you.

I believe I can have an Italian translation of *Der Arbeiter* prepared. Given the analogy of the first postwar period with the second, the problematic posed in that book is in my opinion again relevant today - after all, the solutions that had been hoped for in the meantime in the Reich and Italy were mostly only fictitious solutions, surrogates and ephemeral manifestations. That is why I believe the book can still exert an "awakening" effect today.

Now there is an obstacle to struggle with, because I do not own the said book and it is very difficult to find. Dr. Mohler has even written to me that only an archive copy is available from her as well. Perhaps, however, it will be possible for you to find someone within your knowledge who can sell the book or simply lend it for the period of the analysis and related translation, under formal and personal assurance of its return.

Also: to whom should one turn for translation rights?

Please excuse this approach, which nevertheless offered me the opportunity, otherwise continually postponed, to have the honor of making personal contact with you.

With special consideration

His devoted
J. Evola

[III.II]

21/11/53

Dear Mr. Evola,

Thank you very much for the lines you sent me on November 17. Your name is certainly not only known to me through Mohler, but for much longer. Albrecht Erich Günther, who unfortunately died in the war, often spoke of her⁴². I recalled her death in my diaries, which appeared under the title *Strahlungen*, which were translated into Italian by Longanesi. Unfortunately, their publication goes somewhat by the wayside^{e(43)}.

As for *the Worker*, I have not yet made a final decision as to how a new edition should be published. Heidegger, with whom I talked about it the day before yesterday, believes that I should publish it soon and without rehashes. Instead, I would like to include a whole series of new points of view. It will probably come down to opting for both solutions, so that I will publish a small unremodeled edition and a larger revised one.

For these reasons, I would not like to burn the candle at the seams with translations. Instead, I propose that you turn your attention toward my latest political writings. These are three works, which appeared under the titles *Beyond the Line*, *Treatise of the Rebel* and *The Knot of Gordi*^{o(44)}.

Beyond the Line gives an overview the current state of nihilism and its developments.

The Rebel's treatise describes the possible attitudes of the individual within the modern dictatorship.

Gordian Knot presents the pattern of encounters between East and West since Herodotus.

The three writings appeared for Vittorio Klostermann of Frankfurt am Main. Together, they would constitute a volume of about three hundred pages. In this format it is already being translated into French by Professor Henri Plard and should be out next year from Plon.

I am taking the liberty of sending you the printout of *The Gordian Knot*. Should you enjoy reading it, please contact Klostermann.

Hoping to see her in Rome, where I will visit my friend Henry Furs^{t(45)}, I remain

His
Ernst Jünger

P.S. These days I read with great pleasure the book of his compatriot Faiano [sic] *Time to Kill*, which has precisely appeared in Germanic translation ^{a(4)6}.

Letters to Massimo Scaligero (1930-1953)

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I -
(7)

22-VII-1930/VIII

Dear Sgabelloni (*or Scaliger*)⁽⁸⁾;

Thank you for your postcard and your good memory. As a matter of fact, I had already dropped by your uncle⁹ to get your address, and also to apologize for missing the last appointment.

For our things, still nothing new. I spoke with Arpinati¹⁰, and handed him a memorial. He promised to take an interest in it, telling me at the same time that it had not started with him. I also spoke to the Press Office of the Head of Government, moving pawns there as well. I am therefore on hold. I will urge to resolve it either one way or the other, because that alone prevents me from "escaping" to the mountains or keeps me here.

Rossi visited me yesterday. He is very courteous, and told me to keep him in mind as we might need him in new eventualities. He may have heard about the shameful conclusion of Angioletti's trial against Danzⁱ⁽¹¹⁾. Danzi was forced to withdraw everything he had insinuated, to publish the retraction in his own newspaper as well as to pay the costs to avoid conviction. - Our trial will be resumed around octoberbr^{e(12)}.

I am waiting for copies of *Pagan Imperialism* from my publisher. As soon as I receive them, I will send you one. In fact, for that matter, if there are any changes in your address there, let me know. In the meantime, I am sending you an issue of one of my previous

magazine, in which perhaps there is something that may be of interest to you. The content of the 1st article, e.g., is strictly true¹³.

Again, thank you. And with many good wishes believe me.

His
J. Evola

[II]¹⁴

Rome, April 27, 1931-IXth

Dear Friend,

In a circular, circulated at the time, we announced a criminal action against a group of characters allied in a vile defamation against my person and the ideas defended by me and the friends who follow me^{o15}.

The first fruits of that action were the convictions - under various penalties of imprisonment or fine - of Messrs. Guglielmo Danzi, A.R. Fusilli, Mino Somenzⁱ¹⁶.

Last Friday it was the turn of Mr. Mario Carli who had advanced the filthy and vile insinuation, that the newspaper I edited *La Torre* was a newspaper of pederastsⁱ¹⁷. The trial did not take place only because it fell under the statute of limitations. But it already appears from the court documents that the aforementioned intemperate gentleman - on whom no less than eight criminal cases have already been brought, one for revolt against public authorities, six others for insults or defamation; who already collected from us the epithets of "rascal, scoundrel and vile impostor" (n. 9 and 10 of *La Torre*¹⁸); that he was disarmed and deservedly whipped in an attempted assault directed at us¹⁹ - it thus appears that such intemperate gentleman once again did not betray his "style." At the instruction, faced with the threat of conviction, he categorically stated that the epithet "pederast" was only meant to refer to the ... intellectual inversion of certain of our doctrines (when has he ever studied in order to understand them, let us not say judge them?) and that, poor fellow, he had never dreamed of giving these and similar defamations a different meaning!!!

Another of the vile insinuations moved by the gentleman Carli, for purposes easy to imagine, is that our newspaper *La Torre* would be suppressed by order of the Prefect. Another shameless vile lie. Precisely among the trial files is a letter from the Prefecture of Rome (Div. Gab. No. 11588 dated 24-4-931) requested by the Court, from which we transcribe this verbatim and categorical sentence: "*No order has ever been issued by this Prefecture for suppression of the La Torre Newspaper*."²⁰.

Even if any were needed, these would suffice as evidence of the magnificent style of Carli and his acolytes and to characterize the kind of campaigns in which their "heroism" is expressed today. And yet we wanted to account for them to our friends, as objective elements of fact, and by their norm of loyal people.

J. Evola

[III]

Capri, 19.9.35.XIII

Dear Friend,

Thank you for the letter and article, which is fine and which I have forwarded to *Regime*. I have assigned it to the next *Diorama*, the one at the end of mes^e(21). It's just that sometimes layout problems intervene, which are solved at the print shop in Cremona, not always respecting my instructions.

I then enclose the articles on the "Ghost Vessel"²². Here I could not get a typewriter. If my handwriting creates an obstacle, do you not think that, otherwise, they go [*sic*], I would like to beg you to have them transcribed yourself somewhere, I thinking then of course to cover the small expense.

Here I stay until around the middle of October. In the meantime, let's see what happens. To Farinacci I have forwarded, like others, application for a call to arms. But frankly I would rather have a good war England than end up in skirmishes with Negroes and other colonial bugs.

Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

81 Rome
Street

[IV- (23)]

8.12.35

Sincerely yours

His

J. Evola

Wien (2)
Neuer Markt 3

[V]ⁱ⁽²⁴⁾

Vienna, 27.12.35

With all good

Yours
J. Evola

wishes Neuer

Markt 3
Wien (2)

[VI]

Vienna, 6.2.36

Dear Scaliger,

It has been quite some time now that I have not made to hear anything more about myself: the fact is that indeed nothing has intervened again, life flows, for the side that interests us, now monotonous, in spite of all that can be experienced in a large city whose possibilities, from the worldly point of view, certainly cannot be compared with those of Rome. I have done two conferences^{e(25)}, maybe I will do more, at the end of the month probably in Hungary. I do not yet know when I will return. The return presents me with rather dark tints, with nothing to do, no purpose, with a completely empty time before me. I will try to set adhesions in motion to have my application for Abyssinia, which has already been made for months, given an outcome. It would be a gain of time.

I heard that there everything is proceeding smoothly. Also in your course of life I think no mutation is taking place. Puglisi wrote to me, that he wanted to resume the famous lecture course: it really means to have some vogli^{a(26)}! I received here a curious book: Fersen's *The Universe as a Game* (Guanda ed.), a mixture of deviations and unconscious impulses to "return"²⁷. Do you know it? Perhaps I will write about it, if the barring and restriction of the press in Italy in matters spiritual will allow it à²⁸.

The contacts remain unchanged. , if you believe, it gives signs of life. If those "Maffei" articles of mine came out, please send me a copy quⁱ⁽²⁹⁾.

Sincerely believe me always

Yours
J. Evola

Neuer Markt 3
Wien (II)

[VII-
I(30)]

Budapest, 9.4.36

Sincerely

Yours
J. Evola

[VIII]

9.10.46

Dear Friend,

I thank you very much for your note. Guido³¹ had already let me know about you and your things, and I was glad to hear that they finally settled down.

About my state, they will have told you. There remains a kind of spell, an as yet unspecified cause that stops the movements, in itself possible, of the legs. And this has lasted since September last year, after a first phase, which was overcome, of paralysis. You may transcribe the history and get it to Dr. Colazzi^{a(32)}, perhaps he may have an insight into it, which has not yet been reached here.

As for physical forces and intellectual faculties, everything is in order. What has suffered a curious impairment, however, are those *sui generis* faculties necessary for concentration, the formation of imagery and the like. And, as you may think, this constitutes a serious disadvantage, because precisely in this state of forced vegetative life I would need the defense of a detached inner life.

That something important can be organized by you is also an essential question for me. A certain work just on our line, in Vienna, which had attracted me and to which I had devoted myself, has been suspended for contingent causes. I do not know whether it will be allowed to be put on again. If things with my state should not go in order, it is only when I had a sense that from you I might still have a task to perform, that it would have a reason to continue living.

Have you seen Eng. C. Costam.? I don't know anything about him if his company has overcome the economic crisis. Eventually go and see him and give him my regards. He had, as you know, some interesting projects for the reconstruction of some neighborhoods devastated by the war, and on that subject he was also thinking of m^{e(33)}.

You can perhaps try writing to me, directly, sometime, although the mail still goes very imperfectly.

Say hello to mutual friends and always believe me

You
r [missing
signature]

[IX]

2.II.47

Dear Maximus,

I had at the time your lines - the ones in which you also told me about Eng. Costam. Now I would like to give you an assignment. Could you perhaps make contact with the publisher Bocca (Via Cerva 42, Milan). It is about the 2^a edition of the *Yoga of Power*. The Author, who is still in Siberia, made it known, that he would not consent to publication unless he, or a trusted person, appointed by him, reviewed the bozz^{e(34)} first. If the thing was [...]³⁵, saying that he was in charge. Only that there is to be revised and put right the special spelling of a quantity of Sanskrit terms. For this, you could turn to Prof. Jasink in Florence, who is a friend of mine and who for such things has already helped^{e(36)}. You can ask Bocca or Vezzanⁱ⁽³⁷⁾ for his address. I don't know if it is the one from before.

The reprinting of *Ur*, which had already been accepted by Bocca, became uncertain due to the Italian crisis situation. You may ask... The new ms., completely reworked and much edited, is with the editor.

It had already been largely translated into German, but the translation was lost in the events of the war, which at the same time blurred an interesting and vast combination, to which that translation also belonged and in which you too could have been possibly profitably engaged. For *Ur* in Italy there is, after all, also to settle the matter with that other, unsympathetic conredactor^{e(38)}. And also to make contact with Guénon, because several of his studies have been added there; however, I have not yet been able to get his address, I do not know if he is still in Egypt³⁹.

Colazza, to whom my friend Guido had forwarded an extensive report of my illness, promised to send his judgment. But it to date has not reached me; let us hope it has not been lost. About my condition, nothing new. If you will let me know about you, it will please me. Greet mutual friends, indeed possibly greet the good Gisler as well, tell him (as if I knew nothing) that I marvel how he has given no sign of life - this has its own "tactical" ⁴⁰reason.

Many cordial greetings from the

You
rs Kar
I(41)

[X]

Bad Ischl, 3.III.48

Dear Maximus,

It has already been a long time since I have heard anything from you. As a matter of fact, I too, at least directly, have not heard from you anymore. Of this, the cause is the lack of any news and a course of life, which makes the months seem shorter than weeks.

On the book side I have been sending the new text of the book on the Grail and the other on Hermeticism to the publisher for some time now, and at least the second one should already be in composition. Instead it seems to have a delay in the reprinting of the work, which is presented almost as a new book, on the Tantras by Bocca, so much so that I have had its ms. sent here for new additions. Finally, I have translated *Mask and Face* into German, also reworked and with new chapters, and it seems almost certain to come out in Svizzer^a(42).

I was then very pleased to have resumed contact with Guénon, who informed me of the news and also of the books he has since written and published. It is too bad that I cannot have them, because it seems there is not yet full postal freedom between France and Austria. And have you seen them? I would be particularly interested in *Le monde de la quantité et les signes des temps* [sic-I(43)], also to possibly take them into account in the book that now essentially occupies me, that is, the *reworking* in final form of *Revolt* (I think I owe you the copy sent to me by my brother, on which I am working). Would there be no means of getting me by way of loan from Italy (registered mail shipments are now completely safe and permissible) that book?

Alvi wrote to me, announcing the revival of *Atanòr*, and also the editor of it, inviting cooperation. I asked to see first the issues already out, would be sent to me, but which I have not yet receivedⁱ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

About my state, there is nothing new. The prospect of it remaining that way is not ruled out. This, from the spiritual point of view, means almost nothing to me. It is from the material point of view that it brings more or less vexing problems to be solved. Nor do I think that, after the matter of Czechoslovakia and other pretty little things, a very rosy future⁴⁵ can be expected for Italy as well. In any case, I am now preparing the final move to Italy⁴⁶. And not without relation to this I would like to allow myself to ask you for a double favor.

The fact that Cavallucci is not in Italy is also a loss for me because of the subordinate side of the help he could give on the legal level. Now, I would need someone who on that level could replace him: someone who is trustworthy and who will act especially in the friendship forum. Wouldn't you have among your acquaintances some person, as a lawyer, suitable for the purpose? It is that proceedings will probably have to be set up to send away both the occupants of the house in Capri (which represents almost my only financial resource and which cannot be sold so occupied), and a certain young lady who without my permission has been lodged in the apartment in Rome and who seems disinclined to leave. This is the first point.

The second refers to this very person, and it would be a matter of you lending yourself for some maneuvering apt to dislodge her. I suggested to my brother that he go with you to the room occupied by that young lady, at a time when she is there, but, ignoring her, make as if you were a buyer come to examine and make a list of the furniture. Set a date aloud and say (always to my brother, making as if the other were not there) that in it you will send to pick up everything. (And this may even happen.) Do you want to do this little "part"? Then make contact with my brother (to whom you can also tell about the lawyer, if you can find one); and, if you can think of any, you can also recommend other means of forcing the person to leave without resorting to legal action at all.

Therefore, I would be grateful, because on these two points depends, to a good extent, being able to come to Italy. In any case, I will be glad to hear a few things about you and the atmosphere in general. Greet the friends who still remember me* and with lively cordiality believe me

Yours
K. d. Bracorens

* If you see Leib^{II(4)7}, tell her that I replied to her last letter but that I do not know if this reply, like an earlier one, has been lost, because I have heard nothing more about her. Speaking of lawyers, H.M. Cutell^{II(4)8} comes to mind at this time. Is he in Rome? What is his address?

[XI]

Bad Ischl, 14.VI.48

Dear Maximus,

I have had yours of 8 corr. I am continually seized with violent indignation to think that that wicked woman continues to lord it over my house because my mother has been so disagreeable as to grant her trust and because now, because of her age and temperament, she does not have the opportunity to treat her as she deserves and to make life impossible for her with us. *I beg you very much*, see that you ascertain as soon as possible whether the person she had chosen goes: if not, see *without delay* to replace her. It doesn't seem like it, but meanwhile months and months go by.

For the rest, I am now in a rather unpleasant state, which, however, has absolutely nothing to do with the leg business: it is a pleurisy that gives me to fight with continuous high fever; plus it is intestinal matters (in good part due to the kind of nourishment here, only apt to cause a scurvy) that almost prevents me from eating. Hence great physical weakness. We shall see when this passer à⁴⁹.

If not for what you tell me about your state, I think it is inaccurate to compare it with mine. My impediment is exclusively physical in character, and things have developed in a way, that I sometimes spontaneously feel ridiculous and abnormal the movements that men are forced to make to move from one place to another. The only, enigmatic repercussion is a certain paralysis of the faculty of pure concentration and "perception." If not, the innermost core, the fundamental orientation with respect to spiritual reality, has not only suffered nothing during these years, but has been greatly fortified and enlivened by it. As for the rest, that is, the intellectual tools, they are so in order, that at any moment I could resume with unchanged vigor the fighting positions of *La Torre* or *Ur*.

What makes my future very obscure and problematic (*res sic stantibus* - and I have the sense that there is a great likelihood that they will remain so) is simply practical, material problem.

At you, as far as you tell me, things are quite different. It is something that erodes your life force and by this surreptitious route reacts on the spirit itself as well as having the effects you tell me on the intellectual-discursive and volitional faculties. If I have to speak openly to you, the case seems to me very suspicious. One sure index for me is the way the "continuous sense of a danger of death," the "being face to face with death," reacts. If things were "all right," given your spirit already oriented and certainly not reducing to the physical self, the result of that should be a sense of exaltation, of continual transfiguration, perhaps even an excess of strength that you would have a hard time "settling down" (for long years this was my problem). So as instead you tell me that those states occur and act - I, for that matter, could only formulate one diagnosis: *vampirism*.

There is no reason for me not to be completely honest with you, while leaving it to you to take my impressions as you see fit. In recent years I could not help but notice symptoms in you on the same direction, although on another plane, not yet affecting the organic. Certain of your "assumptions" could only be explained by the *inhibition* not only of the point of view you must have reached in esoteric things, but likewise of the normal faculties of criticism: something that has struck even "laymen." And this, in turn, can only be explained by a "fascinating" power (which is more or less equivalent to "vampirism") of the corresponding doctrinal contents.

Ascertaining the rightness or wrongness of these hypotheses can only be done *ex curantibus*: one would have to see what would proceed from the help and counter-action, of someone truly knowledgeable about ceremonial magic. But where to find it? I know of one person who has done a lot of such magic in his time and actually has "the power." I do not name her, however, because one of my suspicions is that vampiric action proceeds from that same direction, albeit in complete independence from the person in question.

If not, there is only to try the method of "not resisting evil," indeed of wanting "evil," in this sign: "Why be face to face with death and fight against it, where *I want, I crave* death?" If the life force has not been too deeply pink, it is possible that this path will lead to some results. At the same time do not neglect to be extremely vigilant about your physical organism as such, forgetting, in this regard, all that "spiritualism" thinks about it. There may be some hard-to-find "basis" that would give the explanation (in this regard I have become very wary). I am not in the habit of giving opinions or advice without being asked for it. Thus I reserve full freedom about the account in which to hold such remarks.

Sincerely

K. Bracorens

[XII]

Bologna, 4.XI.48

Dear Scaliger,

I got your letter here, rejected from Cuasso⁵⁰, with the one returned from Austria joined.

It certainly makes no sense to suppose that the well-known incident could as it were have affected our ancient friendship. Only I could not help but be astonished at the fact of your having recommended person, whom you did not know how much in it could be trusted. I for certain elementary "virtues" of uprightness and loyalty am rather "strict," so it is not easy for me to think that person, who enjoyed your friendship, would go so far as to do such things, instead of speaking clearly and sincerely, in case of need. However, it is true - and I was able to verify this in Austri^{a(51)} - that these days one does not know who to trust anymore. The boring thing is that I still do not have an idea of the books that were taken away and sold, because I could not remember how much I had, and even a sketchy list from my brother was insufficient. I could have given away books that had only commercial value, provided that others, which I needed for my work, were recovered. In that, it could only serve that person's honest statement about how much he knows he took.

As for the dislodgement maneuvers, I am not sure what had been undertaken. Unfortunately, my mother is as impressionable as ever, and my brother is also often lurching and uncertain. So I find myself in the unhappy situation of not having a "straight blade" who, in my stead, settles my affairs properly.

Look that about *Man as Power* there has been a misunderstanding on the part of my brother. It is not this book but *The Theory of the Absolute Individual* that I need, in order to remake it. *Man* has not yet reached me here. I will reject it in Rome to be returned to you.

I did not have you send the new edition of the *Hermetic Tradition*, because I know that you had this book and in the new edition there are neither additions nor essential changes. However, if you want, let me give you one of the copies that came from home, showing these lines.

I have already corrected most of the drafts of *Yoga of Power* -- think the book may come out in January. Soon after, from Laterza, will come out *Mask and Face of contemporary spiritualism* and, finally, also Mouth has put in

composition *The Angel the Western Window*. Most of all I am glad to have secured the reprinting (but not for immediately) of *Revolt Against the Modern World*, which I have extensively revised. Thus it lacks only *the Theory of the Absolute Individual* for me to feel indebted about the future of my works, whatever in the future may happen to me ⁱ⁽⁵²⁾. The bad thing is, however, that in this way I will find myself "empty": I do not have the slightest idea as to what I will be able to occupy myself with and with which to fill all the time that, in this state of mine, I have at my disposal.

From the place of care near Varese I was transferred a few days ago here to Bologna, to a Red Cross collection center where one is discreetly ill and where there is little hope that anything will be accomplished. From my brother I had you ask for Rossi's address, if he is still in this city, finding myself here at all isolated.

I started looking at a few newspapers, the most in line being basically the satirical ones. I saw *Candido*, *L'ace di bastoni*, which is certainly unabashedly tongue-in-cheek, *Brancaleone* -- indeed, about the latter, having seen signatures like Bodrero's and Papini's appearing there, I had thought of proposing a collaboration ^{e(53)}.

Here I learned that, contrary to my assumption, Joseph Pr ⁽⁵⁴⁾ has overcome the crisis of his illness. Do you know or can you find out his address? Now it seems that he is not even in a house of health. And do you happen to know Fanelli's ⁱ⁽⁵⁵⁾ as well?

The address, which I mark below, you can communicate to those who need it.

However, I tend toward a new move to Rome.

With warmest cordiality

Yours
J. Evola

Red Cross Hospital No. 46
"Centro Putti" - Bologna

[XIII]

Bologna 31.1.49

Dear Scaliger,

I thank you for your and your thoughtfulness to me. I also believe that previously you were the last one to write to me.

About my matter, it should be framed in a somewhat different way. When I faced dangers, I did so not in a spirit of defiance or arrogance, but in a spirit of "offering" (almost in a religious sense). In both secular and domestic premises, I considered an existence that had continued after the war to be meaningless. Of what has happened instead, the meaning is not clear to me. The present situation is that I am ready to fit in, as far as vital and natural force is concerned, as soon as the point of grasping presents itself, but, as far as "focus" is concerned, I feel absolutely none, there is absolutely no object, either of the profane or of the spiritual realm, which animates me as it were and makes me judge it worth the slightest effort. I remain in a state of active indifference that has left one another the various peripheral dominions, including the field of certain subtle instruments, which have curiously turned out to be paralyzed, unlike the common intellectual faculties. As for contradiction with the books I have reprinted (but not Theory-this being a simple philosophical position that engages little), it does not necessarily exist. There are cases for which the evangelical "Thou shalt not tempt thy Lord"⁵⁶ applies. As a state of , if a "meaning" does not become apparent, some of the complications that are now occurring in a chain will well put an end to it. In the meantime I will have time, I hope, to put in order that with respect to which I still feel a commitment.

Of *Challenge* I have received two issues and hope they will send me some more⁵⁷. I was almost amazed to see that not one of the writings is "out of tune." But it is like *a desperados'* fight by fronting against everyone and behind having no one. No basis for a positive counterpart is conceivable today. "In spite of everything" is a value, in the field of straightness. Those who can, however, are better off working on the "catacombs front."

My brother will return to you *The Man as Power*, in which there was misunderstanding. The book, redone, I think will come out as early as the end of the month.

In the previous one, you mentioned to me that you were studying the possibility of reducing the criticism of anthroposophy in the new ediz. of *Mask and Face*. Honestly, I would not see the reason for that. Mine, it is an orientation book, and even with respect to that current you have to put things in order. I don't think you can be followed in thinking that Steiner had to adjust himself because of the people around him. No initiate goes and professes, for reasons like that, ideas that confirm gross errors and fantasies, which are not reflected in any traditional esoteric teaching. For what remains positive, it has been pointed out. I might admit that I don't have enough flair for that esoteric side you tell me. But I see that those who are on the same page as me react no differently.

On the very occasion of the 1^a ed. of that book Guénon reproached me for.
"having been too lenient with Steiner..."⁵⁸.

I think a move to Rome is being studied. Then it will be possible to resume some contact.

Sincerely

Yours
J. Evola

I heard about a wretch, named Palamidessi, who has scampering around in the field of tantrism, with goods from 4^a hand⁵⁹. If any friend had it, I would gladly see (returning it immediately) the second volume devoted to sexual magic (in the leaflet it is said to be a "unique book in the world" and "of unheard-of realism"...).

[XIV]

Bologna, 10.II.49

Dear Scaliger,

I got your letter and I am responding regarding the invitation to collaborate on *The Challenge* in its new development.

Through the issues of this magazine I have already received and those of *Architrav* and⁽⁶⁰⁾—I think I have managed to form an approximate concept of the scope of this current. I told you that I have found almost all the writings to be well-tuned - but essentially for what they *deny*, to put up a united front against all the current parties and oppose both the "message" of the East and that of the West. There is undoubtedly courage there - but not enough to stand up for lost positions without hope or illusions, affirming only what needs to be affirmed.

When it comes to political ideology, it is then evident that one lingers in the dangerous myth of "revolution" (instead of pure reaction) and refers to the "social" fascism of the Verona constitution, not hesitating, among other things, to elevate the "republican" fait accompli to principle and value. Now you know that I wanted nothing to do with fascism precisely at the announcement of such a revolution.

Thus, a side-by-side with an MSI could only rest on a misunderstanding. The principle is that, *precisely* today, rather than shortening the distance and going to meet

to "history," one must *exasperate them*, affirming values in their absolute state not hoping for an effect for the sole purpose of protecting their purity.

Possible action in that group in that sense does not seem to me conceivable - it would contradict party action itself. I would add that your articles have not persuaded me: it is evident that you are trying to smuggle in spiritualist views (and even anthroposophy, named only as "spiritual science") into a plane, where all this can only be vague and abstract; *in primis et ante omnia* here would impose instead the preliminary proof, which is precisely the courage to stand for pure "reaction." Then would come talk of certain gifts of straightness; then of the traditional conception of life; only last, and only for some, glimpses into the world of metaphysical reality.

For my own part, I now tend to keep myself "outside," acting only with books. Restarting the "as if" of my journalistic activity in the fascist period - *Diorama* included - is something that now organically repels me⁶¹.

I say, however, that if you send me the paper, I will follow it with interest. I had written to De Boccard, who seemed to me one of the best and most learned (and courageous elements in the Kappler case)⁽⁶²⁾. Having addressed my letter to *Architrave*, however, it must not have reached him.

Nothing new here. I will see about getting a transfer. Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

Graziani came to see me - quite unexpected visit^{a(63)}.

[XV]

Bologna 8.IV.1949

Dear Scaliger,
Thank you for your
letter.

The two books you had (and about which I agree that the *Yoga* edition is very bad) will be followed by two more, *Mothers and Olympian Manhood*, which is Bachofen's choice of passages, and then *Mask and Face of Contemporary Spiritualism* in the new edition at Laterza -- that, in two weeks. These last two books I also have them sent to De Boccard, who seems to me an open-minded element.

I have been regularly receiving here *The Challenge* in its new edition, and as the occasion arises, please thank those in the management for sending it. If you would like, I could communicate two or three addresses of people in Central Europe, who would be very happy to hear about an initiative.

As for the third page, I have already expressed the little desirability of mixing too many views of a properly spiritual character in an order, where requirements of elementary rectification, not requiring special esoteric presuppositions, should essentially apply. For the paper as a whole, I cannot but adhere to what refers to the polemical element of overall "no." If, in the first moment, there had been someone else capable of giving fair and uncompromising directives for the positive side, something interesting might have come out of the whole current--I mean of the whole MSI.

In any , if indirectly I can make a contribution to that paper, and if it is desired, I have no objection, provided that in the proposed form of pseudonymous signature, but not necessarily on the special page. For that purpose, one could bring up "Arthos" from *Vita Italiana* and, if it is thought useful, mentioning precisely "the one whose contribution to various campaigns of *Vita Italiana* will perhaps be remembered."

(There is, moreover, a special reason to support the journal, and that is the space it gives to the theme of *fish*: seven to nine of them can be admired in each issue, in *Periscope*.)⁶⁴

It occurs to me that I have not answered a request for information. So, the Greek text of the *Mithraic Ritual* can be found in its German edition: Dietrich (or Dieterich - see well in *Ur*), *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, can be found at Vittorio Emanuel ^{e(65)}. For the short Latin text of the *Tabula Smaragdina*, it will certainly be found in Manget's *Theatrum Chemicum*, found in that same library.

What address do Luchini and Del Massa have?⁶⁶

Here, nothing new. Perhaps, for Rome, if not a permanent relocation, a jump will be arranged there, in order to arrange various things, not excluding the ouster of that person *brevi manu* from my home, given the lack of anyone who can definitely organize it to that outcome.

Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

Bologna, 19.IV.1949

Dear Scaliger,

I join you two writings for *La Sfida*^{a(67)}. The one on Austria, because of its character, could go in the purely political pages, the first or second. The other, for the third and not necessarily on the special page. Having time, I can send with some regularity, provided writings of the kind are desired. As for the identity of "Arthos," it can be told to those who know themselves incapable of abusing it, such as Luchini, del Massa and De Boccard. The latter must have received a letter from me in which I told him of my judgment of the movement.

About the addresses mentioned, they are not from central Italy but from central Europe and I could recommend:

Prof. Walter Heinrich Wien (IV) Rechte Wienzeile 19 (Austria)

Prof. Werner Hoppenstedt (24a) Luenenburg Frommestrasse 6 Germany
(Englische Zone)

Prof. J. von Leers - Bad Godesberg - Mehlem am Rhein Meinzergrasse 45
Germany (U.S.-Zone)

For collaboration you might try the "wild initiate" Guido de Giorgio, whose current address is Santuario di Vicoforte (Cuneo)⁽⁶⁸⁾.

Once Antonelli's mother came to Capri, the latter begged me to give her an impression according to a devilish figurine in order to scandalize her good middle-class Milanese intellectual mentality.

This was done, and the sentences in that letter relate back to that. For those who know me, there should not have been, in the matter, "perplexity," not even for a moment-what do you think a bomb would ever do? However, since one cannot see where a joke could lead, if you have that letter in your hands, take it out of circulation.

Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

[XVII]

Bologna, 14.V.1949

Dear Scaliger,

I got your letter - indeed, I no longer received *The Challenge*; it is a pity, if the paper should cease permanently. My two writings, possibly, if desired you can pass them on to some other paper of the same movement; as I mentioned, I have enough free time now and, still as "Arthos" and without a fee, I could put down various little things, from time to time, for the purpose of guidance.

As for what you tell me, I do not see that it has direct connection with the specific subject matter of that book, nor is it such that it does not impose reservations. "Magical imagination," being a mere tool of action, has nothing to do with "imaginative knowledge." Concerning the latter, it is an equivocal concept, the steinerian origin of which is obvious. Imagination can never give knowledge (in the initiatory sense), because knowledge has no "form" and is grasped as an immaterial "sense" when even the support of form, whatever it may be, is abolished (which in Hindu as well as Neoplatonic doctrine is expressed in unequivocal terms). The alleged "imaginative knowledge" is but that which opens the door to the world of visionarism-and the example of the one who defended it, precisely Steiner, in this regard should be more than evident. It is a world for which, even at best, the serious reservations that affect the very phenomenology associated ceremonial magic apply.

Nor is what you say, based on data of equal origin, about the relations between that alleged form of knowledge and the nervous system, accurate. Imagination in general, far from being detached from the world of nerves, depends on it to a greater extent even than does abstract logical consciousness; only unlike the latter, it rests not on the brain system, but on the spinal and sympathetic degree; both in the physiopsychology of dreaming and in investigations about schizophrenia and somnambulism, this is a commonplace-when the brain is inhibited and consciousness relies on those lower nervous systems the world of "free" imagining opens up. For that matter, I, as a "guinea pig," could even give you experimental counter-evidence to this fact: since something has happened in the spinal cord, the organ of imagination has been impaired, while all the intellectual faculties are fine.

I find it as unsympathetic as ever to make judgments, as well as I cannot help discovering again and again, directly or indirectly, in what you think, a well-known "influence" from which it would be good, one fine day, to free oneself...

Here, nothing new.

Cordially believe me

Yours

J. Evola

[XVIII]

Bologna, 27.V.1949

Dear Scaliger,

I got your two letters and thank you for your cordial solicitude.

Things, however, are in a somewhat different way than you think. What Ms. Bau may have said proceeds from the fact that she will have had for criterion what is peculiar to Central Europe, and that it has no match-even in the field of health care-for the untidy, sloppy, unkempt style of things in Italy. But up there, as a negative counterpart, there is in the clinics an unbearable system of order that borders on the barracks. Where I am, to tell the truth, I cannot complain, because in contrast to the various disadvantages there is the fact, for me fundamental, of full freedom, of no compulsory timetable, of having a room almost only for myself, of having a regime of preference both for my former status as an officer (this counts as a military hospital) and for personal reasons, a regime that would be difficult to have in a civilian hospital clinic as an ordinary patient: this, beginning with the food, which by certain testimony, if it is mediocre here, in civilian hospitals is completely absurd.

The main negative counterpart here is the lack of specific neurological care (this is essentially an orthopedic center, and as such has nothing to do with my case - hence, of past, nothing to do with the neurological clinic in Rome). I did, however, have the professor of neurology at the University here, who made a very good impression on me, performed a conscientious examination and gave his opinion. He recommended two cures that can be done where I am (one already has been, without result); after , there would be nothing but operations, which he himself very little recommends. - So just by conscience scruples one can still make an attempt in a neurological clinic, either in Milan or Rome. Now, in this regard - for Rome - steps have already been taken and an admission to the neurological clinic of the University is possible: however (and this is a condition that applies elsewhere as well) for a short time, for the time of the attempts, if others come up. Thus the thing cannot be thought of without also addressing the problem of "afterwards" and without avoiding that I, precisely, later be forced into an even worse arrangement than here. As for the Red Cross, it will do what it can, and numerous are the

people who are my friends, besides Orzi, who can directly move the President, Zanotti Bianco, these being indebted to them⁶⁹. One, on his own initiative, has precisely had the clinical position requested here - but all is useless, before he finds himself where he can stay having that freedom and "detachment" which are essentially necessary for me to lead a possible internal life.

Therefore, I do not consider it appropriate to think, for the time being, of a transfer. Rather, an accommodation, such as the one you mentioned in your first letter, in Italy or elsewhere, referring to Bau, would be the central problem, making no illusions about what can still be obtained from either specialist. Finding *the ad hoc* person is not easy, however, in this moonlight. I cannot send an SOS to those who know me but whom I do not: and among those I know I cannot see who could conceive of an "interest" to such a degree. For that matter, one would have to think well who could use, in reciprocation, all that I, in various fields, can still do. - As for the mention of Rome as an "environment of friends," this is essentially theory. Rome was, even when I was physically all right, a desert for me -- to the point of having to appear, sometimes, to kill time, in Nicolai's "salon" or having solely a Flesch to pick up a few more cheerful relations. The experience of Vienna, where though I had quite another order of knowledge, which except for one or two cases they discarded, is enough for me.

For the rest, as I mentioned to you, as an immediate thing there is the plan to hop over to Rome for a few days, if the return here is safe: in which case, in addition to solving the ridiculous matter of the house, we can talk.

For the reprinting of *Ur*, already a publisher is, in principle, committed. But, for the time being, with the books of mine that have come out and to keep *Revolt* appearing as soon as possible, one has to wait. Another reason is that for the new edition essays by Guénon had been aggregated, which would have served perfectly well as a supplement, but which he has in the meantime (during the war, with communications between us suspended) used in his new books. So one has to find surrogates for them, and rework them again (or have them reworked). In this regard, if you or your friends can think of topics within that scope that you would like to be dealt with or clarified, point them out to me, so that I or the other contributors of that time with whom I am still in contact may consider them in new writings.

Regarding the doctrinal question hinted at in your first letter, first of all I would say not to insist too much about relations between faculties and body systems, since this matter is very problematic: the ancient traditions, which, for me alone, have authority, do not have anatomo-physiological language apt to provide such bases as a modern person may desire. About the mention concerning me, I must have misspoke, because I was alluding to an injury *above* of the faculty

visualizing, supervened in correlation with the spinal cord (injury) affair; what is a certain a posteriori confirmation of a conditionality between the former and one of the nervous systems. That "imaginative knowledge" is entirely free of it, I doubt. In any case, what I think is right in this regard, I have already told you. It is a nonsense to say that "intellectual intuition" as, prior to Guénon, the best Western contemplative initiatory tradition understood it, has as its higher degree a knowing which, to be "imaginative," will always be linked to "form," thus only imperfectly "in act." especially then when, speaking of the "third degree of supersensible knowledge," you go basically to admit precisely the same thing, but with the *détour* of the world of visionarism and of experiences, after all, devoid of interest, in which, in 99% of cases, one stops: of which, I repeat, Steiner himself represents the most eloquent case. As for, precisely, Steiner, you must unfortunately take note that I regard the case as exhausted and unrevisable--in the terms set forth in *Mask and Face*--and that, far from being able to regard Steiner as a source and doctrine in any case usable in the same way as a traditional teaching, I am inclined to feel a dark and contaminating influence wherever ideas or positions are affected by his specific influence.

Thank you again and best regards

Yours
J. Evola

[XIX]

Bologna, 8.VIII.1949

Dear Scaliger,

I got your letter. As far as a possible French translation of my book on race is concerned, I doubt that it is a thing [*sic*] that was started by a young Frenchman, from a socialist grouping who, with two lines from De Boccard, also came here to see me. But if that's what 's about, it's an indeterminate project that for now has no basis, that group having for now no possibilities at publishers. In any , I wouldn't have any difficulties in principle, only that I would much prefer that we start at the beginning, so as not to give rise to the idea that I am a specialist in racism, where this is for me but a fairly contingent derivation of a much more general traditional conception. The principle would be *Revolt against the*

modern world and when this was known beforehand, the mentioned misunderstanding could not arise. See, in any case, how precisely things are; in the case, one would have to rely on the German edition, which I may be able to get, where several modifications and additions had been made^{e(70)}.

Things here have no change, except for the contingent ones due to a certain prostration, caused by the summer weather to which I had not been accustomed for many years. I think that, if ever, from a personal meeting with Colazza might come a chance to examine some aspect of the matter in a different light.

Pistonⁱ⁽⁷¹⁾, who came to see me, did not really intend to convert me to Christianity, but to ask me if I could contribute to an esoteric interpretation of it, which seems to be his current fixation, so in this same sense he also addressed Guénon and Schuon. That the thing is meaningless (if anything, he could have turned to you, since it seems that you still flirt with Steiner, who is the representative of a similar thesis) and that for him-just as you say-the silence of interpreting, in writing and framing, would be the principle for getting serious, I told him plainly, indeed, as he remarked, but cordially, "a little roughly."

Pistoni then propitiated my meeting with a curious fellow-Clement Rebora, formerly a poet in Papini's group, *La Voce*, now become a priest and very much inflamed in a sacramental-based mysticism. Later, Rebora, out of a good disposition, offered me a trip to Lourdes. I could only tell him that the thing offered me no interest^{e(72)}.

Pistoni himself served me to make a kind of warning to the Tantric master Palamidessi, who becomes an even dangerous individual: in his books he takes at face value, without even taking the trouble to paraphrase, from my books and from *Ur*, as well as from a number of other authors. And the whole thing having a manifest speculative purpose and only being able to follow more confusion and discredit, it seemed good to pull the reins a bit.

The Challenge seems to have died out for good, with that schism quarrel. The editor of *Meridiano* wrote to me very kindly for a collaboration: but the paper is completely political, it lacks any group that deals with somewhat higher issues and - I replied - before that happens, I think that my isolated collaboration and, for that matter, of decidedly reactionary intonation, would be of little use.

A young man from Trieste, Armando Stefanⁱ⁽⁷³⁾, who seems to me to be okay both politically and in initiatory inclinations, will probably come to see you on my recommendation. Perhaps you can put him in touch with people in either camp whom he would like to meet. In this regard, I have a favor to ask of you: if Stefani has not yet come to you, or if you have any way

to find him again, tell him that if he is certain that when he returns he will visit me again, I would like to beg him to bring me a bottle that I have at home, and for which, in case he does, I will join you two words for my mother.

That's it. I am now working on a final revision of *Ur's* material. Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

[XX]

Bologna, October 8, 1949

Dear Scaliger,

As you see, I aim to write with some continuity in *Rivolt*^{a(74)} and in *Meridian*⁷⁵. For what you hint to me in your last one, those in *Meridian* have given no sign of being *froissés* about simultaneity in the other journal, and generally, under the present conditions, it seems to me to be quite a luxury to afford rivalries in the family. For that matter, it seems to me that *Meridiano* stands a wee bit higher as a level (there is an excellent element there, the Berenzi); but, all things considered, *La Sfida*, despite its more modest cadres, presented a few more possibilities than either. They are related with more than one tuneful element that could result in a fairly homogeneous group; the problem is of where, eventually, they might find "space."

As you see, the plan of jumping to Rome has not yet been realized. In fact, in this regard, I would like to ask you if you are still in relation with Pellisser^{o(76)}. For now, the obstacle concerns the means of travel, because, since it is not an outward and immediate return trip, the CRI would have to mobilize an autolettiga for four routes, two of which would be empty; so the file seems to have gone to the Ministry of Communications. But possibly this could be arranged privately, and Pistoni indicated to me that Pellissero, at least previously, often made the Rome-Milan car trip, then via Bologna. This could be seen to be the case; only, in a private car, I would need some space, to be at least semi-retired, sitting down not being able to stay for long without strong reactions. If there is a possibility, one can think of such a thing before the season, as a climate, becomes unpropitious.

Pistoni also intends to recommend me to an Aureli lawyer, whom he says you also know, in case, since I am unable to intervene by the shortest means, we proceed legally to vacate the apartment in Rome.

Also, there is this pleasure, which I would like to ask you. Once you happen to pass by there or you have time, could you go to the Society of Authors? She is staying in Prati, in a new building on the corner of Via Valadier. It had already at one time been interested in translations of my books abroad. Then things came to a halt. I wrote without getting an answer. It would be a matter of asking whether it is willing to mediate such placements, me being able to give directions; if so, to whom precisely should I write. The Society is, properly, both of the Authors and the Publishers. The initiative could therefore appear, possibly, on the part of the publisher (Bocca or Laterza), if the fact that I am not inscribed in that society is prejudicial.

In a previous one of yours you wrote to me about Steiner exercises passed for the new edition of *Ur*. At the time, I could not remember anything like that. I recently got from Vienna the collected material for Volume III, and I think those practical addresses, where a drawing of a man arranged in a pentagram also appears, are what you allude to. I will therefore review things. You know very well that in regard to Steiner we do not agree at all. And in *Ur*'s revision I have also taken care to remove anything that has even an indirect reference to Steiner, that is, to things that refer only to him and of which he was not the mere transmitter from another source. That is why I said that I will have to review what this is about in the specific case; in any , I should know whether these are addresses that are found in printed form in the common domain, in Italian or German.

I saw this morning your article on Rome in *Revol't*. The general requirement is of course right; however, the important thing is to move to the concrete with pointing out what precise elements, especially as elements of "style," can be enforced by the Roman tradition today.

Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

[XXI]

Bologna, October 16, 1949

Dear Scaliger,

I got your letter and thank you for your concern.

As far as the trip to Rome is concerned, it would be a matter of seeing how things stand with Pellissero. The fact is that it is not a question of just coming to Rome, but also of the certainty of being brought back here after a short time, about a ten-day period. Whether this is within Pellissero's possibilities is what would need to be well ascertained. Then there is the "climate" factor, both for the trip and for the stay in Rome, where my house is not properly equipped: the thing, in this regard, should be organized by November, no later. And, finally, in the case, one would need to know in some advance and with certainty the dates, because I have to promptly arrange things at home and set up meetings with people who would specially come to Rome from afar.

On all this, I wrote at the same time as to you [*sic*]-to Pellissero at his address in Turin, which Pistoni forwarded to me. However, I thought it advisable to report it to you as well, in case P. is still in Rome, and, in any way, to keep track of things, if appropriate, and warn me.

That famous intruder in my dwelling is finally gone. One of the purposes of my trip thus fails, Aureli has made himself superfluous; yet various other things would still be to be settled, in Rome, and contacts to be resumed.

The Authors' Society wrote to me, I don't know whether responding directly to my letters already sent, or whether -- probably -- because of your intervention. In the case, thank you for that as well.

In this week's issue of *Revolt*, my second article ⁹⁽⁷⁷⁾ should come out; as occasion arises, please pray that both it and the previous one be sent to me, if possible, a couple of copies -- say three copies.

For now, nothing
else. Cordially

Yours
J. Evola

[XXII]

Bologna, August 15, 1950

Dear Scaliger,

Some time has already elapsed since our meeting again in Rome; there is no particular news, except that, not very pleasant, that it is now decided for November the dissolution of the center in which I am, and it remains very problematic that an equivalent one can be found, as to a sufficient basis of private comfort. The matter of the pension, which would condition a return Corso Vittorio, also remains problematic^{a(78)}. So we shall see, for the period ahead, as clouds gather on the international horizon.

Otherwise, you may have seen my articles here and there, and also how I agreed to support the *Imperium* group with my cooperation, hoping that it could properly organize itselfⁱ⁽⁷⁹⁾. I have been in contact especially with Rauti. I told him what I already pointed out to you at the time of the *Challenge*, namely, that articles, such as the ones you published, seem to me out of place and, in the end, counterproductive, in a paper in which upper limit must be, at most, ethics and the general worldview. This, without going into the theses, which, as far as they manage to be intelligible, are highly questionable*. It would be to be hoped that you would meet someone with sufficient authority to tell you that you are off the mark. I, in this regard, tend to stay completely off.

As for the *Imperium* group, apart from the magazine, it seems that it makes sure to create enemies and tensions with "official" elements of the MSI more than is necessary. The desirability of a more tactical proceeding has been pointed out and has also been acknowledged, but from the reports, which unfortunately can only be indirect, it does not seem that too much account has been taken of it.

I had the first issue of that Tucci magazine in English, where my article (totally butchered in an impossible translation^{j(80)}) actually came out. It is afresh a pity that those who have means should squander them. There are but insignificant things in it: despite the intentions expressed in Tucci's editorial. I wanted to write him a few words to say that several developments could and should take place in an initiative intended to establish really interesting exchanges between East and West. I also mentioned that I could possibly deal with the relations between certain "existentialist" positions and the Hindu doctrine of *svâdharma*. But, after all, it is sloppy stuff. And I still do not know of any journal where serⁱ⁽⁸¹⁾-subjects can be properly dealt with by us.

One had to unexpectedly fight for *Revolt Against the Modern World* because Bocca's manager, back in Italy, had distress complexes and wanted to postpone, despite the fact that one is already a year behind the contract deadline. This seems to be resolved and any minute now I think I will have the drafts.

As for everything else, nothing new. With cordial greetings also for mutual friends

Yours
J. Evola

* In case you might be interested, here is Guénon's impression: "*J'ai été stupéfait d'y voir [in Imperium] un article de Massimo Scaligero qui témoigne, à l'égard de mon œuvre, d'une incompréhension complète à laquelle je ne me serais pas attendu de sa part; ce n'est vraiment pas très encourageant...*" (the underlining is mine)ⁱ⁽⁸⁾².

[XXIII]

Bologna, 2.XI.1950

Dear Scaliger,

There was a meeting of minds: I received yours when I proposed to write to you.

Sassa [*sic!*] had already told me of his intention to approach you for that pamphlet, he not knowing about things of typography. I thank you for the trouble you were willing to takeⁱ⁽⁸³⁾.

Still about the pamphlet, I am expressed concern that there is a lack of organization in the Rome group to be able to adequately disseminate it, this defect having already been felt in regard to *Imperium*, which in other cities is very difficult to find.

Then again, I do not know what has become of this magazine, which has already been out print for a couple of months, while Rauti assured me he had a secure grant base for at least a year. Rauti, too, has given no further sign of life here. I hear various rumors about group intrigues, rivalries and the like - all luxuries that one should not afford at all these days.

As for a curious "syncopated" style in reports, there is another case, and indeed for it I would really like to address you. It concerns the publishing house L'Arnia of Marquis Costantino Patrizi. To it had been pointed out the possibility of using my work. At first he wrote de Boccard, who soon afterwards ceased to give signs of life, according to a manner of his which is repeated and which seems to me very singular, of rigor, having to feel in some respect obliged to me. Having let de Boccard go, eventually Patrizi himself wrote to me, to tell me that my proposal to translate from English the book of Varange *Imperium* had been, in principle, accepted⁻⁸⁴, and that we also reserved the right to examine the possibility of publishing a book of mine (development, more or

less, of *Orientations*), *Men and Ruins*. After that, again complete silence, despite the fact that I have already twice urged, to define things. Incidentally, based on that assurance in principle, I have already begun the translation of that English book, having now, to that, time available. Since everything has remained as it is, would it not be possible for you to telephone, or approach Patrizi, to that we wake up, give a sign of life following at least commercial correctness, and respond to mine, in which you asked to define things?

Someone told me that there is an element in that publishing house who, who knows why, tries to "mount" against me, and this would be Tedeschi, the author of the book on fascists after Mussolini⁽⁸⁵⁾. But it may be one of the many rumors one hears about one or the other.

Otherwise, I also thank you for the new step taken at Tucci. But I have to think what can come it, in order to the theme you propose, and on which there would be only to repeat what Guénon wrote in *Orient et Occident*⁽⁸⁶⁾. I would be for the particular theme already alluded to by Tucci himself, namely the correspondences of the Hindu theory of *svâdharma* with various existentialist demands, as a sign of one of the convergences between East and West that are significant, and, where a real contact existed, could lead to an integration of the thought of the latter through the former, but I fear that, like the one already published on Tantrism, such an article would be wasted, given the level of the journal: it would be justified only with a view to remuneration, which for me, despite everything, can never be the decisive thing. As for raising the level of the journal-as you say-it would require Tucci to make up his mind to take the direction I have already mentioned, choosing appropriate contributors, especially foreign ones. With an article of yours or mine, if not, things would not really know how to turn out to be changed.

I go back to recognizing and valuing the good intention attached to your prodding on therapeutic addresses. I would say, however, that you should defer to those who, even in that domain, are not exactly first-timers, such as myself, when, after proper examination, they tell you: nothing to be done while the chips are down, and when they point you in the only direction along which action beyond the ordinary ways, whether physical or psychic, might take place. For what you come back to hint at I have only to say, "old stuff"-the hint in my book is about acting-without-acting, commanding movement through imagery, which is the soul of the procedure, though punctuated in two times, of which you have been told.

As I have already mentioned, at the end of the month this center closes. In connection with that it is almost certain that you will return to Rome. This is both because it is difficult to find another institution with the same amenities and freedom, and, more importantly, because you need to try the adventure. Having no intention at all of spending the

time I have left to live in an institution or semi-hospice, there is only to see how and on what I can arrange myself in Rome, before my mother passes on to other vit-a⁽⁸⁷⁾, and yet I have no basis whatsoever for living in the apartment. Appeal will have to be made to all the people who testify to my devotion to see about grouping possible resources with articles, translations and lectures. But even more important will be to find a suitable person who gradually begin to replace my mother entirely and with whom I can live when I am alone. We shall see.

If not, nothing else new. For *Rivolta*, an exasperating delay, due, however, not to the publisher, but to the printer, who, since August had the ms., still does not decide to make drafts of any sort appear.

Again, thank you for everything and warm greetings from

J. Evola

The address of L'Arnia is 54 Magenta Street.

[XXIV]

Bologna, 16.XI.1950

Dear Scaliger,

I got your letter and, first, thank you for the step you took at Patrizi's: we will see what comes it, and if so, I too will take a step at least to see if it makes sense that he still occupies too much time on the translation of the book he had written to accept, and now seems to be in question again. and again, and even where one should least expect it, one encounters a style of elusiveness, of irresponsibility, of non-drafting.

There is another case, and I do not know if I abuse your courtesy if I ask you possibly to put an end to it, one day you come to pass near Via 4 Fontane, which is a central place. To that, I enclose the assignment sheet. The telephone number of the administration is 42460. Having the money, in check or whatever, you can keep it with you for now. If you happen to meet Pennisi, who is the editor of that paper, let him understand in due manner how his demeanor surprises me^{e(88)}. For the sheer idea (a couple of articles at 2,000 apiece is hardly a subsidy!) I do what I can for the monarchist cause, and you know very well how even within the MSI I insist on it, and a slightest sign of an appreciation of it does not give it, it is of an improbable sloppiness, to have one of his

letter is an event-as if he then had who knows what signatures at his disposal, for the side he militates with, and which probably knows little about his tortuous conduct...

As for the mention of the person who would be a good fit for my residence, it will have to be seen in person. It is out of the question, if the interested party is away, to have her come like that, committing myself as that is in advance. It will come into question someone who is already in Rome and whom I personally can probe, to this being able to have some time, because at first we will go ahead on the basis of some common servicewoman or half-servicewoman. Besides, your mention of a "Spartan type" is not really a recommendation: that is the last thing that is pleasing (to me) in a woman.

As for Tucci, he actually wrote to me in the sense that you had foretold, the article I have already drafted and sent and it is certain to be in his hands by now. It could only be something generic.

As for here, a new communication has come about the impending closure deadline, which would be end of the month. Staff and patients want to make "revolution," refusing to leave the hospital. But I doubt, however, that no matter how fashionable these means are, a positive result can be achieved. Without that, I will therefore reappear toward the end of the month in Rome.

Again, thank you for everything, sorry for the hassle, and have me, very cordially

Yours
J. Evola

[XXV]

Bologna, 29.III.1952

Dear Scaliger,

I am still in Bologna, indeed my stay here will continue for a little longer, having to define something that has no small importance for me. The address is as written below, in a way, that of last year.

Things in progress, there are, if not, few. I don't know if Tonelli⁽⁸⁹⁾ has published either of the two articles of mine that he has; I haven't had the mail go on here, not even the papers, so I have no way of checking. If ever, and if you believe, remind him. For the article for Tucci, as I already mentioned to you, it will be discussed at my

return, not having with me the materials to compile it. Given the slow pace of *East and West*, this will certainly not make much of a difference.

I have read Aurobindo's commentary on the *Iṣa-upanishad*; it is not too clear and, on the whole, a mixture of Vedānta and Tantra. There are no discombobulations, but I don't really see your interest in my reading it; of such things, the supply I have made is already extensive, I would say exhaustive, and already an *Iṣa-upanishad* with Tantric commentary was part of the material used for my well-known ^{o(90)} book.

As I mentioned, there is a friend here who has *Autobiography of a Yogi*; I had him bring it to me and read it. I believe you pointed the book out to me as a pleasant pastime. It is a veritable sum of nonsense, and since I have wasted my time reading it, I have taken reason for an article-bashing to come out in *Roma* ^{a(91)}.

Well, if there is anything to report, write me two lines, which will be appreciated. Meanwhile, very cordially, believe me.

yours
J. Evola

New Pension, Via del Porto

[XXVI]

Bologna, 17.X.1952

Dear Scaliger,

It has already been some time since I have given a sign of life. After the period of escaping the torrid season, a return to Rome should have been on the agenda.

Instead, as you can see, I am in Bologna, and already for several weeks, somewhat like in a stuck being. In fact the last few experiences in Rome, and especially at home, have certainly been negative. And without a realization of several conditions staying with me instead of in a hotel or guesthouse presents little sense. Absolutely necessary would be someone who, in addition to helping me with what my business demands of me but of which I am physically impeded-books, contacts, etc. - would also exercise a kind of superintendence over the things of the house and be in way at my side, on my mother not being able and not wishing to rely. But in this regard, one is still on the high seas.

On the other hand, even the best in Rome seem far more interested in more tangible and practical things to have time and real desire for contacts of other kinds. Not least this concerns our young friends themselves; but not they alone. Possibilities of properly extending the circle of my acquaintances, because of my *handicap*, I have none. Thus the thought of returning to Rome arouses a kind of impatience in me, although not a little annoyance succeeds in being so, with prospects as indeterminate as ever.

Otherwise, you may know that my *The Men and the Ruins* is being composed in Rome. It will be interesting to see if another process ~~or⁽⁹²⁾~~ - which would result in another diversion - comes out of it. But as a contribution of clarification and insight those pages of mine should not be without significance.

About that book I would still like to write, contacts with Colazza would be helpful; hopefully the return will give me the chance. For now, collection of various materials, but again, hampered by not being able to do library work, to say nothing of more complex and difficult research ^{i⁽⁹³⁾}.

If not, very little of relevance to report. Did that issue of *East and West* then come out that was supposed to contain that essay and review of my book ^{?⁽⁹⁴⁾}

This makes me think by association of Eliade, whose translation of the book on shamanism I managed to get accepted, not without interest at least from the documentary side ⁹⁵.

If you let me know about you, I will be
glad. In the meantime very cordially

Yours
J. Evola

Pension Nuova Via
del Porto Bologna

[XXVII¹⁽⁹⁶⁾

Bologna, 25.IV.1953

Dear Scaliger,

The last one of yours that I received was the one in which you gave me the distressing announcement of the passing of Colazz^{a(97)}: something that even apart from the human side, given the value and loftiness that even in that respect our friend had, cannot help but leave one unpleasantly perplexed, in an environment where similar stature is not easy to find...

I think you will have long since received my new libr^{a(98)}. Should I intend to write about it, there is to be kept in mind the plane in which I intended to limit my considerations and their "direction of effectiveness": independent of anything purely transcendent.

Various reasons have again and again made me postpone my return to Rome, which, after all, has an "experimental" character: because without a home and a suitable environment, it is not possible for me to live in my little apartment. The latest impediment was a ceiling collapse in my studio, with various damages and repairs that had to be done little by little. But you may have heard about that.

But by now I have to make up my mind for the return, which will be within the first decade of May, and that is why I would like to ask you if you would be of help. It is that every arrival of mine, like every departure of mine, has to be "arranged" with an ambulance transport, recognition at the station, etc. With my brother, who already had to deal with it, due to supervening circumstances, I prefer not to have relations. Lately Cavallucci had been interested in it, and so had Rauti. Except that for that period Cavallucci - as he tells me - will probably be called toward the south, and on the young people of *Imperium*, all caught up in pre-election nomadism, I don't know if it can be counted on with certainty. Could you see about taking care of that?

As far as I am concerned, this is not complex, and will be liquidated in three quarters of an hour. It is a matter of notifying the Red Cross the day before, by telephone, on the number of the "Ambulance Service," making an appointment for a few minutes before arrival at the entrance to Termini Station, and warning that is a "stretchered" *. There you will find yourself: it is a matter of "spotting me," finding myself in a first-class compartment in the very first cars after the locomotive. Unless otherwise advised, I will come with the direttissimo from Bologna arriving at 4:11 p.m.

In addition, there would be this; it is possible, but not certain, that an acquaintance of mine, who was to travel to Rome for a few days, would take advantage of the opportunity, because I am entitled to a free trip for accompanying person. In that case it would be a matter of fixing a place in a boarding house in the area near Argentina, Piazza Venezia, where the person in question, who does not know Rome at all, has to stay. Cavallucci had already identified such a guesthouse: it may be the

"Eletta" guesthouse, Piazza del Gesù 43, tel. 65969, or the "Impero" guesthouse, Via Torre Argentina 18, or "Urbis Romae," Piazza S. Pantaleo 3, tel. 50377. This would be full board for a few days.

So, *as soon as* you receive this, you should write me two lines, telling me whether you are given to help me with all this, so that I can adjust. If so, as soon as it is definitely fixed, I will send you a telegram: if it will say, "I will arrive on such and such a day," there is only to think of me; if it will say instead, "*We will arrive* on such and such a day"**, there is also to book the boarding house immediately, which I think can also be done by telephone, without my having to waste time. Agreed? And if the arrival time is different, I will let you know: if not, it remains the one indicated, 4:11 p.m. .

I hope that at your place all things go in order, in the pace that times allow. And in Rome we will see what can be done....

Very cordially,

Yours
J. Evola

* Expenses borne by the
interested party.

** If by chance there was nothing available in all those guesthouses, a simple room could be booked e.g. at the Albergo Cesari, if I remember correctly. Via di Pietra. Name: Miss Gubellinⁱ⁽⁹⁹⁾.

Receiving my telegram, however, he telephones Cavallucci: and if he is in Rome on that day, he passes everything to him pointing it out.

[XXVIII]ⁱ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

Bologna, 26.IX.1953

Dear Scaliger,

I had at the time a postcard from you, with other signatures as well, from S. Remo. Now I believe you have returned to Rome while I only on 20 corr. from that place in the Apennines, where the climate was almost winter, moved to Bologn^{a(101)}.

But this year I have no particular reason to particularly prolong my stay here while it is necessary to see about addressing the Roman question once again.

It is not without relation to this that I take the opportunity to write to you. I would ask you if you would possibly have the time and inclination to arrange, in the terms I already announced to you once, my "reception" at the station, inquiring as to whether

it seems that Cavallucci, usually used for the thing, is presently not in Rome. The figures are these: I would arrive by direttissimo leaving Bologna at 12.53 and arriving in Rome at 18.02 (Termini), first class car which, being reserved seats, is usually immediately after the locomotive. The day before, you would have to phone the Red Cross, at the number, well in evidence, of "transports" by autolettiga, order one for the next day indicating that it is a "stretcher", to be taken specially at the time of arrival at the "10" entrance of Via Marsala of the station and joining the nurses to pick me up at the carriage.

I remind you that Tuesday is a day when you are busy. If for one of the other days you could possibly take care of it, which altogether takes about an hour, on receiving this send me a postcard at once so that I can adjust. I would then indicate to you telegraphically the day of arrival, the day only, the other details having already been indicated. The thing could be next Friday; but a circumstance might intervene for a postponement to early next week.

Receiving no response, I will assume that you are not in Rome either and will provide otherwise.

Meanwhile, with many cordial greetings,

Yours
J. Evola

Letters to Walter Heinrich (1948-1958)

[I]

Bad Ischl, 18.IV.48

Dear Exalted
Friend!

I inform you that with the publisher Amandus everything ended in a deadlock. Countess Thurn ¹ must have relied on rumors not at all serious. First it was said ed. A. would accept the book immediately if things did not go with Switzerland. Now they say the publisher "would be enormously interested in the book (!!), but cannot make any commitments for publication." I would be tempted to comment: typically Viennese! The countess, meanwhile, has left for foreign countries. On her return she will try again. In the meantime, the two books *Spiritualism* and *Grail* thus remain available.

It would also be desirable for you to beg Dr. Kaufmann to stop by. The trip from Linz to Ischl costs thirty-seven shillings. Could a hundred be enough for travel expenses? The doctors here are not opposed to the visit (after all, only treatments recommended by outside doctors have been performed for months). I consider Dr. K.'s visit useful, as the Novocaine treatment he recommended has so far been the only one to have any effect, and perhaps he can recommend a suitable treatment to continue ^{e(2)}. Let him know that I have indicated the two drugs, Curaro and Novocaine, as recommended from abroad, and it will be appropriate to talk more personally *with me* rather than with doctors. Also, it would be desirable for Dr. K. to communicate only on the day of the visit, and it would be just as desirable for him to

visit would take place as soon as possible: my intention is to undertake any attempt before my departure from quⁱ⁽³⁾. -

I had a chance to read one of Guénon's new works, *The Realm of Quantity and the Signs of the Times* ⁴. It is really very interesting, particularly in terms of the perspectives on the end of this cycle and the forces at work there.

Regarding the "philosophy of religions," I would like to emphasize two more points:

1) The application of "organic categories," however useful in other fields, is misplaced where the most determining term is the transcendent as such: here there is no possibility of "reference" and "concern" *apart from subiectis*, that is, *hominis*. Conceiving the two terms in an organic-categorical way inevitably leads to "humanization," and the whole thing then remains limited to "religion" (with the appendix "mysticism").

2) There is an obvious *circulus vitiosus*: a certain unconscious spiritual-cultural disposition has meant that in the choice and determination of categories, as far as they (at least in the field of religion) should be universal, Christianity in particular has been taken as a model. No wonder if we then come to a *happy end*, that is, to the astonishing realization (equivalent to the repetition of the prejudice) that Christianity is *the* religion, which stands out above all and better represents the various categories than the others...

Of E^{!(5)} still no news? *Usque quamquam*, etc. Sincerely

His devoted
K. Bracorens

Hans Bauer
room 112

[II]

Bad Ischl, 6.VIII.48

Dear Exalted Professor!

Many thanks for your affectionate letter: so our next correspondence will cross the border
!(6) -

When he returns to Vienna, a friend of mine-Professor Knaffl-Len^{z(7)}-will bring them:

1) A specimen (the only one in existence) of the translation of *Mask and Face*⁸.

2) The book he lent me, *Revolt*⁹ - I took the liberty of sending it to a friend of mine, who very much wanted to read it and could in no way get a copy: he can absolutely be trusted!

3) An unbound copy of *Hermetic Tradition*, in loose sheets. It was sent to me by the publisher as the basis for the new ^{e(10)}-edition; now, I no longer need it and you can keep it with you, if you wish, or give it as a gift to someone, should you already own it.

It only remains for me to express to you again my gratitude for what you have done for me in such a loving way. Yes, you have behaved with me as a true *friend*, one of the few -- I can hardly count more than *three* -- in this unfortunate period! Of course, we will continue to stay in touch. Please: if you need anything in Italy, remember me. Even if due to the leg injury I should continue to be stuck, I still have multiple contacts, which I would gladly mobilize if needed.

Again many many thanks, I wish you all the best

His
J.E.

I carry it with me, the manuscript, since it bears many corrections and the text needs to be changed in some parts. It would be better to have a new one made. After I wrote to you last time, I let Professor Spanⁿ⁽¹¹⁾ have some greetings. Please let him know at the first opportunity. If the letter got lost I would be embarrassed where Professor S. should believe that I have eclipsed myself like this.

[III]

Cuasso al Monte, 3.X.48

Dear Exalted
Friend!

I am finally giving - from Italy - a nod ! Time has flown by so fast that it seems unreal that I have already been here for almost two mes^{if(12)}. The trip, which went quite well, was organized to perfection by the Italian Red Cross. I landed in a sanatorium north of Milan, only a

couple of kilometers from the Swiss border (Lake Lugano). Normal conditions again apply here: food is not an issue, each evening we receive a menu from which we can choose from six courses, meat and eggs, for the next day's two meals. In addition, we are "served," in the true sense of the word, with the same respect as in a private home or a good hotel - a far cry from the style of so-called "nuns" from across the border.

The idea, however, that "Italy," climate change, a normal diet, etc., could have a decisive positive influence on the known complication (pleurisy) has not been answered. Rather, a worsening has occurred, and I am now in much the same state as when I Austria. This distresses me quite a bit, since it delays my transfer to a neurological clinic (this here is mostly a spa); Italian neurologists should prove to be better prepared and better than their Austrian colleagues.

From the newspapers and discussions, I get a sense of the local political atmosphere. The immediate impression is one of particular turbulence. Individualism and aggression are unrestrainedly unleashed within the general framework of a political carnival. Of orientations, no trace. Needless to speak of the compromise made by the party in power--there are things at your place, too, only here there is a sinister mixture of "socialism" and an even stronger political Catholicism. A significant phenomenon is the fact that it is admitted that there is a group (whose parliamentary weight is limited, but influence quite extensive), the Italian Social Movement, which without qualms has assigned as its task the defense of fascism^{o(13)}. What one can read in their paper against the democrats and allies--western as well as eastern--could frighten a Central European: yet, while opposing parties are crushed on the one hand, a certain weakness about the propositional side reigns. Nothing better can be found than the so-called *Verona Charter* (corresponding to the dying republican phase of fascism), which itself represented a compromise. If I were sure of their arrival at your destination, I would gladly send you some papers so that you could personally get an idea of this strange world.

As far as I am concerned, there is no particular news: just renewed relations with publishers. The situation also seems to permit a new edition of *Revolt*¹⁴.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask if you have already received this book from Professor Knaffl-Lenz, along with the manuscript of the translation of *Mask and Face*. There is also a specific reason for this question. A German friend of mine - Dr. L.F. Claus^{s(15)}, whose valuable studies on the doctrine of "soul race"

should be known to you-he has resurfaced. He is currently an editor and would be interested in that book. So I should know - for possible forwarding to Dr. Clauss - who is currently in possession of the manuscript. In this regard, I would ask another courtesy: to call Countess Thurn, who at that time received two copies of the translation in manuscript form, to find out if at least one of them is available. This, for security reasons, before sending across the border the copy held by her or Professor Lenz. If the political situation stabilizes one or the other, the publisher could represent a favorable opportunity for us all, Clauss being absolutely open to our ideas and being able to resume the plan of a specialized publisher, linked to the Tradition, for our works, those of Guénon, etc.

Now I have to close. Anything new on Rafael? I will be glad to hear from you. In the name of our long-standing and faithful friendship, I salute you.

His devoted
J. Evola

CRI Sanatorium, Room 2
Cuasso al Monte (Varese) Italy

This summer Professor Knaffl-Lenz has been at his estate in Vienna (114) Zierleitengasse 44 (he also has a telephone, the number of which may be found in the directory). If not, his residence is downtown and is probably already there: Pfeilgasse, 21 (Wien VIII).

[IV]

Bologna, 11.IV.1949

Dear Exalted Professor!

Thank you very much for your nice letter. I am replying immediately, as I am concerned about the news about the volumes of *Introduction to Magic*. You have already reassured me, precisely after El's departure, that everything was all right and ready to ship - so how is this possible? In any case, to facilitate the search, I tell you that these are not three "volumes," but three groups of unconnected fascicles, twelve in each group, printed in Italian, with handwritten notes and additions, as well as typewritten sheets. The title is *Ur. Introduction to Magic*

Which Science of the Ego; however, it is likely that the title page is incorrect. The format is octavo, the paper yellowish. I think it is impossible to be mistaken, since other such manuscripts in Italian should hardly be found in the apartment. At the time, El assured me that all the files were there. A loss of them would be very troublesome, since I am sure there are no other specimens: I could hardly arrange the manuscripts and the edited text, such as it is, and there is still a commitment with a publisher. For which, it would be very kind if you would take care of the question and let me know something as soon as possible, to reassure me.

I'm glad you received *Yoga* as well. The new edition of *Mask and Face* is coming out soon. But she has already read the German version! As to that, here's the thing: the German publisher has identified an acquaintance who can bring the translation in a form suitable for printing, but an agreement has not yet been reached--I think. Since the text has already been revised in part by you, it would be helpful to send it to the publisher for review to avoid having the work done twice. The address is:

an den Kompass-Verlag (Dr. L.F. Clauss)
(16) Oberursel (Taunus) Postfach 5
(US-Zone)

It is also possible to write on the first page, "Stylistically improved specimen," and send it off, indicating, "Commercial papers." A specimen being already in Germany, it is not risky to send it.

To Professor Knaffl-Lenz I wrote a few days ago. I mentioned that, if he wanted, I could send him a copy of the translation of the Grail text - two copies having been made, I can deprive myself of one of them. The translation is considerably better than that of *Mask and Face*.

It is inaccurate to say that new publications indicate a "vital momentum"-they are basically works that have been done before, that is, mere rehashes. In me there is always a force ready to erupt - what is lacking is only the opportunity for a just and convenient application. In Italy the situation is bleak from a spiritual point of view; still the same old junk of "intellectuals" and "literati da scramble." Needless to speak of the seriousness of the internal situation. However, it is surprising how much is printed in Italy, despite the fact that books are definitely luxury goods - prices are about fifty times higher than in the previous period.

A small group of young people have the courage to hold on to the old positions, continuing to fight the lost battle. Perhaps I will make an effort

For them to send her their
magazine.

Good.

With kind regards,

His
J. Evola

Anything from EI yet?

[V]

Bologna, 27.VI.1949

Dear Exalted
Friend!

I received your postcard some time ago: I rejoice that you found *Ur*'s packet. I would like to beg you to send me the first volume for now. The best means would be by registered parcel, the contents having to be listed as "business papers."

Two weeks ago I forwarded a copy of the German translation of my book on the Grail to Professor v. Knaffl-Lenz. At the same time it remains, of course, at his disposal.

How is your work on the eschatology of the Vedānta, Schelling and Eckhart progressing? I think it was in the process of being sent to print. This is not unrelated to my intention to personally take care of the Italian translation. I have already mentioned to you how it is not advisable to send a manuscript of a foreign text that has not yet been published to a local publisher for evaluation.

In this regard I would like to - if it is not inappropriate - ask you for another small favor. You quote a passage from Eckhart, where it is said that fire would not be that which burns, but rather "Nothingness." These are a few words, which I quoted in my first book; now, as I do not have the volume here with me and would like to use this quotation, I would be grateful if you would let me know - perhaps by means of a leaflet enclosed with *Ur*. But in modern German, with an indication of the source! The fact is that I am working on the new draft of a purely philosophical book of mine - *Theory of the Absolute Individual* - which is perhaps not without interest in the manner of a kind of propaedeutics to the foundations of Absolute Idealism in the field of esotericism.

Is there any news about EI?

I have given your address in order to send you a bold youth newspaper from the MSI *circle-The Challenge*. I only regret that it comes out with a very irregular cadence.

Otherwise, nothing noteworthy - only, it is starting to get unpleasantly hot. Best regards,

His devoted
J. Evola

J. Evola
"Putti Center" Clinic
Ward 3b
Bologna

[VI]

Bologna December 1, 1949

Dear Professor.

It has been some time since I last gave a nod. Actually, there is nothing new here; the same goes for the state of health, besides the usual intellectual activity. Anyway, I have started writing ethical-political essays on some local pages, as I to. Actually one can say anything, but the situation is worse: one is heard only by a small circle, within a total chaos.

Best thanks for your taking care of the newspapers that were interested in Gröning. The case has already been brought to my attention from Germany, and I was sent the dossier that appeared in the *Revue*. It is of interest only insofar as it is an objective force and not "psychotherapy," dealing with phenomena proper to belief and suggestion. Had it been reachable, I would have gladly made contact with Gröning.

However, you had intended to forward me a copy of your text on eschatology. What is the situation then? I am entering a period in which I am not planning anything in particular and could take care of the translation. You could, however, send me back part of the manuscript, in case you do not have time to transmit to me, in modern German, Eckhart's passages.

Then again, I can understand some Old German. No news from Professor Knaffl-Lenz. Do you happen meet each other?

Has any progress been made by any chance in order to my Grail book? The publisher's position toward you always seems difficult. *Mask and Face* also had no follow-up in Germany. However, I learned from my friend K.A. Rohan that a small series of classics of conservative thought has been launched for Braumüller.

It is possible for me to go to Rome for a few days, which was not possible because of organizational quistions. Over there I have various things to put in . In any case, these are not facts worthy of too much interest; you can always write to me here.

Anything new on "El"? And what has become of Frau Inge? In case, please give her my regards and give her my best feelings.

Best regards,

His
J. Evola

[VII]

Bologna, May 5, 1950

Dear Professor.

You will forgive me for coming forward again to trouble you with request for a favor. It concerns the following quistion.

I have started a whole procedure to obtain a pension as a civilian war invalid; it would be the only basis for organizing myself in my home in the coming times. For this purpose, a certificate from the consulate is necessary: it has been months since registration, without my receiving any feedback. I would be *very* grateful if you could find the time to go there personally, to deliver the enclosed letter to the appropriate office, with a suitable "intercession" for the purpose. Since you know Italian, there is no need for me to refer you here to the contents of the letter. The important thing is not to be satisfied with a vague assurance-as is customary at bureaucracies-but to follow up the matter until a result is obtained. I have mentioned that if attestations regarding Bracorens-Evola's identity, the cause of the injuries, etc., were needed, one could also have recourse to her - and to other friends, e.g., Countess Thurn, mutual acquaintances or people with whom I could easily get in touch.

Excuse me again-but you will understand the importance of this on a practical level, and with a border in the way, things could go on forever.

Otherwise, there is no particular news-except for a trip to Rome, which allowed me to meet many people-old acquaintances and new forces. There are more than I thought - especially in the younger generation - who understand our ideas. By the way - as a symbolic gesture of my "presence," despite my physical state - a speech of mine was organized in a theater. In addition, I am collaborating with various newspapers in the well-known direction.

[signature missing]

[VIII]

Bologna, 7.II.1951

Dear Exalted
Friend!

I have not given any hint of life for some time now, since you have declared your kind willingness to attest, or rather to let others attest, to the war pension question. In this respect, it now appears to be definitely in order and I will soon be able to count on payments, which now constitute an economic basis for living independently again. In the meantime, since the military hospital in which I was staying has been closed, I reside in a boarding house, also in Bologna; I will probably then go directly to Rome, without intermediate stops, to another nursing home. The situation is, in any case, stationary and no treatment is planned. I am sorry that everything is still so uncertain and that the condition in Austria has not stabilized. Otherwise, I would have even considered coming back to you, since my income, which for the situation in Italy is very meager, would amount to a nice sum in Austria. However, in Italy, in my field, many more forces are in motion. From the *Orientations* pamphlet you will have seen that I have hoisted the well-known banner, committing myself in that direction.

I should - albeit belatedly - thank you for the excellent pieces on Adamic and Kainitic economics you sent me, as well as for pointing me to my book; in addition, I read in full the volume you edited on the occasion of Othmar Spann's 70th birthday; your contribution (in which you also wanted to mention me) is the best.

Along with Spann, another spirit guide has passed away. I don't know if you already know about René Guénon's death on the 7th of last month in Egypt, at only sixty-two years of age. It is difficult to think that he could have a worthy successor; he has

had much influence, but I know that his work cannot be carried on by anyone of the same stature. I find this rather disturbing, since I find it impossible to believe that Guénon gave all he could give to illuminate these dark times.

Of the book in question, I know that Dr. Riehl printed it at Braumüller, by way of a compendium of Spann's thought. If possible, ask the publisher to send me a copy. I do not own all of Spann's works, and this collection might be more useful to me than any other for an essay on the Master, which I would like to write for some suitable journal for the purpose.

Please use this new address, to be considered valid until mid-March.

Pensione Nuova
Via del Porto 8
Bologna

It is possible for a magazine, *Europa Nazione*, to write to you, referring to me, for collaboration; it is a magazine for unity of Europe (not in the federalist-democratic sense), the editor of which is my friend Filippo Anfuso, former consul in Budapest and Berlin. I have arranged for Prince Rohan, who has already provided an essay of his own, to be invited to write there. A really interesting topic to cover could be *European Question and the doctrine of totality*.

By March the new revised edition of my *Revolt* should appear. Could you read *Doctrine of Awakening* by then? It has come out, in the meantime, in English translation-incidentally, I have received an offer for a translation of *The Yoga of Power* from an Indian publisher.

Well, I have to close now. Please be in touch. Best regards

His devoted
J. Evola

Any news, by any chance,
about "EI"?

Are there any prospects for the publication of your work on the Vedānta, Eckhart and Schelling?

I recently resumed contact with Dr. Birven, whom you yourself mentioned; he survived the storm and is active as a writer of "magical" address.

[IX]

Rome, 2. XII. 1951

Dear Professor.

If the echo of domestic politics crosses borders, you will certainly know why I have not given any hint of life for several months. At the end of May I was ... "arrested." The reason is that small groups were formed that allegedly wanted to re-found the National Fascist Party and committed some nonsense (some bombings for "demonstrative" reasons); an attempt was made to see me as the spiritual father of such a movement, about which I knew almost nothing, since several followers of it were assiduous readers of my books, sharing in particular the ideas of *Orientations*. Of course, this is an absurdity, since you know well on what level my activities have always been held. So (about two weeks ago, after a trial that lasted forty days) I was acquitted with a full verdict. The same happened to most of the defendants -- only three out of thirty-six (those who planted the bombs) are still "in."

For me the whole quistion of course meant nothing; it only manifested itself as an opportunity for a period of spiritual recollection, since, on the material level, everything is certainly more comfortable and cozy than the situation at Schönbauer's in Vienna or at Dussik's in Ischl, with those terrible "nuns."

In return, the hubbub has meant free publicity in the press and unexpected fame among nationally inspired forces that may also prove useful.

Just before this mishap I received the excellent essay on the "traditional method"; many thanks for sending it and for how it treated my doctrine. Now I want to reread the manuscript; I wonder if it should not be translated. Having settled permanently in Rome, I want to see if a publisher can be found who might be interested in such things. The economic situation is not bright at all, prices do not stop rising, an only apparent order covers a deep chaos. Thus, even in publishing today one is discouraged from undertaking anything. Fortunately, I managed to get the new edition of *Revolt* published and to find a publisher for the new edition of *Ur (Introduction to Magic as a Science of the Self)*; the three volumes will be out next year.

Did you perhaps make contact with the "Guénonian group" in Paris through Ziegler? For obscure reasons, I was unable to re-establish connection with them, while I had a regular correspondence with Guénon in Egypt.

As for Ziegler himself, I could not get the publisher to send me a copy of *Menschwerdung*. His earlier book *Tradition* I found to be a little too Christian-inspired for my taste.

Speaking of books, are you familiar with Mohler's text *The Conservative Revolution in Germany 1918-1932* (Vorwerk-Verlag, Stuttgart 1950)? It is an excellent book - Spann's name also appears in it, along with a whole series of old acquaintances.

If you happen to meet Professor Knaffl-Lenz, please convey my greetings to him and explain the reason for my silence. In the near future, I will write a few lines to him as well.

Wishing you all the best, also for the coming holidays, affectionate greetings from the

His devoted
J. Evola

J. Evola
197 Corso Vittorio Emanuele

Ps. How I'd love to know that you've heard something about EI in the meantime!

[X]

Rome, 10.V.1952

Dear Professor.

Just now, back in Rome, I found your nice letter of the 3rd of last month; for about two months I was still in Bologna and the whole correspondence has been waiting for me here. In fact, there is no news in particular; your mention that the well-known affair of last summer affected only positively, favorably, etc., is quite correct; it is also pleasing that the corresponding orientation of the youth is gaining more and more body, which perhaps will have fauste consequences.

In this regard, these days I have finished writing a new cultural-political text, a kind of development of *Orientations*, where all the points concerning a just struggle are presented. It is entitled *Men and Ruins*. Now it is just a matter of finding a suitable publisher for it.

Not only have I already written to Ziegler's publisher, but I also received a denial; he only suggested that a copy be made available at a reduced price. The book will be shipped and I will read it with due interest.

Do you read the magazine *Europe Nation*? I happen to write in it sometimes. So in the March issue, an essay of mine came out there.

El's story is too sad. May he be given just more chance!

The peoples' quistion does not surprise me beyond surprise. Franzi, after the breakup, was unfortunately no longer recognizable and-as you will recall-even from my point of view in recent times was not quite right. The outcome, however, was quite bitter.

It occurs to me that you are already in contact with Braumüller. Would it be possible to get through him some information about Otto Weininger's life and, in particular, about the circumstances of his suicide? I have been commissioned to write the introduction to a new edition of *Sex and Character*, and for this purpose it would be useful for me to receive some information.

I hope her path will also take her, once, to Rome! I do not know Palamenghi-Crispi in person; he should be a journalist, on friendly terms with Costamagna.

Anyway, all the best and dear greetings from the

His devoted
J. Evola

Ps. Did you then receive a copy of the new Italian edition of *Revolt*?

[XI]

Lama Mocogno, 29.VIII.52

Dear friend!

It has been a while since I have given a nod. It's been hot as hell in Italy this year, so for the past couple of months I've been moving to a location in the Apennines, where the temperature is acceptable and everything is fine from a practical point of view.

Of particular news, at any rate, I do not have much. The publisher Bocca assures me that he has recently sent you the new edition of *Revolt*. I hope this is true and you have already received the book; in leafing through it, you will find many additions and corrections.

I hope that later this year my *The Men and the Ruins* will also come out: it is more or less a systematic development of the points made in *Orientations*, intended to be a further reason for crystallization for the trend that she already

knows. Otherwise, I continue my action in some newspapers. There is also the idea of a new edition of my Grail book.

Forgive me if I have not yet conveyed to you my thanks for the news received about Weininger. The specific, concrete reason for his suicide has not yet been revealed, which would be of particular importance, especially since there are tendentious rumors about it.

I have had enough time to deal with Ziegler's books that he kindly forwarded to me. In all sincerity, I must tell you that I am not entirely enthusiastic about them. In the smaller one, on the Platonic and Christian State, the idea of Platonic thought is excellent, but the main motive turns out to be highly suspect. Ziegler's sympathies are undoubtedly with the primitive state, understood almost as matriarchal, towards which, according to him, all lordship means only sacrilege and guilt to be atoned for, and to which only a Christian blessing is added. It comes to the point that, by the end of the book, socialism, Marxism, the world peace movement, perhaps even the UN are not condemned but absolved, relegated to sins of youth, temporary materialized and deformed forms of the Christian ideal of society -- thus, after all, along the same lines as Anti-Empire. About the main work, there is, yes, here and there, something valid, the foundation remaining, however, markedly *religious*; starting from the religious, Z. attempts to gather complementary elements from various sources, without the religious category flowing into the initiatory one (categories that, in my opinion, should be kept clearly separated!). Even on the level of sensation, there is very little sense in these books of that "gift of light" about inter-traditional connections and esoteric interpretations, so evident e.g. in a Guénon. In several places there is clear recognition of the appreciation and ascendancy of Spann's "doctrine of totality," but this remains subordinate to the main thesis. However, this does not detract from the fact that, given what the cultural marketplace offers today, Ziegler's works are of a superior rank.

After a short stay in Bologna, I will return to Rome toward the end of September. The next useful address will therefore be the one in Rome. It remains, however, still unresolved the question of an adequate organization. There is a lack of someone who, on the one hand, will exercise a kind of "supervision" (there already being, for the coarser chores, a servant woman), and on the other hand can assist me in the activities that my physical situation complicates (libraries, errands, contacts). Otherwise, my work and activity, especially regarding the second point, will be significantly affected. Fortunate circumstances have meant that there is no lack of financial prerequisites; thinking about a suitable element, however, I fear that it is more easily found abroad than here, since in Italy it is quite rare that a person of a certain culture demonstrate

at the same time diligence for household things (with "detachment"). You never know: remember the question, should a person with these characteristics turn up in your environment. In Central Europe there should be no shortage of people who, being "rootless," would be employable, also considering the appeal of the south, Italy and Rome.

Do you know from near a certain Dr. Helik? He should belong to Dr. Spunde's circle. From him I have recently received rather singular letters.

Does the name Mircea Eliade ring a bell? He is a Romanian, author of numerous books that systematically deal with myths and religions from a point of view that, after all, derives from esotericism (but he is careful not to write it, intending to act in the citadel of academic culture as a Trojan horse - in fact, in the past he was a subscriber to *Ur*, knows Guénon well and has been to India). His books, published in French, are about to be released - at least, some of them - in Italy as well (: *Techniques of Yoga, Treatise on the History of Religions*-thanks to my mediation, *Lo sciamanismo e le tecniche dell'estasi* will also come out). Since you, if I remember correctly, do not read French easily, I will have the Italian editions of these books sent to you, if you wish.

I do not ask her questions about El in fear, unfortunately, of having to hear the same answer again and again.

Best Regards

His devoted
J. Evola

[XII]

Bologna, 9. X. 1952

Dear friend!

Many thanks for your letters. Those addressed to Rome have also arrived.

As you can see, I am back in Bologna and will be here for some time yet, because of the already mentioned uncertainty about my accommodation in Rome.

But before I get into the subject, I want to thank you in particular for the attention you paid to my work at your conference. I am very pleased that the ideas I advocated still resonating, not so much in reference to me personally, but as a general symptom. Here in Italy we will see how to proceed. My book *Men and Ruins* is already in print and therefore

will come out soon. It is the first to contain systematic fine-tuning in a nonconformist, "totalitarian" direction - in postwar Italy, that is. The book will be the first publication of a new publishing house of young people - it will presumably be called Edizioni dell'Ascia. If this venture ends well on a practical level, the intention is to publish other related works, e.g., Guénon's *The Crisis of the Modern World* in a new edition, de Poncins' *The Occult War* - if possible, I would also like to include a translation of Spann's *The True State*. We will see what can be accomplished, depending on the circumstances.

Thank you also sincerely for your concern about the element of helping me-this is in fact my major concern for the coming period. Regarding your proposal, I must openly confess to you that the designation *Frau Doktor* frightens me a little. I do not remember exactly what I wrote to her in this regard; in any case, I know that on the one hand she is required to have a certain intellectual ability (i.e., not exactly a "goose"), but on the other hand she will also be entrusted with the role of "housewife," in much the same way as in other cases it is up to the "consort," since only a housekeeper will be available for the heavier work, and not even for the whole day (there no bed for another element at my house). It is therefore a commitment that would presuppose some interest in addition to the professional one, of which "intellectual" assistance would represent only a part. A part that would have to be exploited gradually, since I assume that your acquaintance would first (and this could be accomplished together) have to learn Italian quite well.

Should these concerns be without reason, I think the best thing will be for me to contact this *Frau Doktor* directly by epistolary means. In October, when her father comes to Rome, I will unfortunately not be there. If the intentions are serious, I think a direct meeting is necessary-which I would personally arrange-because the personal factor cannot help but play a role as well. Then, in the positive case, his stay in Rome would be considered. By *Frau Doktor* it is possible to mean either a person who has done the relevant studies or a doctor's wife. What is your case and how old, more or less, is your acquaintance? If you will inform me about all this, I will be able to deal with it more closely. In any case, I renew my warmest thanks to you.

Eliade was invited in August to Austria, at the Alpach [*sic!*] conference (I think that is what it is called). It was perhaps on that occasion that he made contact with the publisher in question. In any case, I will have the Italian translations of his books sent to you as soon as they are out.

Best
Regards

His devoted
J. Evola

[XIII]

Bologna, 4.1.1953

Dear Professor.

It has been a while again since our last letter -- this time, it was mostly the depressing effect of my forced vacation...

As you see, I am in Bologna, since the quistion in Rome has not yet found a solution. As for the person whom you so kindly thought of, I have taken no further steps in that direction, as I have not had impression that she is suitable. First of all--according to her old indication--the person concerned should be in her forties, which from many points of view is prejudicial; then I had the feeling that, basically, she understood the "position" in the framework of an intellectual commitment, whereas I want something much more complex, that is, multifaceted. I don't know if I was wrong in this judgment.

Otherwise, I hope to be able to send you as early as later this month a copy of *The Men and the Ruins*. We are just waiting for a "symbolic" preface from Prince Borghese, whom you, as a soldier, may have already heard of. The publisher will be called Editions of the Axe.

This or a similar one showed interest in my idea of translating Professor Spann's book *The True State* into Italy. I no longer remember how large the volume is, whether it is still current, and whether - in case it is too long - there is a possibility of its "reduction." If so, whom should one turn to for translation rights?

I have been offered the opportunity to publish my book on the Grail. You still have the manuscript of the translation; would you be so kind as to forward it by registered mail to Friedrich Vorwerk-Verlag - Stuttgart - Stafflenbergstrasse 28? I have known Mr. Vorwerk for a long time; his publishing house has published Mohler's formidable study of the Conservative Revolution and a couple of other texts of the same orientation. Let's hope he will be okay with my book. On the other hand, someone informed me that a

publisher in Graz might consider it-but, even in the case of a positive decision, one would have to wait at least two years...

Otherwise, there is nothing particularly noteworthy. I hope things are going well for you in every respect. Too bad that your situation is still so unclear. Otherwise, an appearance by me in Vienna would not have been ruled out.

Best Regards

Always devoted
J. Evola

New Port Street
Pension
(Address valid until approximately 20.1!)

[XIV]

Rome, 20.XII.53

Dear Professor.

At least around the vacations I give some hints of life again! It should have been some since I last wrote to you. The fact is that nothing particularly significant has happened in the meantime--about the same things, with many translations from German and English as a pastime.

At the time I had Axe Editions send her a copy of Guénon's *The Crisis of the Modern World* in the new edition, although she probably owned the book in its previous guise. It remains to be seen whether in the coming year this publishing venture can secure some secure funding. As mentioned, a translation of *The True State* has also been planned.

As in past years, I spent two months in the Apennines. I will stay here in Rome presumably until the end of January. Rome is always a very boring city, particularly in my state, in which I only resort to the mountains going to the prophets...

I would like to ask her about EI, but I'm afraid the answer will always be the same; otherwise, I would surely have known something.

I will always be glad to hear from you. In the meantime, I wish you all the best.

His devoted
J. Evola

Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197
Rome

[XV]

Rome, 28.XII.1953

Dear friend!

Our letters have crossed paths! Below are a few supplementary lines. First of all, I am enormously pleased to more about EI! I would love to come back among you soon!

There is something mysterious about her telling me that she has only now received *Men and Ruins*; the book came out in April and she should have received a copy already then! I have also arranged for her to be sent a copy of the new edition of my translation of Guénon's *The Crisis of the Modern World*. The managers of the publishing house are out of Rome on vacation; when they return, I will make sure things march on in that respect.

Unfortunately, the German publisher who was interested in my Grail book backed out. His conduct was far from faultless. This is Mr. F. Vorwerk, whose name was perhaps not at all unknown to you at other times; his publisher, for publishing Mohler's work and by virtue of its general tendencies, could have simply declared that it was not possible to accommodate the book for financial reasons-in which case, he should not have asked for the manuscript to examine it! The ms. will be sent back to Vienna. So, the quistion remains open and as soon as it is appropriate I will make the ms. available to you again: I believe you do not have another copy with you.

As for Birven (who, moreover, is not old: should be about our age), I received his text on Goethe very late, since it was sent to Rome, where I found it ten months later. I have already written to him that I am not at all inclined to follow anyone who wants to find too many esoteric traces in Goethe. As for the other book, I am of the mind to read it now; I would even have thought of a possible translation of it. But I see that it comes down to little more than an anthology, not being an exposition of the fundamentals.

My state of health is always - one would almost say: unfortunately - normal. As for my home in Rome, at any rate, no solution has yet been found in the sense known to you. You know very well how expensive everything is in Italy. I have my disposal about the equivalent of four thousand shillings a month. So I live normally, that is, commonly, where - I suppose - in Austria and Vienna (where there would be the possibility of a transfer) everything would be totally different, and the prospect for the resolution of every problem would turn out to be better. But, because of the Austrian political situation and the persistent state of occupation, a relocation is hardly imaginable.

Sincere thanks for your good wishes, which I heartily reciprocate.

His devoted
J. Evola

[XVI]

To Mr. Baron dr. Julius Evola
Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197
Rome Italy

February 20, 1954

Dear friend!

Best thanks for both of your letters, dated December 20 and 28, 1953, one of which crossed with mine.

As I have already reported to you, I have received both *Men and Ruins* and *The Crisis of the Modern World*, and I thank you very much. We will prepare reviews.

El has written again and can now receive packets-it is a good prospect.

As for the manuscript of the Grail book, we would gladly receive it, of course, in German translation.

We would, of course, send it back, on the spot, as soon as we had the chance of a publisher or she instructed us to do so.

I fully agree with your assessment of Birven's books. In particular, the one on magic is a bit disappointing, at least for us. Birven, by way, celebrated- contrary to his last communication- his 70th birthday last year.

Regarding the idea of moving the family to Austria, it is crystal clear that with four thousand shillings one could undoubtedly live decently there. Which

would happen, unless she was thinking of moving to Vienna, where there are all kinds of difficulties-although, as far as I am concerned, I would of course be happy to have her here. But, if she were planning to move to the Austrian province or to one of the big cities in the West, I could certainly - in case any decision on this matter on her part followed - ask my circle of friends for enlightenment.

As far as the state of the occupation in Austria is concerned, I could imagine that some personage in the occupation forces would take care of you, especially since the entire top leadership of the police is dependent on the Austrian authorities. Think about this once again!

With best wishes and warm greetings

Always His
Walter Heinrich

[XVII]

Sestola, 13.VII.54

Dear Professor.

After a rather long pause, I went back to give her some hints of life; meanwhile, there was nothing particular to report. There are only mountains around us.

For the past few days I have been back at a spa resort in the Apennine mountains, where I plan to reside until early September.

The only good thing is that the Grail book has finally been able to be placed; it has been accepted by Barth-Verlag in Munich, the contract has already been signed, and it will likely be published as early as later this year. At the same time, a French publisher has accepted my *The Doctrine of Awakening* -- for which in France, where there was mysterious resistance, "the ice was broken." Now my main interest is to get *Revolt* published in a new German edition, as I have the impression that the book is more current than ever. With the previous publisher - the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt - there is nothing to be done; after some hesitation it let the volume "free." In fact, even before that I was not at all satisfied with it.

I don't remember whether I thanked you for the important guidance in your *On the traditional method*. I knew the text when it was still a manuscript.

Had I known that he intended to publish it, I might have directed his attention to a couple of other points.

Have you heard anything else about El since the first happy news?

Well, I will be glad to from you. In the meantime, with many kind regards I remain

His devoted
J. Evola

Hotel Sole e Pineta
Sestola
(prov. Modena)

[XVIII]

Rome, 12.XII.54

Dear Professor.

There was again a break of a couple of months in our correspondence ... which I, with this nod, intend to restore, despite the fact that there is nothing particularly interesting to share with her.

I hope that in the meantime I received my book on the Grail from the publisher. It was hurriedly printed, unfortunately with many errors - almost all the Greek words are wrong, some source and page directions are missing, and so on; moreover, I was not given the opportunity to supplement the text with changes and additions, as will happen in the new Italian edition, is about to be published. This is because I could not send the materials, despite the arrangements publisher was in a tremendous hurry, account of I don't know which "book fair" anymore.

On the success of this book will depend whether the same publisher--the Barth-Verlag--will consider a new edition of *Revol't*. However, there has been talk of a "popular edition," something I could hardly imagine.

A short time ago I suggested to the Italian publisher, to whom I occasionally offer consultations, the publication of a work by Altheim on Roman religion. Now, you should know his name. Professor Altheim had been known to me for some time, having visited me in Rome and told me some rather interesting things.

Is the development of El's affair proceeding favorably? I really hope so.

In your last letter you advised me for the umpteenth time to move to the western part of Austria. This would make little sense. In that case, I would have to opt for an entirely contemplative life, but then every place would be the same - so, the best solution would even be to arrange myself in a guesthouse at any convent in the countryside. In any other case, I have to solve the problem consisting in expending a certain vital potential, for which a *milieu* and acquaintances are necessary, which a small provincial town certainly does not offer: not even a large public library would be available there for possible studies, and an acceptable pastime would be unimaginable, unless I brought with me a suitable "retinue" for the purpose.

Also for the coming vacations I wish you all the best and remain, in faithful friendship,

His devoted
J. Evola

[XIX]

Rome, 30.V.1955

Dear Professor.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for Schurtz's book, which I return to you here, and for your kind letter of c. 24.

As soon as I heard about the settlement, my first thought was that the "filth" that happened to El had finally come to an end. I really hope that this matter can be resolved soon.

As for publications, the publisher said that so far my Grail book has not "broken through" as he had hoped instead. Thus, he could not make up his mind about the new edition of *Revolt*. But in the meantime, the previous German publisher - Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt - showed up quite unexpectedly with a proposal for a new edition. With reference to the first edition, he would only like certain passages to be dropped. But this should have already happened in the last Italian version, which would thus serve as the basis for the new German one; therefore, I hope it will "go smoothly."

Otherwise, I will be mainly engaged in translations, as a pastime, as well as the long and arduous task of gathering material for a new book, *Metaphysics of Sex*.

A short while ago I received an invitation to give a lecture as part of a congress of symbology scholars in Basel in the fall - you should know this, since your name has also been mentioned. However, nothing will come of it, since a brief appearance there does not justify, because of my physiological state, the necessary travel arrangements.

As for your mention of the omission of certain external difficulties with a view to a stay in Vienna, I think this is correct. For such a project lacks a sufficient reason. From a supra-personal point of view, this motive could only consist of any "orientation" work, if there was a possibility of organizing anything challenging. Conversely, if it were a question belonging only to the personal-private sphere, the conditions would hardly be sustainable; here now I have to fulfill occasional political and cultural or "spiritual" relations; in this tedious city there is a lack of a match that could make up for it, in the direction, one might say, of non-intellectual distraction. Now, in Vienna even what little I used to have at my disposal is forbidden, during the war and in the period after; I still have a few contacts that can be, in this respect, helpful. Organizing the summer stay in the mountains, which is imposed by the intolerable Roman heat, also presents itself, for similar reasons, a problem not easy to solve.

I received Easter greetings from her thanks to the good and trustworthy Countess Elsa Thurn, who stopped by.

Best Regards

His ever devoted
J. Evola

[XX]

Rome, 16.VI.1955

Dear Professor.

I learn that he has already received Schurtz's book. I had it sent back to him about two weeks ago at the Institute address. I have attached a couple of lines for you.

There was also the issue of the new edition of *Revol't*. Things, from this point of view, are like this. As already mentioned, the publisher of my Grail book could not make up his mind. He does not seem well equipped, and the publication of this book, not exactly slim, seems risky to him. In the meantime, however, there was the welcome surprise of the first publisher (the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt) who wrote to me personally to propose a new edition. He only wished to delete some passages from the previous version. The latest Italian edition was sent and it was possible to verify how it already corresponded to what was desired. Suddenly, a new surprise, this time unwelcome. Quite unexpectedly, the publisher backed off, for reasons that were unclear.

The book lies, awaiting review, at Beck-Verlag (Munich, Wilhelmstrasse 9), which is expected to make a decision in the next few days. So, at that juncture, I thought of you, in case you had a direct or indirect way of soliciting the book from Beck. To examine it he would like the German edition (1935); I pointed out that the new, revised Italian version is in a sense presented *up to date* and from the scientific point of view is formally expanded: which should not be overlooked.

A similar report was submitted, a short time ago, to Beck thanks to Professor Franz Altheim. It would of course be very nice if someone could help us to get Beck to agree to publish the book.

About Professor Altheim: we have resumed our old relations and are in close contact. You are familiar with his writings on antiquity; we are having an Italian translation of his *History of Roman Religion* published. Apart from scientific queries, he is one of the few who spiritually in a "conservative" sense is well grounded*. I would really appreciate it if somehow someone could get in touch with him, even occasionally. Perhaps he can be let in *on the traditional method*.

From El I really hope to know something definitive.

Now I have to see how to solve the summer quistion.

Best Regards

Always devoted

J. Evola

* An anecdote, taken from one of his last letters, "Yes, *Die Orgie über sakrale Königtum!* [Here in Rome there was recently an international conference of historians of religions, the basic theme of which was to be this]. He is totally right. What should be done? None of these heroes could even conceive of the existence of a sacral realm (the only one that deserves this

name). You should hear at least once from my friend de Ferdinandy (moreover, a direct descendant of Attila...). He spoke to Otto of Habsburg, who explained to him his own conception (assuming it is worthy of the name) of a "social" monarchy. F. responded to the Habsburg by telling him that a social monarchy would be a *contradictio in adjecto*. Either a monarch, like the ancient French kings, lays his hands on the sick at the Easter feast, telling them, "Rise, the king has touched you, you are healed!" or there is nothing to be done. The Habsburg was completely dumbfounded at such an eventuality... Reason being. F. ended the speech with these words, "If kings no longer believe in themselves now, who should?"

[XXI]

To Mr. Baron dr. Julius Evola
Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197
Rome Italy

Vienna, July 5, 1955

Dear Baron!

Thank you for your letters of May 30 and June 16. In the meantime, Rafael is back: the seven and a half years of very harsh detention, in conditions that led to the death of other detainees, from a physical point of view were not without unpleasant consequences, so that he now has to deal with his lung disease. From the standpoint of soul and spirit, however, he is still the same.

I heard from Countess Thurn that she found it in good condition at your recent meeting. I have always taken care to get some information to her through the Countess, assuming you are still in touch.

I wrote two weeks ago to publisher Beck, as per the attached carbon copy. We hope it will be of some use.

I sent Professor Altheim the booklet *On the Traditional Method* and *Schellings Lehre von den letzten Dingen*. It is great what she reports about *Orgre* [sic] *über das sakrale Königstum*. I also recovered Schurtz's book.

Too bad we can't be of help in solving summer problems: the distance between Rome and our mountains is unfortunately too great.

Perhaps, however, we will be able to complete, a little at a time, the orientation work you mention, rightly lamenting its lack. In this

way - that's how I think too - he would have a sufficient reason, from a suprapersonal point of view, to move. But this will certainly take some more time, especially should it go through. However, we are prepared.

I wholeheartedly wish you a good summer and remain

Always devoted
His
Walter Heinrich

[XXII]

Rome, 26.XII.1957

Dear Professor.

I am sure you will forgive my long silence. Even the letter attached to the writings sent, as forewarned, had to wait. Nor is it what, for all intents and purposes, I should have written in order to deal more accurately with the ideas of his latest book. I have developed the conviction that all this would have been, were contained in a missive, very verbose and unenlightening. It would perhaps be better suited to a personal interview, with more free time at my disposal, the more so as it became necessary to test certain arguments of the Spann doctrine, to which you, in good substance, refer. But-beyond the well-known physical reasons-it is really difficult for me to appear in Vienna, and on the other hand I ignore whether her steps will take her to Rome in a timely manner....

In particular, it is through Dr. Blahut that I have been able to follow with interest the development of his initiative. It will certainly be interesting to see how far we can go in an organizational sense, so as not to be confined solely to the role of "stone guest" (or "non-convitee"), as my pessimism suggests to me as a result of many confirmations related to the experiences I have had.

Both reviews of his book are influenced in their critical insights by precisely this practical pessimism. I have therefore openly acted as *advocatus diaboli*. I fully agree with most of the claims you make, but I am very skeptical about the possibility of their implementation at this time. I do not know, from that point of view, how much the impossible local conditions, which are perhaps different from the Austrian or Central European situation (mainly because of a self-styled, irresponsible "democracy" of trade union and left-wing forces), can bear out. If I may still

consider the formation of an entrepreneurial *ethos* possible, there is nothing to hope for when dealing with the working masses. They can make "human relations" even more impudent and stupid, according to the American model.

I do not think you have an entirely correct perception of the question, since certain terms-provided with a better meaning in the Middle Ages, because of a peculiar spiritual atmosphere (small communities, sense of communal belonging, and so on)-would be reduced in today's world to the domain of a mediocre and uninteresting petty bourgeoisie. It is a note I also make to a certain spirit, which often emerges in Spann's considerations. Thus, while decentralization within a given organic society is correct, it seems to me to be dangerous today, where chaotic centrifugal forces must instead be ordered with a magic wand, and - to move to another plane - one should not facilitate "materialized" men, but create difficulties for them, in the hope that finally a change in the state of things will occur.

But these are just speeches, and, as I said, in case the possibility of a personal interview existed, we could establish and determine many decisive points. Since no scholarly journal is available here, I have had to limit myself to *feuilleton* articles, with all the limitations that the case imposes.

From Rafael I have not heard from him for a long time.

Most likely, he will have fully recovered in the meantime and will be busy with business again. Instead, as I said, I often hear from Dr. Blahut, who had granted me a meeting here in Rome. My thoughts often go back to the good days I spent with you in Vienna.

I would love to hear from you directly. In the meantime, with all good wishes, I remain

his old and faithful
J. Evola

Has Dr. Kerényi spoken with her yet? Dr. Blahut told me about his stay in Rome in October. Accordingly, I conveyed a few words to him because of our previous friendship. He, however, has not yet made any appointment or given any reply, which is strange to say the least....

[XXIII]

Dear Mr. Baron Dr. Julius Evola

Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197 Rome

Hadersfeld, January 2, 1958

Dear Baron!

Your letter arrived, and--always happy with your every nod--I can thank you for both: for the thoughts expressed within it and for the two reviews of my book you sent me earlier.

I hope you are - general conditions permitting - quite in good spirits and happy to work, as our mutual friend Blahut also confirmed to me. The great distance between Rome and Vienna, and thus between us - in comparison with our previous connection here - particularly pains me, especially in view of the fact that certain more serious matters can hardly be dealt with by epistolary means. I am always thinking about the possibility diminishing or overcoming this separation. For one thing, I have decided, in spite of the low attractiveness of Rome for me after the end of the Fascist experience, to visit her as soon as possible - since she embodies an absolutely superior force of objective attraction.

As for your remarks expressed in the letter and reviews on my study *Economics and Personality*, I can say without exaggeration that they are the best thing that has come out so far on the subject; moreover, I would myself express the same "practical" criticism on the content of the book and its framework of thought if it were my turn to write a review of it: this whole framework remains a utopia; it differs from traditional utopias-at least, so I believe and hope-only in that, due to its conservative foundation, it should represent a utopia *maioris ordinis*.

I believe that it will come to fruition through the *modus procedendi* by which my friends and I try to employ this facility of thought as a tool for transformation or -- in a more modest way -- to propitiate one.

To prove some justification for the hopes we cultivate, I can list two experiments: the first consisted in organizing a talk, first before a small audience of a few friends and then to an audience of about sixty selected participants, on his work *The Men and the Ruins*, by our friend Blahut, who fulfilled this task excellently. result lived up to expectations. All the listeners agreed in the conviction of an almost complete coincidence of the two worldviews: of his organic concept of the state and of my totalitarian-decentralizing doctrinal construction, derived from Spann.

The second experiment is this. For three years already, my friends and I have been holding numerous seminars (about 20 per year) in front of audiences of

entrepreneurs, artisans and workers: the goal, however, is not to fall back on the line of a disinterested and mediocre petty bourgeoisie and a hymn to ease and prosperity, but rather, for all these people, to reach that brink of the abyss where you, if I understand you correctly, hope that a greater disposition can be induced capable of setting in motion "any transformative factor."

For the time being, we will keep to such an organizational line--of course with a vigilant and continuous attention to all surrounding events, but without overestimating these possibilities--also hoping that our calls for decentralization as the organic will of society will not increase chaotic centrifugal forces but, on the contrary, through the faltering of faith in the massified state, may, at least within an elite, foster a new concept of the state: That of the "magic wand," as you say, which will develop beyond a pure materialized manhood.

There is always the possibility that, ultimately, we are just another mask of the "stone guest" (or "non-guest"), but our "role" also implies the opportunity not only to provoke the thrill at the bottom of the precipice, but also to lift the veil a bit on the image situated beyond the precipice. It is, in essence, the same thing that you are also doing.

And that's the reason why I feel, we feel so connected you, and I thank you so much for your reviews. I can say that you have discovered the lion's claw or -- to use your terms -- the tiger's paw that you ride.

In this sense, I greet you with gratitude and great reverence

His
Walter Heinrich

[XXIV]

Rome, 18.XI.58

Dear Professor,

It has indeed been a long time since we last wrote to each other. In the meantime, however, I often heard about you from Dr. Blahut and got news of your industrious activity through the bulletins of your society. I hoped to reconnect with her personally in Vienna, as a trip there had already been planned. Despite the interest shown by Countess Thurn, things did not go well, nor do I know if even the idea was left

fall. In the meantime, Dr. Blahut has left G.f.Gf. and I have not heard from him for months - my last missive still awaits a reply. As for Rafael, he has really vanished - I have not received single word from him since.

I follow his activity with particular interest and have frequently informed local friends about it. Among other things, I will see if your lecture *Hat der Westen eine Idee?* can be published in Italian translation. I have already told you how enlightening an exchange ideas on the various points would be. I wonder, however, if you, from a human point of view, do not get too absorbed in the question. In your book you yourself stigmatized the man of today who has ended up in the gear, who "never has time..."

Apart from giving a nod to life, with this letter I would like to ask you for one piece of information: has anything come out of the third part of your work (on Meister Eckhart)? It is likely that there was a misunderstanding about this: the publisher sent me the first parts, along with one other thing, repeatedly asking me for payment, although it is likely that the printing service was included. Well, my request has a purpose: I am a contributor to an English-language magazine, *East and West*, and I am always looking for material for appropriate articles. Now, your work would be excellent for generating an essay; for that, however, I would have to own the third part in order to establish an East-West parallelism.

Otherwise, there is nothing new here. As a publication, Dr. Blahut should have mentioned to you my voluminous new book, *Metaphysics of Sex*. In any , I asked him to do so: it should not be too far outside his circle of interests, and if he thinks he has some time to read it, I will gladly have the publisher send him a copy. A paper of mine on Jünger, *The Worker*, and a new annotated edition of Lao-tze's Tao-tê- *ching* will be out next year. You will receive both, no doubt.

Well, I was very pleased to hear from you again. In the meantime, I remain, giving you the kindest regards,

Always devoted
J. Evola

J. Evola
197 Corso Vittorio Emanuele

Letter to Titus Burckhardt (1963)

Rome, 9.I.1963

Dear Lord,

I have read in *É.[tudes] T.[raditionnelles]* your review of my latest book and I thank you for attention you were willing to give it, as well as for the notions contained in it, which you thought were positive and intended to point out to readers.

Coming now to your critical remarks, I believe that to some extent they stem from the fact, that you aimed too high. The fundamental problems of this work are not those of initiation, but are kept essentially on the level of a kind of "ethics" that takes the place, while maintaining its primary function, of a *sui generis* "traditional esotericism"-in place of that, which, in the "regime of the residuals," in my opinion no longer makes any sense. That is why traditional doctrines are only minimally included in this book; the problem of initiation I have only touched upon in the last chapter, and in its pages the words "transcendence," metaphysics, etc., must evidently be taken *cum grano salis* and by adopting definite reservations.

Thus, what you say about the traditional meaning of the word "symbol" is right, but it is manifestly not what I am referring to in talking about, e.g., "symbolism," etc, of machinism, etc.; here "symbol" is very simply equivalent to "paradigm" or "image" of an attitude and behavior to be adopted in life ("nothing too much," clarity, essentialism-which here does not have the pretentious sense of "realizing one's own essence," as you translated, but indicates an essential and objective style, in a general sense), without necessarily metaphysical implications, as in the current use of this term. On the other hand, you will have seen that I have taken a stand against those (I am thinking of E. Jünger, *An der Zeitmauer*, to which *Le matin des magiciens* might be juxtaposed) who suppose that the modern world of technology conceals a "metaphysics," in the sense you assigned to this word.

In the domain that is closest to you, I would have to ask whether or not you admit that even non-Western civilizations are affected by "cyclical laws." If so, I do not assign great importance to distinguishing certain places where involution has not yet reached the level of the modern West. As for initiatory organizations, I did not say that there are absolutely no more of them, but that they are "increasingly rare and inaccessible." This is the pure truth, proving impossible to seriously deny the obscuration that has affected many of them. And if you invite me to disregard such organizations as groups of men (duly qualified men), then it is difficult not to infer that it is the "vertical" rather than the "horizontal" direction (i.e., the chain, insofar as it also exists in history) that counts for real connection. Thus, in the brief analyses I wished to devote to this topic at the end of my book, while considering the horizontal link (to propitiate the other, vertical), I found it necessary to point out two other possibilities (p. 307-308) which, abnormal in a normal environment, are likely to be almost the only ones effective in an abnormal environment, such as the present one.

For that matter, I don't think I would be doing you a very good service if I conveyed your address, based on your quotation *quaerite et invenietis*, to all the people who come to me asking for "initiation" and who, except in exceptional cases, I refer to far less pretentious perspectives than those contained in the last pages of my book.

Also, I would like to bring your attention to p. 309-310 of my work, where I have tried to indicate what may perhaps generate a divergence between us on these issues. For me, initiation, in the sense, is that which, in the face of irrevocable trauma, produces an ontological opening and change *in the terms of a lived experience*. It is difficult to speak of "true" initiation in regard to so-called "virtual" initiation—a condition that is "necessary" but so scarcely "sufficient" that it would be legitimate to question whether it is even necessary—as much as a merely formal connection with an organization capable transmitting in an almost mechanical, ritualistic manner a "spiritual influence." On the other hand, it would be too simple to point out how many "regular" initiates, in this precipitous sense, are far from showing "lights" or powers more than many "laymen" (there is, e.g., the case of two well-known Italian Orientalists who have a whole collection of "regular," evidently "virtual" initiations in the East—the founders of Theosophism and other occultists were largely not "regular initiates," as were Freemasons, and yet were they not responsible for sinister distortions of traditional knowledge?).

When she speaks of spiritual influences "whose action, though not always apparent, immeasurably exceeds anything that falls within the powers

of man," in general-that is, regardless of what my book refers to-nowadays this idea, to which in principle I could not but adhere, poses a problem. I wonder whether those who can still dispose of such influences have been instructed not to use them and not to meddle with the general process of involution. That is, what should we think, e.g., of Tibet, ravaged and desecrated by Chinese communism? Perhaps we could add to it the case of Japanese suicide bombers, almost always shot down like flies before they could approach the enemy, activating in their own way "the wind of the gods." Many other similar cases could be evoked. The presence of Sufist centers in Islam has in no way prevented the "evolution" of Arab countries, in a "modernist" and "progressive" sense. That is, should one perhaps think that the general process of "solidification" and desacralization now makes the power you speak of relative, and that it is not easy to verify by stopping at the domain of mere knowledge?

Finally, an observation on the last paragraph of your review. I do not see how it is possible to link *tamas* to the symbol of the tiger, in either a literal or spiritual sense. It can only *be rajas*, in its multiple valences, higher and lower. It is quite visible how the background of my book is the same as the "Way of the Left Hand," with a *çakti* referring to the *vîra* type and not the *daiva* type (it is the latter that you consider, with all evidence, and that corresponds to *sattva* and not to *rajas*). Now, according to Tantric doctrine, in the ultimate age the *daiva* type (or *daiva* disposition, *daiva-bhava*) hardly exists any more, and the powers of the "rites" proper to other ages, which presuppose it, are thus nullified. On the other hand, I believe that you yourself have recognized the positive possibilities inherent in one of the possible uses of the "tiger," regarding the sexual techniques and the path of eros that I mentioned in another book of mine. I recently found an interesting testimony: Proclus reports an Orphic doctrine that the God of the ultimate age is Dionysus. This is, in my opinion, very close to the Tantric point of view, and one can see there the opportunity, in times like these, to assign prominence to perspectives such as the ones I have expounded especially for the West (especially since *vîra-bhava* has always predominated in the West), despite all the dangers they entail.

You will forgive me, dear sir, if I have entertained you with these remarks, which are aimed at clarifying some points of view rather than "arguing," and which are also meant to be a demonstration of the special consideration I have for you.

With kindest regards

J. Evola

J. Evola
Corso Vittorio Emanuele 197
Rome

PS. I do not remember whether or not you have received my book on the Grail, in the German edition. If not, I will have a copy of the newly released Italian edition sent to you.

Letters to Ladislao Toth (1963-1964)

I have already shown the close connection between the creation of the Archè publishing house and the person of Julius Evola, evoking the beginning of relations, first epistolary and then personal, with the "Black Baron." Having been his assiduous reader for years, along with authors such as René Guénon, Titus Burckhardt and Frithjof Schuon, it was in the logic of things that one day or another I should make contact with the major Italian author of this current. What better occasion to celebrate, alongside the memories of that day, a minor but nevertheless important current event, namely the first French translation of the present text, which will complete the French Evolian bibliography of Archè.

My letter of April 1, 1963, contains a report on an unexpected meeting with the editor-in-chief of the Turin-based *Rivista di Studi Tradizionali*, Mr. Riva, assisted for the occasion by a young "follower," Mr. Coscia (who in turn had visited Evola in Rome). The meeting took place at the initiative of a group of Evolians whom we young people called "the Senators," because of their age, and whom he had invited. The subject of the discussion was the problem of initiation. Some, having well in mind the Evolian article on "initiatory regularity," ended up putting Riva on the spot, forcing him to suggest somewhat too casually to obtain instrumentally the so-called "Masonic" one. The proposal by Riva and his acolyte elicited a lively reaction from the listeners. This is very indicative of what is "underneath" this group. My next long letter, dated August 29, 1963, is entirely occupied with a detailed nine-point description of my publishing project, accompanied by confirmation of my firm determination to carry it out.

To this missive came, like a cold shower, Evola's timely and detailed reply of September 3, 1963, reproduced here in full.

Actually, all these criticisms were well founded and perfectly justified, dictated, as the philosopher said, by the charitable intention to protect me from myself, from my own enthusiasm. The point is that, at that time, Evola could not take into account the innovations or, more precisely, the future inventions of the low-cost reproduction technique, combined with the high quality of my early publications. Thus, my reply of September 17, 1963, recognized the proper basis of my correspondent's criticism, expressing deep gratitude for his lucid analysis and frank words. I concluded by saying that, while remaining true to my principles, I would wait for ... more propitious times.

Ladislaus Toth

Rome, March 17, 1963

Dear Friend,

I got your letter, thank you and apologize for the delay in acknowledging receipt of it. There is evidently very little to add to what you say, dealing here with my own views. With regard to the Turin Guénonian magazine, you probably know that I thought it appropriate to give a brief reply to this singular account of the *Doctrine of Awakening* (rightly making a point of the things you wrote to me in the letter you subsequently received) in the last issue of the magazine *The Ghibelline*: unfortunately, magazines designed to deal with such matters do not exist here at all. I spoke of Guénon and Guénonian "scholasticism" (in the deterrent sense of the term) and characterized as "first of the class" those who, as you rightly say, are afraid to come out in the open, venturing their own personal thoughts. I was told that in the next issue of the same magazine there would be an account of my *Metaphysics of Sex*. I have not seen it, and I will not seek it out, nor will I assign any importance this group and what it says, after this fine-tuning.

Perhaps it will not be entirely without interest to see what "lies beneath" the attitude of the journal in question, for it is bizarre that these criticisms-witnessing a rather profligate sense of the desirability of holding to common principles with a view to concerted action against the dominant secular culture front, in lieu of creating internal dissensions-were rightly made at the time when, on the other hand, the Parisian headquarters of Guénonian orthodoxy, *Études Traditionnelles*, which had expressed certain reservations about me, had blocked them, since they published the French translation of *The Hermetic Tradition*, and rightly publicized the two works attacked by the Turin journal. Before its release, I had been duly warned about the initiative, where in a way one was surprised that the organizers had not made contact with me. It is true, moreover, that an article by Burckhardt on *Riding the Tiger* came out in the last issue of *Études Traditionnelles*, where certain dogmatic positions of this current come up again (but this is partly due to the fact that I did not recognize the plan-not entirely initiatory-to which that book belongs).

In order to rectify a few points and point this out, I sent a letter to Burckhardt, with whom I am on cordial terms, which was also circulated in Paris.

You may know that in the meantime the new, revised and partly completed edition of my book on the *Grail Mystery* - published by Ceschina - has also come out.

At the end of the year another book of mine, *The Way of Cinnabar*, will come out, which is a kind of history of my activity, starting from the beginning, through almost four and a half decades.

It goes without saying that if you were to pass through Rome, I would gladly see you, on the sole condition that I would be notified only at the last moment. However, I would advise you to use the trip to take care of some other business, since I think that for this interview it is not worth undertaking an unshort trip, with all that this entails.

Best regards

J. Evola

[II]

Rome, September 3, 1963

Dear Mr. Toth,

I got your letter. The project you set out is undoubtedly interesting, but, as I told you here in Rome, I find it difficult to imagine the possibility its realization. The first thing you should have told me in your letter is that you have a not insignificant amount of money-four or five million lire-or that you have found someone willing to put it in, even with the prospect of at least a partially non-returnable payment, since it is already problematic to fall back on expenses. Beyond that, everything remains without a serious basis. First of all, in order to attract the attention of both the public and booksellers, it is impossible to start with one or two books: one must launch at least three or four. The method of publishing one book and waiting for the money to come back to make a second cannot suit a solid initiative. Passa tried it, with Axe Editions, and had to stop immediately.

You will certainly be familiar with the subscription-based publications of Omnium Littéraire, which waits years before collecting advance fees. But a publishing house new to the market would offer no guarantee to those who would have to pay in advance. Moreover, one should have no illusions about the effectiveness of the bulletins sent to customers. To promote my latest books, the Atanòr address book was used, with about one thousand seven hundred addresses, combined with my own, personal ones. The result did not eighty direct orders from the

book, already given for publication; in fact, purchase orders serve mainly to inform those who reside in large cities, who almost always go looking for the book in a bookstore, only those who reside in small towns order it directly from the publisher.

To "move" booksellers, one has to take a direct interest in them, moving from town to town, as Scheiwiller does, with all the associated expenses; moreover, booksellers will never get too enthusiastic about works of which only a few copies are sold, given their genre. How many booksellers say that my volumes published by Laterza, which is nevertheless a well-organized publisher, are sold out, when in fact they are not sold out at all?

About quality texts, additional financial problems arise for the latter: partly, because of copyright or translation rights (an advance is always required); partly, because the idea of finding highly qualified people (for translations, critical editions, etc.) who their work in good measure out of "ideality" always remains highly hypothetical: turning to pure professionals in fact requires high fees to be paid upon delivery of the work (*cash*). Leaving aside the poor opportunity to come up with a single book, the choice of this Italian remake of Geber (*El Gabîr*) I do not find happy (the original might be of interest: but how to find a translator from ancient Arabic?). The text is difficult, there are several "remnants" of physical alchemy, a great deal of interpolations. This may be of interest only to ultra-specialists. And then, there is an experience to be taken into account: Della Riviera - *Il Mondo Magico de gli Heroi* - a much clearer and suggestive work: the sale was very weak, the work, after twenty years, is still not sold out.

As for novels, there is competition from publishers devoted to them. For good, relatively modern works, it will always happen to her to face the purchase of rights and translation costs. For *The Golem*, she would have to deal with the Swiss publisher that currently owns all the rights to Meyrink, and possibly also with the heirs of Campitelli, who had published it.

All this will seem a bit daunting to you, but it is impossible for me not to feel the need to protect you from yourself. Unfortunately, today material "solidity" conditions everything.

I would add that for Oriental texts that are not primarily esoteric in nature, but may fall into the category of "Orientalism," there is competition from publishing houses such as Boringhieri *et similia*, with wide means and already organized dissemination networks.

Best regards

J. Evola

[III]

Rome, September 5, 1964

Dear Mr. Toth,

Mention of your publishing initiative to certain people (not those likely to steal ideas from you one way or other) sparked interest.

An element of the Neo-Kremmertian circle told me that he has the translation of the *Chymica Vannus* and *De Pharmaco Catholico*, done by E. Quadrelli (*a.k.a.* "Tikaipos"), and he could remit the manuscript to her should the initiative develop in the direction of publishing the translations as books in their own right, in their own right. Several copies, she assures me, would be purchased from that environment.

I remember the presentation of the series whose draft you forwarded to me. If there no final decision for this form and if you send that paper back to me, I could see if a better one can be worked out.

Best regards

J. Evola

LOST WRITINGS

Magicians, gods, titans: a controversy of the 1920s

By Julius Evola and Francesco Aquilanti

The reader will encounter below two texts of extreme relevance to the understanding and historical contextualization of the Evolian philosophical phase. The first is taken from Francesco Aquilanti's 1927 volume *Certezze*. In these pages, the author, an outstanding Catholic thinker and scholar of the philosophy of law attentive to the speculative debate then underway in neo-idealist circles, presents the *crisis* situation with which culture - in particular, philosophy - had to come to terms in the first decades of the 20th century, recalling, among others, the figures of Carlo Michelstaedter and Otto Braun. The two very young thinkers, to the collapse of the *positive* certainties of modernity centered on the primacy of the *universal*, opposed a kind of *eleatism of practice*, paying with their lives (the former died by suicide at only twenty-three years of age, the latter fell on the battlefields of World War I) for this inane effort to *ethicize the individual*.

Aquilanti alludes, then, to that congeries of thought that Massimo Cacciari would, in later years, call "metaphysics of youth." Such a trend of thought connoted of itself the generation born "around" November 20, 1889, the day Gustav Mahler conducted his First Symphony at the Budapest Philharmonic. It was a speculative and existential experience marked by the *negative* and the rejection of all transcendent reference, matured through the exegesis of Stirner and Nietzsche. Michelstaedter, Braun and the others Aquilanti mentions were induced by the historical-spiritual contingencies to live socratically, privileging the ethical dimension, the decision and the choice that in them, unlike in Kierkegaard, was no longer directed to the religious in the proper sense, but to the *Werk*, to the work that, in such a view, should have realized the reunion of life and thought, finite and infinite. Well, the Catholic writer notes how to the same existential and intellectual tension belonged the author of *Essays on Magical Idealism*, published in 1925.

The second piece of writing was instead published in the July-August 1927 issue of *Il progresso religioso. Rivista del movimento contemporaneo*, edited by Mario Puglisi (one of the periodicals of Italian Protestantism, to which the Roman philosopher collaborated): it is Evola's review of Aquilanti's same book. The pages of the Catholic thinker propose, in synthesis, the *criticalities* detected in Evolian theorems by his adversaries, starting from Ugo Spirito to reach Antimo Negri, who, albeit in different tones, have enacted a "crushing" of magical idealism, leading Evolian positions back to

expression of sterile solipsism and titanism. On the contrary, the Evolian reply contains, *in nuce*, those absolutely essential elements of his speculation, only in recent decades highlighted by the most shrewd exegetes of his philosophy, such as Gian Franco Lami, Roberto Melchionda, Giovanni Damiano, Franco Volpi, Massimo Donà and Romano Gasparotti.

To understand the extraordinary relevance of magical idealism, it is necessary to keep in mind that such a system of thought implies the progressive negation of the empirical individual, in an *iter* of autonomization from the cosal and empowerment of the self. The ego is not, therefore, required to defer to a principle placed outside itself, as the Catholic Aquilanti would have it, but chooses self-determination, an effective *persuasion*. Incidentally, unlike the different and earlier forms of idealism, in Evola the distinction of real ego and abstract transcendental ego is lost. The latter has been defined by idealists in disparate ways: by Hegel as Idea, by Royce as God, by Gentile as pure Act. "It is thus that the Ego, which has in philosophy elevated itself up to a cosmic creator, finds itself by any accident of its little 'overcome' humanity led back among the infinite contingencies of life, before which it is so *powerless*." The individual of abstract idealism is present to himself only on the theoretical level, of thought, Evola argues (we can indeed reconstruct the internal plots of our thinking and saying), but we cannot say we are self-sufficient in the face of a natural phenomenon, of which at most we grasp the imaginal dimension: "*Formal* or gnoseological sufficiency is opposed by an [...] *intensive* insufficiency." Now, the spiritual and intellectual crisis of the first decades of the twentieth century was, for Evola, traceable to such a contradiction, which was evident in idealism, an advanced form of modern knowledge, which could have been overcome on condition that the ego proved itself capable of taking upon itself its own insufficiency and, "bearing the full weight of it, consist."

It is possible to arrive at the absolute individual by considering the "other" that limits freedom, the datitude of the world, as not necessarily caused, but having in itself a positivity to be made explicit in a process always *in fieri*. Naturally, Evola looks with participatory interest at the Aristotelian doctrine of potency and act. In him, unlike the usual readings of Aristotelianism, act does not exhaust the infinite, metamorphic dimension of *dynamis*, of potency. I and not-I are both involved in an infinite transformative *iter*, always available to *novum*, to *da-being*. By "humanizing" itself, the ego humanizes the world. Thus, Evolian philosophy presupposes the resolution of logical and ontological dichotomies, including the one in question of Ego and non-ego, existence and essence, error and truth, in a *mediation*, in a process. These are merely quantitative differentiations, not qualitative ones, such as the one that

"distinguishes" the possible (always *in fieri*) from the real, the actualized, precisely because the "real" is not Other than the ego.

Given these premises, it is inevitable, in order not to follow the escape routes of other idealisms in the theistic God substitutes, to place the ego not "fixed once and for all in certain capacities, but as an infinite power of development, and to affirm that absolute knowing has as a condition the actual extension of sufficient activity of the ego over all that world, which is its world." In that case, absolute knowing is power. In fact, "I can say I am absolutely certain only of those things of which I have the principle and causes within me, as unconditioned freedom." The whole of nature, the cosmos, "rests" on the "I. In this statement, most exegetes, like Aquilanti, have read a clear profession of titanic solipsism. Actually, the identity of ego and world, the erasure of the otherness of the latter, can be read in a "classical" and/or Brunian key. A single principle animates entities, including man, *dynamis*, which gives rise to *physis* as *mixis*, an eternal succession of passages from potency to act, never definitively concluded, not even in man, exposed to the hyperbolic *novum* of Dionysian potency.

The *magical* dimension, open to the *impossible* of our knowing, allows for a new reading of the world. In fact, Evola clarifies, "there are neither material nor spiritual things, but rather a way, material or spiritual, of experiencing things, which in themselves are neither material nor spiritual." Moreover, keep in mind that for Evola the action of desire, "rhetoric," aimed at the realization of ends through the correlation of consciousness, proper to the "titan," is impure and powerless. Pleasure, the useful, should not be the motives of action, on the contrary! They are "the flower and creation of it," a consequence of its arising from a free and powerful choice, equal to that of Duns Scotus' God. Thus, the philosopher points out, "the spirit is nothing but the infinite energy that reasserts itself over all those forms in which it coagulates and determines its power, it is nothing but the Heraclitean *pùr*, the creative and dissolving blaze."

The titanic, solipsistic checkmate is not Evola's. His *action*, as Aquilanti himself points out, is not the *action* of the modern subject. This is shown, clarity, by the third test of which the philosopher says, that of *love*: "A deeper negation of self, which is the existence *in* itself of a thing, v. d. the thing as the object of unconditional love." The individual will only be able to become conformed to his own *absoluteness* by coming out of himself, in fact denying himself, "and to feel inwardly and productively all that was previously opposed to him as an external world."

So much for titanism Evola's absolute individual denies himself and meets the
potestates of cosmos, as happened to the Sapients. È the
denial of

modern subjectivity that springs from "experiencing" the *immanent transcendence of dynamis*. Critics of Evolian philosophy have not understood this, not even Aquilanti, whose exegesis of Evola is not prejudicially critical but hinges on a heteronomous worldview, unable to read *physis* as the only transcendence that truly overpowers us. The two writings that follow allow the reader to enter into the living things of that debate and grasp the relevance of magical idealism.

John Sessa

To understand an epoch, it is necessary to reflect seriously on the way of thinking of its most representative men. There is between the ideology of the crowd and that of the geniuses a mysterious and profound correspondence.

We are at a turning point in the history of civilization: something dark and powerful is about to be born. The old world has collapsed: the outlines of the new are barely visible. It is significant and almost rises to symbolic value that the most original and characteristic thinkers are all young, some indeed, like Evola, very young, others already broken by the icy breath of death or at war, like Braun, or fierce against self, like Michelstaedter.

Maturity is the age of the limit: they ignore the limit, they theorize the vortex, the dynamism, the perpetual flow. They are Heraclitean: their mysticism no longer inebriates with heavenly visions, it adheres to the earth, seeks to grasp its tragic and suggestive soul. The creed of these young people could be summed up, in my opinion, in one word: *titanism*. The expression is taken from Braun: "Realize the God in you."

As can be seen, this school is the antithesis of Christianity: dedication the one, pride the other, the one as powerful as water which cannot be resisted and envelops everything with itself, the other as arduous as fire, aspires to the supreme heights, and meets with emptiness.

Yet in these writers there is a burning ardor of spiritual life, there is a very high sense of God. They blaspheme him and they worship him: aberrant propositions alternate with lucid and sublime propositions, like speeches angels.

Let us try to orient ourselves. starting point is idealism; it is simply Kant.

The shadow cast by the loner of Königsberg is still lofty over the world, hence an intimate persuasion of mine that a true value system cannot be reconstructed except by overcoming the lofty but nefarious doctrine of the Nordic thinker. The center of reality is not outside us, but in us: science becomes a function *Io*: Einstein, Riemann, Lobačevsky ended up demolishing the

so-called eternal truths of Euclid and Newton: nothing resists the dissolving force of their analyses.

It seems that vulgar, sparkling, full, poetic knowledge sometimes even prevails over scientific knowledge, naked, abstract, remote from life. Idealism is the orgy of thought, which has become with Fichte and Schelling a creator: history for Hegel has no more secrets, it is the rational that has become real.

But one does not live by thought alone: cold light is preferred to warm light: Gentile's transcendent ego has the abysmal depth of caves. Everything and nothing at once includes in itself. The revision begins at this point: recent thinkers have realized that the extreme thirst for the concrete, which animates idealism, has remained unquenched. The universal, says Hamelin, is the poorest degree of reality: everything tends toward the individual with ever fuller development. The ethical problem is the grave of idealism: after all, it is ethics that best evaluates systems.

Metaphysically, it is possible to exchange negative signs for positive ones, but life has ironclad demands, which do not lend themselves to compass games. The new metaphysics therefore are ethically based: this is also the attempt to overcome idealism by a young philosopher of ours, Enrico Castelli, expressed in a lucid little book, published by Signorelli, *Philosophy of Life*.

One has today what I would say is a very intense, concentrated view of life. Obstacles are no longer tolerated: the world is a creation of the ego, and not of the ego as thought, but of the ego as will. Art gives us the suggestive cue to understand this complicated position.

The old great masters of mankind made their glory consist in oblivion, in allowing themselves to be almost absorbed by the poetic flame, which stirred them: Aeschylus, Sophocles, Dante, identified themselves with the world they represented.

Today, on the other hand, the "I" crazes in art: Chekhov, Andreiev, Pirandello entrust the spectator with the most difficult and lofty part in their comedies; in France the Theatre of Silence achieves great success; nothing is unfolded, everything is hinted at; cerebralism triumphs; art is no longer a gift of grace, but a laborious construction of thought. The world of art, like the world of mathematics in Vico, attracts us greatly because it is decomposable into planes and lines, diaphanous, transparent.

One wants to break down through the concept of power the spirit-independent nature: to make it also our own projection. Idealism is no longer actualistic, that is, resolving itself in the act of thought, but magical, as Evola expresses himself: now what characterizes the magician before the philosopher is that the magician is invested with power over reality. Regardless of the particulars peculiar to each conception, Evola, Hamelin, Braun, Michelstaedter, Keyserling, to whom he refers

the "School of Wisdom," move on the same plane. Their merit is that they have accentuated, indeed exasperated, the problem individuality.

In an obscure but highly thoughtful book by Evola, a strange theory around the "construction of immortality" is boldly unfolded. What is valuable and exact about it is the assertion that Gentile's abstract, ideal immortality does not satisfy us, does not interest us: what is pressing is that the ego, our Ego, with its experiences and with its consciousness, conquers death.

Immortality therefore would be the conquest of a chosen few, of those who have become accustomed in the pilgrimage of the earth to free themselves from the senses. Other souls would be purified as they went along, through the crucible of successive rebirths. I think one really does not have to go back to Pythagoras or Plato's myths to trace such an insidiously aristocratic theory.

Immortality is proper to all souls, it is in the essence of the soul, but it is not therefore Christianly dependent on us to achieve true joyful immortality. So likewise, the doctrine of the progressive liberation of our bodies from the bondage of the senses, the enhancement of the activity of the spirit in the face of the passivity of matter, can be part of the Catholic tradition.

The Pauline body is a garment of glory: the body is a temple of the spirit; hence high and worthy moral precepts follow, such as that of the superiority of chastity over conjugality, chastity which is an indication of self-sufficiency. But in all this there is really nothing magical, much that is traditional, despite the novelty of the expression.

Where the great dream turns into delirium is when Evola, dominated by the idea of autarky, wanting to make man the creator of the world, repeats Fichte's aberrant sacrilegious program to the disciples, "Today we will create God," and strives, with fine but fatuous analysis, to demolish, as he says, all the supports, all the foundations, on which life is founded.

There have in this part quick and interesting references to experience and catharsis of the mystics, but we cannot indulge in such inquiries; and we reprove them instead recisively when we connect them to the end they aim at, which is Stirnerian and solipsistic. The world, the other selves, have dissolved, all of them: all that remains is the creating self, locked in a gloomy vortex, without relations or healthy dependencies. Already Pirandello's characters had accustomed us to these catastrophes, these collapses of humanity's spiritual foundations. Here the artistic process has become a philosophical process.

There is, however, in the background an attempt at mystical overcoming. The denial in the name of my spirit of all spirits is too strong: if everything returns to the One and from the One derives, will not the spirits be forms and modes of the central One? Do you feel

Plotinus and Master Eckhart. But where then is the exaltation of individuality, if the individual is destined to mystically dissolve into the whole?

In Keyserling the sense of freedom is most vivid. The two worlds of nature and spirit are sharply contrasted: the Knower is the one who rules things from within, and is thus lord of them. Remember Emerson and Carlyle. Matter is an opaque letter; spirit is its vibrant soul. When we understand the world, it becomes the instrument of our freedom.

Universals fall apart before the absolute assertion of the Titan; there is only the arbitrariness of man turned into god; the old God for Braun is a puppet of the imagination. Mysticism descends from heaven to earth: each of us should be lord of our passions in order to curb or unleash them in due time (a contradictory passionality because it is logically cold).

Evola adds, "No feeling, no pity, no generosity," the Autarch must live without support. We are, as the shrewd reader warns, on the verge of lucid madness. It is the extreme end point of modernity: activism, dynamism, energy theories fatally disgorge here.

But the Titan instead must kneel, the Titan must acknowledge God. He has misunderstood: he still believes in the Jewish God, he has not understood that God is Love, and that to serve Love, supreme Love, is to be lords in dependence. Self-sufficiency does not mean taking refuge in a gloomy cult of the ego like Michelstaedter, who instead declared himself insufficient in the face of life's arduous trials, trials that must be daily, with invincible consciousness, overcome. The universal is not a shadow play; it is the means by which the individual is purified and uplifted. We must dispense with the supports of the world, but this means redeeming ourselves from the bondage of things, loving them not for our demanding selfishness, but for what in themselves they are worth, for what in themselves they are.

The Titan, like Prometheus, is bound to the cliff: only Love will be able to untie him: then he will no longer be like the Fairy Morgana, magnificent but illusory, then his voice will be the voice of reality all around and, if Genius, he will convert the world, like the Hebrew Prophets, into a fiery tongue, hailing God.

Francesco Aquilanti

The work, which we point out here, comprises a group of lucid and valuable essays on contemporary currents, personalities and doctrines, with special emphasis on what concerns the spiritual and religious problem. The rare gifts of open and sympathetic understanding, loyalty, nobility and moral elevation, exquisite feeling connected with a lively sense of inner and supermundane values that a lyrical style

and effective, enacts in rapid synthesis, these qualities that, far from being alone, we already admired in Aquilanti the writer and orator, and which made him so sympathetically known in Roman intellectual circles, in this new work receive irrefutable confirmation.

There are many pages that emanate a sense of strength and light. However - we would be about to say - more because of a strange and indefinable power of the writer, than because of the theses advocated, to apply to which the title of "certainties," seems to us somewhat risky, and by "certainty" we mean the spontaneous adherence of feeling, the appeasement of common sense, the conformity to what traditional psychic habits ànno imprinted in us, there is no doubt that the work of Our Lord - and to this he manifestly tends - is saturated with "certainties." Senonché we believe that the philosophy and consciousness of higher beings begin with the power to impose silence on all this, and with the effort to discover, reconstruct and verify with a cold eye the subterranean genesis and foundation of that natural evidence, with respect to which we are passive, which imposes itself on us as a pure fact. But then the reservations that could be made to the A. would multiply with every page.

Often we see the A. becoming almost fascinated by the liveliest and most varied contemporary trends, following them, identifying with them to point of lyrically and sympathetically giving them soul - but, all of a sudden, here he reacts and the appeal to "evidence" returns, almost as if out of a sense of danger. Which "evidence" is identified, at a remove, with the Catholic view of life nuanced in some cases in Franciscan tones, in others in "heroic" tones; but which in any case, on the basis of a need for fixed points in "other," for human consensus, for communication, we very much fear betrays the secret key to so many of today's "comebacks": that is, a sense of mistrust and release of creative forces, a need to lean back. Of course, believing that the Good, the True and the Just are not arbitrary statues but absolute values, believing that there is a providence in the world, believing that we are not alone and that Love is the deepest law of things-believing all of this soothes, comforts, distracts many. The evil, however, is that on one principle the fact that it is good for men's feelings is by no means a guarantee of its validity; and, secondly, that there may be beings who can dispense with tranquilizations, consolations, and distractions and, ceasing to believe, see things as they are, and operate coldly and manfully in consequence. Prof. Del Vecchio, in a preface nod, precisely points out to the A. that ethics, e.g., is entirely unrelated to the question of whether or not to accept idealism, a question that must be resolved in purely theoretical and gnoseological terms. This fair point could extend to many other condemnations, or glorifications, of the A.

Transporting them into a technical order, we believe, is not even their intention. More than anything else, they tend to delineate, enliven and contrast spiritual positions. In this area, however, we can detect some one-sidedness, which is useful for the needs of games of effect, but not so much for the purposes of objectivity. We find disliked, e.g., the A.'s adherence to the tendency so prevalent today to consider Christianity without question as the synthesis and exclusive repository of the highest spiritual values. Effective, on the other hand, is the critique of the activist and Faustian fever, of the struggling, tragic, worried, greedy sense of existence that pervades modern work, made up of machines, gold and paltry selfishness; in what, in this area, he denies, the A. finds us entirely agreeable and as much as dissenting with regard to what he asserts as the antidote and solution to this evil.

Having then done us the honor of also considering the personal doctrines of the writer of these lines, we deem it necessary to clarify the points of contention, even though in so doing we depart from the lines of the program and ideas advocated by this periodical.

We fear, therefore, that lyricism has distorted things a bit for the A. in leading him to frame us against the rather tragic and *vieux jeu* backdrop of titanism, the doctrine of "God-killers and pale egoarchs." What only is certain is that we believe that those who have truly gone through the crisis of modern consciousness (to which the author himself acknowledges a certain dialectical sincerity) and hold firm, cannot return to any form of Christianity. The writer of these lines believes that the religious sense of the world in us moderns no longer arouses any resonance and, truly, looks with wonder and curiosity at those who are still capable of it.

We believe that the future (if future there is to be and not catastrophe) for the West, will be of a true liberated race, superior (and here we agree with the A.) to the law of matter as well as to that of gold, desire and selfishness; of a calm race, returning to the purity of a state of active indifference, of absolute practicality, untethered from purposes, reasons, values and feelings; of a loyal, simple, military, positive race. Perhaps major and perhaps minor: individuals against individuals and individuals alongside individuals, without any providential or theological background. God will simply be the greatest of powers, whom one can obey and against whom one can fight, but whom one looks up to in every case, without Christian fear or Semitic envy. Acts of absolute generosity and absolute cruelty -- to sacrifice, to give or to sacrifice -- in a pure, passionless way. Let the A. be sure that we take on many of his instances, but there where he thinks he reconciles the views of sobriety, strength, calmness, lucid selfhood, hierarchical superiority, venial, as he puts it,

not from above by privilege, but by natural selection of competition (p. 73), that is, the pagan views, not the Franciscan Christian views, contaminated, more or less, with sentimentality, with the needs of the soul, with equality of will, to huddle together and communicate out of mutual insufficiency and identical fear of loneliness and silence, when he attempts this conciliation, we the A. can no longer follow him, and we regret it: for this conciliation is not possible, and every bridge between these two worlds, between which the modern age is bound to decide, is a compromise.

Julius Evola

On apparitions and the magical meaning of baptism

by Julius Evola

The discovery in the Historical Archives of the Italian *Encyclopedia* of two headwords prepared by Julius Evola for the *Encyclopedia* did not surprise me. I had always had the conviction that the Roman philosopher's collaboration with Treccani had, in fact, gone far beyond the *Atanòr* "entry" and the unsigned ones (*Smaragdina Tavola* and *Pietra Filosofale*), which were in any case of uncertain attribution. In a letter to Giovanni Gentile, Evola reported that he had delivered "to his friend Spirit" the "voices" within his competence, thus speaking of "voices" in the plural. And not at random.

The headwords presented here, which were not published by Gentile's decision, who suppressed them, allow us to shed light on the complex web of spiritual and cultural influences that affected the formation and worldview of the traditionalist philosopher. This is evident from both the citations in the text and the bibliography at the end. The author ranges from the classical sources of the Greco-Roman world (Pindar, Aeschylus, Heraclitus, Plutarch, Plotinus) to the biblical and traditions, from Mahayana Buddhism to Indian esotericism-considering, in particular, Tantrism-to Chinese Taoism.

I call the reader's attention to a few points in particular. In distinguishing between "subjective," "semi-subjective" and "objective" apparitions, and in dwelling, in particular, on the second type, Evola writes: "From the practical point of view, of one who sets out on this experience by a conscious method, the difference of the apparitions of the second type from those of the first, is based on the attainment a state of mental "Emptiness" (the *çunya* of Yoga) and intense "asceticism" that neutralizes all those elements that would act in the imagination."

Therefore, the spiritual orientation and the rigorously experimental approach of the Author is immediately clear: conscious, active orientation, facing the spiritual entities with which one has a direct relationship, a dominating attitude, based on conscious presence, far from any mystical and dualistic inclination but also from any form of mediumistic passivity. It is the "solar" orientation, assuming the Sun as the physical symbol of the spiritual Sun-which the philosopher Julian Emperor tells us about which Evola expressly recalls-and above all of an inner solarly, according to the traditional conception of man and his constituent elements illustrated by Evola in *The Hermetic Tradition*. Moreover, it is certainly not accidental that the work *Introduction to Magic* has as its subtitle *which Science of the Ego*.

The centrality of conscience as the foundation and prerequisite of a healthy and

positive experience of the supersensible is reiterated when Evola speaks of objective apparitions. In this context, he dwells on the doctrine of the "spiritual body" or "magic body," on the assumption that the ego has towards corporeality the same relationship it has with speech, which may or may not be manifested: "Corporeality [...] takes on the character of an 'apparition'; and we speak men who can appear or disappear at will, [...] always maintaining the centrality of consciousness."

This central theme reappears-as a golden thread that connects and unifies the whole-in the final passage of this lemma, when it speaks of the possibility of the transposition of the consciousness-will core into a higher condition of existence "where bodies are not bodies but groups of forces" and cites Plotinus' world energies (*Enneads*, II, IX, 17). This final expression is very significant, as it introduces the theme of Will, which corroborates consciousness and thus solar orientation.

The influence of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophical esotericism and, more properly, Spiritual Science as the inner and deeper core of Anthroposophy is evident, so much so that in the bibliography he cites Steiner's *The Initiation* in its original German edition.

Spiritual Science articulates the human being into the three faculties of *thinking*, *feeling* and *willing*, connected to the head, chest and lower limbs respectively. In particular, the prominence of Will emerges clearly in the exercise concentration on the insignificant object, where Will is injected into thought to concentrate it on the entity and thus transform it into "thought-power."

The prominence given to the Will was already present in the esoteric reading of the Mithriac tauromachy, in the essay published in *Ultra* in 1926, and is related to the influence that Steinerian thought had on the Roman philosopher, in his youthful phase, through the mediation of Giovanni Colazza - but also, perhaps, of other anthroposophists, such as Colonna di Cesarò and Arturo Onofri - who was part of the Ur Group in a leading position and whom Evola knew and frequented even earlier, in the years of collaboration with the Independent Theosophical League of Rome, directed by Decio Calvari.

The reference to the Hermetic-alchemical tradition also stands out in this final passage, when he quotes the maxim "dissolving the fixed, fixing the volatile." We are now in the late 1920s (the epistolary relationship with Gentile runs from 1927 to 1929), and Evola in 1930 proposes his text *La tradizione ermetica* to Laterza; he writes to Benedetto Croce, asking for and obtaining his support at Bari publisher. So these are the years when he is delving into the sources of the alchemical tradition, after books on Taoism and Tantrism. After all, the only "entry" he manages to publish in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* is *Atanòr*.

Appearing in the bibliography-and appearing first-is René Guénon's *L'Erreur Spirite*, fundamental to the critique of Spiritism, which will strongly influence the chapter on the subject of *Mask and Face of Contemporary Spiritualism*, first published by Bocca in 1931.

We are in a phase of Evolian thought in which very different cultural influences coexist, from Guénon to Steiner, which nevertheless linger, if it is true that not only in the first edition but also in the later ones of *Mask and Face* a partially positive judgment on the spiritual orientation persists, experimental and conscious, of Rudolf Steiner, whose "evolutionary deviations" in the view of history Evola nevertheless challenges-it should be pointed out-and rejects the centrality of Christ and the "mystery of Golgotha" that characterize the thought of the founder of Anthroposophy.

Evola's peremptory appeal to traditional doctrines (in particular, where he writes, "For the second type, one must admit the doctrine that the visible world is the externalization of a world of spiritual forces") can be a fruitful key to understanding Giovanni Gentile's decision to suppress the "voice" prepared by Evola.

In his neo-idealistic conception, whereby the world does not exist outside the act of knowing it by the thinking subject, this reading of semisubjective and objective *Apparitions* must have seemed to Gentile too far removed from his worldview.

As for the second item, however, the "body of life" that Evola mentions refers to the conception of the "etheric body" and "astral body" set forth in *The Hermetic Tradition*, within the framework of the conception of the four constituent elements of man (ego, astral body, etheric body, physical) and which we also find in the works of Rudolf Steiner and those of Maximus Scaliger, as well as Giuliano Kremmerz.

This doctrine is, moreover, amply illustrated in the journals *Ur* and *Krur*, and later in *Introduction to magic*.

The "body" of the collective entity refers to the doctrine of the collective psychic entity, that is, the collective "astral," with reference to the forces of the collective psyche. All this relates to the esoteric conception of "magical chains" (to whose headword Evola refers at the end of this "entry"), similarly set forth in *Ur* and *Krur*.

Baptism, in this view, is an act of power due to the Rite, to which an objective and necessitated efficacy is attributed, by virtue of which a bond, deep and invisible, is established between the individual body of life and collective and traditional psychic entity to which the consecration refers. It is noteworthy that the author points out the ambivalence of such an occult link, since in all that

can proceed from the strength of such a collective body unseen influences of both "blessing" and "curse" can come into play.

Here it is necessary to refer to the conception of the ambivalence of the sacred, well known in the history of religions and, in particular, in the works of Mircea Eliade, with reference to ancient civilizations. In such a conception, sacred designates everything outside the ordinary, whether positive or negative, whether beneficial or malefic. In the modern, secularized age, initiation rituals in criminal organizations are an example of the occult and malefic link, in a residual and degenerate form.

Baptism, as a sacrament in the Christian religion, in this magical conception would thus be the religious, exoteric transposition of a very ancient magical rite of initiation to be located in "mystery" type environments dating back not only to the classical world but to archaic cultures. Moreover, there are residual traces of it among so-called "primitive" peoples widely documented in ethnological literature (Frobenius, Levy-Bruhl, Levy-Strauss, etc.).

The delicacy and complexity of this issue, in the cultural and political climate between the late 1920s and the early 1930s, at a historical moment marked by the stipulation of the Lateran Pacts and the Concordat of 1929 between the Italian state and the Catholic Church, may be a fruitful but not exclusive key to Gentile's decision to suppress this lemma.

Stephen Arcella

1. Apparitions

This term can include any manifestation of "figures" that cannot be ascribed to the modes of common perception. Apparitions can be distinguished into: 1) Subjective; 2) Semi-subjective; 3) Objective.

Those of the first two types are manifested through imagination. They occur when - either through a state of spiritual exaltation or intoxication or through a spontaneous dissociation of psychic dynamisms or artificially, by means of hypnotic actions and suitable substances and drugs - the power of the imagination remains isolated from the bodily senses, so as to directly receive or translate into sensible images certain impressions. When these come from the (often subconscious) purely subjective content of the individual psyche, we have the first type of "apparitions": identical in meaning and determination to that of dreams.

Moreover, many apparitions of divine or demonic figures, which occurred in states of ecstasy or intense emotion of mystics and devotees who had made them the object of powerful mono-ideas, must also be traced to this class.

For the second type, one must admit the doctrine, according to which the visible world is the externalization of a world of spiritual forces. These, under given circumstances, instead of manifesting themselves to the bodily senses so as to produce the common representation of things, are thought to be able to act directly in the imagination, in which then again sensible symbolic figures are formed, which, however, accepting the premises, would only in part be said to be subjective.

Traditional personifications of natural forces into "entities," "gods," "genies," "elements," etc., could, in connection with this, have more than just a mythological basis. From the practical point of view, of those who embark on this experience with a conscious method, the difference of the apparitions of the second type from those of the first, is based on the attainment of a state of mental "Emptiness" (the *cūnya* of Yoga) and intense "asceticism" that would neutralize all those personal elements that would act in the imagination, altering the images that could be produced by real extra-subjective influences. A fairly widespread idea in antiquity was that such experiences can easily occur in the state of natural detachment that one has in sleep: whence, with reference to sacred visions and apparitions, it was said that when the eyes of the body close, those of the soul open (cf. Pindar, fr. 131; Aeschylus, fr. 104-105, also Heraclitus, fr. 24 and 75, Diels; etc.).

Consider also that not only forces whose correspondence is on the physical plane can appear; manifestations can be given of forces whose nature is very varied and only "psychic," especially of those dominant in the Far East, "wandering influences."

The third type of apparitions, which we have called "objective," more directly ties in with the doctrine of invisible powers existing behind the visible and corporeal and capable of manifesting themselves not only in figures of the imagination but also materializing before the physical senses. This can be provoked by the magical art, by means of special substances, fumes, perfumes, etc., which form an environment capable of "condensing," of offering an ephemeral but also visible body to the forces that are evoked, or it can be something that takes place in stages such as those of mediumistic trances, where a human being is himself providing, with his dissociated vital and "fluidic" dynamisms, the matter for the apparition (ectoplasms).

Other cases such as those of spontaneous apparitions of *maisons hantées*, etc., obey laws and meanings that are too varied and complicated to be reported here and which, moreover, are rarely examined within magical studies themselves.

Entering the order of ideas of doctrines such as those of docetism, alchemical hermeticism, Mahâyânic Buddhism, Taoism, etc., one encounters the idea of "apparitions" having a permanent or quasi-permanent character, and indiscernible from the real; it is the theory of the "spiritual body," "magic body," or "body of freedom."

The assumption is that the same free relationship that the ego has, e.g., with speech, which may or may not be manifested by him, and this or that—that such a relationship, higher beings, or men who have become higher beings, can establish with all the elements that constitute corporeality. This, then, takes on the character of an "apparition"; and we speak of men who can appear or disappear at will (in Taoism we know *s'inhziai*, which is disappearance without residue—from cf. with the *icchā-mṛtyu*= death at will, of Hindu esotericism, especially Tantric: the biblical tradition has themes of the same concept in figures such as Elijah and Enoch, who were "abducted" so that their bodies could no longer be found); who can take this or that body, and even change it (this is the practice, e.g., of the *of the phouva* of Tibetan magic), always maintaining the centrality of consciousness.

Characteristic is the doctrine of the *nirvana-mahānga*, a magical body that the Mahâyânic Buddha sheathes to manifest himself variously in space and time, according to his mission of universal liberation.

Taoism identifies such a body as the result of a kind of quintessentiation and subtilization to be operated on the same elements as the physical body. Alchemical hermeticism equally views it as the reunion of body and spirit in an inseparable simplicity achieved by corporatizing the spirit and spiritualizing the body: "dissolving the fixed, fixing the volatile." The reality of these and similar possibilities is based on the admission of a plane or stage or condition existence, where bodies are not bodies but groups of forces (Plotinus' "world of energies," *Enn.* II, IX, 17) and of the effectuality of the transposition of the consciousness—will core into it.

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See: Docetism / Evocation / Magic Mirror / Ubiquity.

Reference of: Apparent (Body).

Reference in: Bodies.

2. Baptism (Magical Interpretation of)

According to this interpretation, Baptism would be an act of power determined by the objective and necessitating action attributed to the "rite," conducted under the necessary material and spiritual conditions, by which the "body of life" of the one undergoing it comes to be placed in relation and magically conjoined to the "body" of the collective and traditional entity, to which the consecration refers: so much so as to be part of it, willingly or unwillingly, and to be involved in it by virtue of unseen laws, in all that with regard to "spiritual influences"-both of "blessing" and of "curse"-may proceed from the force that constitutes such an entity.

See: Magic chains.

The scepter and the key

by Julius Evola

The following is the full text of the ninth chapter of the first part of *Revolt against the Modern World*, as it appeared in the second edition of the text (Bocca, Milan 1951). To the deletion of this chapter (already present in Hoepli's first edition of 1934, but enriched with new elements in the second) in the third edition of 1969, published by Edizioni Mediterranee, Roberto Melchionda devoted a paragraph (*The case of "The Scepter and the Key"*) of his useful essay on *The Three Editions of Revolt*, hosted in the new 1998 edition, also edited for Edizioni Mediterranee by Gianfranco de Turreis.

Although removed by the author himself in the third *Revolt*, *The Scepter and the Key* remains a highly significant writing from an esoteric and esoteric-political point of view, so much so that it did not escape Piero Di Vona's attention. The only two republications prior to the present were from the journal *La Cittadella*, where it appeared in both its first series (a. XIII, no. 55, January-March 1998) and its second (special issue *Julius Evola thirty years later*, a. IV, no. 14-15-16, April-December 2004, p. 255-263).

Sandro Consolato

This order of considerations will close with a mention about the symbolism of Janus, who is one of the figurations of divine kingship, while he is at the same time the god of "beginnings" and, in an eminent sense, of initiation, by virtue of a convergence of meanings, which by now will be clear to everyone.

Janus is given by tradition as the first king of Italy who, together with Saturn-Kronos descended into Latium, would reign in the Golden Age. Virgil connects Latium to *latere*, that is, to the idea of an occult residence. According to Hesiod, the immortal lineage of the Golden Age, of which Saturn was the king, would have passed over to rule men invisibly; hence the tradition of the common reign of Saturn - *latens deus* - and Janus is, after all, but a symbol for a type of kingship, a reflection of the occult, universal sovereignty.

Janus was generally figured with two faces-that is, he had two aspects, to be found in his two keys, one golden and the other silver. In place of the golden key is sometimes found the scepter; while in later symbolism applied directly to royal or imperial function, one has the scepter and, at the

place of the other key, a sphere, symbol of the "world" (in Rome, surmounted by a winged "Victory," in the Christian period, by a cross). But in ancient symbolism the two keys were referred to the "gate of heaven" and the "gate of hells," i.e., to the two aforementioned paths, and yet also to the great and the small Mysteries, destined, in the ancient idea, to put one in contact, respectively, with the forces of the overworld and those of "nature," with the "Olympian" principle and the "chthonic" principle. In King Janus, therefore, the two possibilities were conjoined: he can value us as the type of one who can evoke the telluric, vital and natural powers (silver or lunar key, sphere of the "world") but also lord them supernaturally (golden and solar key, the scepter, the "Victory" or "cross" surmounting the world). Tradition, passed into religious form in Catholicism, will speak of the dual pontifical power of "binding and unbinding," a possible interpretation of which is precisely binding lower element and, on the other, liberating, unbinding *the janua coeli*. The possibility of returning the dominated force to a free state is hinted at by the fact, that in ancient Roman times the temple of Janus was open only in time of war, to the bursting out against the enemy of the demon that the power of the god, in peace, held back, this, according to the interpretation of the predominant tradition. But, not to stray from direct royal references, for further correspondence with the symbolism of Janus we can refer to the Egyptian ruler. The two symbols of Janus visibly correspond to the two attributes "strength-life" (key) and "stability" (scepter) already considered for it. Another of his main titles was "ruler of the two lands" or "of the North and the South" or "Lord of the two crowns" - *nebti*. The two lands or dominions in that tradition are expressions encompassing real senses and, simultaneously, spiritual analogical transpositions. The two lands, North and South, Upper and Lower Egypt, simultaneously counted as the regions of Set and Gold; and Set is the infernal, demonic force, the one that tore Osiris apart and closest equivalent of which is the animal that in the little-remembered Hellenic symbol corrodes the rope of Oknos; Gold, is the resurrected and victorious Osiris. A key moment in the royal ritual, moreover, was when the "reunion of the two lands" - *sam Tau* - was accomplished. It was then proclaimed, "The South is united with the North" or "Heaven is united with earth," and the king assumed both the red crown of the North and white crown of the South. It is, this, a different expression of the meaning contained in the above-mentioned symbolism of two-faced Janus: synthesis of the chthonic-vital primordial force and the principle that transcends and dominates this force by determining the unity of the two powers.

Moreover, in the transposition of this function of kingship to the concrete order mentioned just above, in the traditional ruler one must recognize the one who, instead of being a mere and fallen manifestation of it, personifies

fully the totematic force (whence so many transpositions even to solar kings of totematic symbols and attributes, more than likely comfort absurd interpretations and mislead those without the proper doctrinal basis), however, by changing its polarity and giving it a new center.

Deprived of dæmon because he became to himself his own dæmon, having removed the boundary between "I" and genius and therefore between mortal life and everlasting life, the king was immortal individually: with respect to individuals he represented the very function of that "individuating individual" that each of them could only realize as the "other" of his own Ego, and thus stood to them literally in the relation of "act" to "potency," so that in the Inca tradition it was conceived that only the solar king is and lives in an eminent sense; the others, being almost no more than apparitions, than his *shadows*; as individuals are with respect to the totem. But, in him, this unique and profound principle together with personification - remember the transition from the "fortune" of a given city to "royal fortune," whence the objective sense of the saying: *οπου αν ο βασιλευς η, εκει ρωμη*, "where the emperor is, there is Rome" - had undergone transformation. For this reason, in traditions, such as precisely that of Rome, the Emperor could assume, in addition to the title of *aeternitas*, *sacratissimus*, *invictus* or *victor*, that of *salus generis humani* - *τω σωτηρι της οικουμενης*: in his "victory" he was not only the "life," but also the "health" of all life. Even more characteristic expressions-once it has been said of the "double"-are those of Egyptian inscriptions, where the supernatural power of "strength-life-stability" is referred to the king "to that he is at *the* head of all *living doubles*, *he and his double*, as king of the South and the North, on the throne of Gold, eternally as the sun." The expression "living doubles" or "doubles of the living" here may in fact also have that special sense, whereby the immortals, par excellence, traditionally were often called "the Living," in opposition to the others, the "dead." One can thus think of occult immortalizing influence radiating from the transformed and "osirified" double of the ruler into those of the subjects. Conceived as "the one who is eminently," in the Indo-Aryan tradition the king indeed appeared to be the one who "places in beings the fluid of life, the force." Not only that: still according to Egyptian tradition, the king was the one who by his "virtue" can eminently give "nourishment" to the dead who have become gods, that is, he can confirm and develop the supernatural influences of the primordial heroes, who upheld individual family traditions and propitiated individuals for the *post-mortem* the path of immortality. Thus every family cult in Egypt was polarized around the ruler; and there came as a consequence precisely the idea, that the king already to the living, directly, could give the gift of a life removed from death. It has already been mentioned that not different was the origin, in Egypt, and also among the Incas, of a caste of "worshippers" to the king, precisely because of such mystical participation.

With this is simultaneously clarified that mysterious "virtue" - *tea* - whose mode is "acting-without-acting," which the Far Eastern tradition referred to the ruler. If the totem or genie or demon is the strain of deep forces - today we would say: subliminal-which from behind the scenes of consciousness direct most of the intentions, thoughts, passions and thus also the actions individuals, it is understood that to the extent that the Chief truly and supernaturally embodied and dominated the entire totem energy at one point, having science and power over the various orders of subtle causes attached to it - for that very reason he was conjoined from "within," occultly, with the life of each individual and with what in the broadest sense, even without referring to the *post-mortem*, may be called the "destiny" of it. And just as a color infused into a spring passes on to spread throughout the waters, so it may be thought that in this way the behavior of the Chief, through the ways of the collective unconscious, could actually affect the whole of individuals, so much so as to present itself as the actual cause both of a given social *ethos* and of happenings concerning the kingdom as a whole.

Of past, it could be noted that the moderns, who discovered "psychoanalysis" and "subconsciousness" with the delay of a couple of millennia compared to traditional knowledge, might not even see a closed book in all this at all, if they put aside all their non-senses about the "libido," the "primordial horde," and the "superego." They have begun to have an inkling of the dark forces and ancestral complexes active behind ordinary consciousness and all that such forces can in ordinary life and even in so-called "crowd states." Thus it might not be difficult for them to admit even the possibility of determining, in that same "subliminal" zone, influences of a different, higher kind-although in a civilization, such as the present one, because of the total absence of any true Leader and the truncated relationship with metaphysical reality, such a possibility remains entirely problematic. On the other hand, one would have to be able to recognize in the power of suggestion and animation of certain Chiefs everything that cannot be explained "psychologically" or even psychoanalytically, which implies a quite different order of forces and laws than those that fall in the light of an awareness limited to such an irrelevant part of man's integral being as is the awareness of man today. However, the subtle but nevertheless substantial difference existing between the natural prestige of an anointed prince, and a leader-people or Napoleonic leader in their "tellurism," is to be traced to the plan mentioned and has been felt until relatively recent times.

On the Grail

by Julius Evola

In *The Way of the Cinnabar* (1963) Julius Evola devotes a single chapter to *Revolt Against the Modern World* and *The Mystery of the Grail and the Ghibelline Tradition of Empire*, the first editions of which came out in 1934 and 1938, respectively. Speaking of the second book, he writes, "It took shape as the development of an appendix to the first edition of *Revolt*. The book sets forth a research intended to demonstrate the presence, within the European Middle Ages, of a vein of spirituality referring precisely to the primordial tradition in its royal aspect, the corresponding ideas having been expressed mainly through the symbolism of chivalric literature, as well as of figures, myths and sagas of the 'imperial cycle.'" Indeed, that appendix (*On the Grail*), not included in later editions and reproduced here, contains *in nuce* some of the fundamental theses set forth in the book a few years later: the traditional character (in the sense understood by him and Guénon) of the myth, its "heroic-solar" and "royal" nature, its essentially non-Christian character, the central role played in it by Nordic symbols and mythology (Celtic and Norse traditions), and the severe critique of Wagner's modern rewriting. But the birth of *The Mystery of the Grail* from this rib detached *from Revolt* also helps to understand the contingent reasons that fostered it and inspired some of its central ideas. Indeed, Evola explains a little later, again in *The Way*: "It seemed to me possible to relate that essential aspect of the saga [the chivalrous and warrior aspect] also to a precise historical situationality, to that of the European imperial Middle Ages, so much so as to see in the theme mentioned the symbolic expression of the hope and will of high Ghibellinism, in relation to its attempt to revive, reorganize and unify the West under the sign of a sacred imperality, of what some political theologians called the 'royal religion of Melchizedek.'" He adds:

"In this historical aspect, the Grail book complemented what I had laid out in summary in the chapter on the Middle Ages in *Revolt*."

The relationship between these considerations and the historical situation of those years, which had given Evola hope - albeit with grave doubts - of the possibility of a restoration of those warrior and imperial ideals, despite the distortions and political perversions he repeatedly denounced in the political movements that referred to these ideas, is evident: so much so that the pages on the Grail in *The Way of the Cinnabar* constitute a kind of interlude between those devoted to *Revolt* and the next chapter devoted to his *Action in Germany*, that is, to the book's fortunes in Germany, his activities there and his relations with certain

characters of the German Right. Indeed, before addressing the topic, he writes: "In this context, it is worth mentioning again actual meaning of my activity in Italy and Germany alongside the Right-wing movements until the Second World War."

But, in fact, *The Mystery of the Grail* is far more than a development of *Revolt's* appendix. The 1938 book is based on a vast knowledge, exceptional for its time, of the sources of the legend-even minor ones, especially in the Germanic sphere-and of the related historical and critical bibliography. The writing *On the Grail*, on the other hand, is nothing more than a commentary on some of the symbols and motifs contained in a kind of modern compilation of the myth contained in the volume *Le secret de la chevalerie* (1928) by the French occultist Victor-Émile Michelet and summarized in his studies on the Grail also by René Guénon. It is partly based on authentic medieval sources, but it also contains narrative elements and developments that are either unaccounted for in them or constitute free reworkings of them. Indeed, in the notes to the 1934 appendix, no medieval text is cited but, as far as the Grail legend is concerned, only Michelet and Guénon. It is true that the symbols and motifs considered here (the fall of Lucifer, the Grail as Luciferian stone and as emerald, Mount Meru, and others) are then extensively studied in *The Mystery of the Grail*. But in the book he always refers directly to medieval novels, the texts of which are quoted extensively (often in the original language as well). Michelet, the only source in the appendix *On the Grail*, is never mentioned except in regard to the Grail as a vase carved from an emerald and the legend concerning its possession by Adam in Paradise and its discovery by Seth after the expulsion of the first man.

Indeed, Evola was unable to find any medieval accounts containing these data and resigned himself to citing, only in this instance throughout the book, Michelet's compilation. One must conclude from this that, at the chronological height of *Revolt Against the Modern World*, he was still only familiar with what can be called the "occult" sources of the Grail legend, those on Guénon's essays are also largely based: the writing *On the Grail* is valuable because it enlightens us about the historical and metaphysical reasons Evola's interest in the legend of the Sacred Vessel, but it still lacks the erudition and hermeneutical depth that still make *The Mystery of the Grail* one of the most important studies on the subject today, despite some questionable theses.

Francis Zambon

In connection with what we said about the Grail as the "soul" of Ghibelline chivalry, it is also worth mentioning a different redaction of the legend, besides

The one already reported. According to that redaction, at the fall of Lucifer an emerald that stood as a diadem on his forehead would fall to earth. This emerald, cut according to one hundred and forty-four facets in the form of a cup, constituted the Grail. It belonged to Adam in the earthly paradise, where it still remained when Adam was banished. It was obtained again by Seth, who was able to bring it back to earth after remaining in paradise for forty years.

Later the Grail reappears in Roman hands, in the hands of Pontius Pilate, who grants it to a knight, Joseph of Arimathea, in return for his services to the representative of imperial authority. After collecting the blood of Jesus, the Grail is brought by Joseph of Arimathea to Britain, and for it and its knights is built the "adventurous castle" and an order, later presided over by King Arthur.

Three components are present in this legend: an element of remote origin, in a biblical adaptation; a further Christian adaptation, with a sense almost of interpolation; and a third element that brings back to life similarly remote, pre-Christian, extrasemitic Nordic-Celtic traditions.

1) Fall of Lucifer. This is a variation of the theme of aborted "heroic" attempts-which are attempts to manly regain the "primordial state" (see p. 294, s.).

2°) It has been noted that the stone that fell from Lucifer's forehead is distinctly and significantly reminiscent of the frontal stone - *urnâ* - which in Indo-Aryan symbolism often holds the place of Çiva's "third eye" and which famously figures on the forehead in the figurations of the royal ascetic Buddha. To such a "solar" eye is referred both a power of vision in a transcendent sense and a "dazzling" power.

For latter, we have already recalled the tradition that Çiva with such an eye electrocutes the god of passion who had tried to distract him while standing in the same "polar" seat as the "universal lord," Mount Meru. Moreover, in esoteric traditions of equal strain the front eye corresponds to *the âjñâ-cakra*, which is the center of command (*âjñâ*) in an absolute sense and the highest seat of "transcendent manhood."

As for the other power, of "vision," it takes prominence in the Grail saga itself by the fact, that Lucifer's front stone is an emerald: the emerald being regarded by the Ancients as the stone of "prophecy." According to this character, the Grail goes to reproduce exactly the virtue of the mysterious Azewladur vessel that pre-existed it in the Celtic tradition, and of which it is precisely said that it "inhales the vaticinium, gives wisdom, reveals the mysteries of the world, the whole treasure of human knowledge." But, in the higher sense, the vision of the symbolic third eye is *bodhi* as "awakening" or "cyclic vision," the attainment of the

which immediately means destruction of the human state and regaining the primordial state.

It should also be remembered that in the Norse tradition the "sacrificial" myth of Odin abandoning one eye at the "world tree"-that is, passing to the one eye, or third eye-possessing by that means the mystery, both wisdom and power, of the runes, brings back the same meaning.

3°) The Lucifer stone as a stone that fell from the sky brings back more generally to the symbolism of "thunderbolt stones," aerolites or stones that fell from the sky, often identifying themselves to the "black stones" of which it is quistion in many traditions. A black stone, together with a mystic vessel and a spear-that is, the exact equivalents of the objects of the Grail saga-is, moreover, found among the objects that the prehistoric divine race of the Tuatha are said to have brought to Ireland from Avallon: and it is the stone that acclaims legitimate kings. With an aerolith, moreover, would have been formed *the ancilia*, "pledges of empire," of the Salii in Rome (cf. p. 394 where the analogies of such a sacred college with the Grail order are given); and a *lapis niger* opened the "sacred way" to Rome.

Now, it has been noted that the "heavenly stones such as thunderbolt stones are stones that symbolize the thunderbolt: they are nothing but the prehistoric flint axes... The stone axe is the stone that breaks and cleaves, and therefore symbolizes the thunderbolt." Such an axe is not only among Çiva's attributes, but also corresponds to Paraçu-Râma's axe and Thor's *mijölnir* double hammer, i.e., the weapons with which these divine figures of the Aryan race felled telluric and titanic apparitions. It thus symbolizes the same force-lightning with which Zeus strikes down titans, corresponds to Indra's dazzling *vâjra*, and so on. In short, we are brought back to the idea of the same terrible celestial force that we have seen essentially consecrates divine kingship, and breaks and overwhelms those who attempt to usurp it "prometheanically."

But in the medieval saga, even the Grail is life-giving and transfiguring for the elect, while it is terrible for those who want to approach it without being worthy of it. Both Lucifer and Adam thus appear to us as figurations of a type incapable of sustaining the dual power of "vision" and dazzling "force-command" symbolized by the primordial frontal eye and posthumously by the Grail.

Finally, in the most recent Grail legend it is curious that the "sinful king" punished for wanting to see the Grail without being worthy is pierced in the thigh. Indeed, the thigh plays an enigmatic part in classical mythology, e.g., in Pythagoras, who is said to have had an Apollonian title through the golden thigh that connected him to the god of Delphus, or in Dionysus, who is said to have been "saved" by Zeus from "fire" through his thigh. It has been noted that thigh, *μηρός*, in Greek, is a word almost phonetically identical to Meru, the residence

"polar" of Çiva as the "universal lord," and that in certain seemingly random closings there is often-in the traditional world-much more "intelligence" than one might suppose. Cf. also what we said about the punishment of Prometheus (on p. 287) but especially of Atlas (ibid.) to whom the function of "pole" is transmuted into punishment.

4th) Meru as "mountain" brings back the symbolism height, standing at the basis of original etymological meaning of the word "paradise" (cf. p. 35). Seth's recapture of the Grail in paradise is highly significant for this, that Seth is a word that includes two contrary meanings, of "foundation," and of "turmoil" and "ruin." According to the second meaning Seth appears to us, like Nimrod, a symbol of the savage warrior principle, divorced from the sacred. But through the "heroic" transformation this principle becomes, as a royal function, "foundation," that is, "pole." Seth regains possession of the Grail, which Lucifer and Adam had lost, in Pardès, which is the "height," like Meru. If he dwells forty years in it, 40 is a figure that in these traditions recurrently applies to a cycle of "purification" and "reconciliation."

He is equally the figure of a knight, i.e., a warrior, Joseph of Arimathea, who receives the Grail: and here again is the symbolism of 40 in the number of years he spends in captivity, together with the Grail, , destroyed by the Romans in Jerusalem the center of Jewish tradition, he can take himself to the northern lands to start the Grail Order.

This "transition" in Britain is nothing more than the reconnection of the ancient motifs to other, equally pre-Christian motifs existing in the Celtic-Pagan heroic cycles.

5th) The number of facets cut into the Lucifer stone to make the Grail, 144, is the square, i.e., the power, of 12, which is the "solar" number and the very number of the principal knights of King Arthur's Round Table.

Overall, therefore, this version of the Grail legend also presents us with elements of a heroic-solar and royal tradition, in comparison with which the Christian veneer appears inessential. If not "Luciferian" - Lucifer being but the figure of a prevaricator and a vanquished - the wisdom of the Grail is to be said to be "heroic" in the specific sense we give to this term, and *not Christian*.

And if it were not too daring, we might indeed think that the fact, that the Grail was in the hands of the Roman magistrate who let Jesus be executed by the Jews, and the fact, that to produce the vivification of the Grail at the hands of a "pure hero" was necessary that same spear, which pierced Jesus - that such facts, put e.g. in relation to abjuration of the Cross, i.e., the overcoming of the

Christianity, attributed as preliminary to Templar initiation, might make more than one suspect a well-alarming double bottom line in this "Christian" myth of the chivalric Middle Ages.

It remains firm in any case that if today the Grail is known to most only through the Christianising assumption and the dull languid "mystical" melody of Richard Wagner's *Parsifal*, one cannot help but think of the rightness of what a Nietzsche said about this author as an exponent of decadence and corruption.

Tomorrow's articles

by Julius Evola

One particular aspect Julius Evola's publicist activity has not yet been given due attention: that which sees the traditionalist thinker in the guise of an elzevirist and a commentator on mores. Yet, this is a type of activity that Evola engaged in for long years, in different newspapers and during very different periods of his life. The language and subjects proper to this type of publicity also make it possible to "bring Evolian ideas down to earth" from the glittering hyper-urans in which they are rooted, comparing them not only with the most prosaic current events, but also with social and cultural phenomena seemingly far removed from the philosopher's interests, such as popular television programs, "ditties," escapist literature, crime news and even gossip. Which, let it be said in passing, also allows us to open up ever new glimpses into Evola's human side. Which is not to be taken for granted in a thinker who never satisfied any reader's curiosity about his own personal interests and the "human, all too human" minutiae of his everyday life.

The articles that appeared in *Tomorrow*, which we present here for the first time, provide an eloquent cross-section of what we are saying.

But first a few words about the masthead, which even the most careful researchers of the history Right-wing publishing seem to have lost track of. *Tomorrow. Weekly Politics and Current Affairs* was edited by Enzo Erra and registered on April 12, 1956. In the list of contributors, a prominent role is given to the, broadly speaking, "spiritualist" world. Besides Evola, who kept a column there called *Orientamenti*, and editor Erra, we find the signatures of Aniceto del Massa, Fausto Gianfranceschi, Guido Giannettini, Piero Buscaroli, Romolo Lupo and others. The scanty news we have been able to track down about the magazine practically ends there.

In his articles, as mentioned above, Evola comments on various current events, sometimes relating to national or international politics, but at other times he makes significant inroads into costume and even into the pink chronicle. The traditionalist thinker's view of such events traces that already read in his other similar pieces published elsewhere and is marked by what we might call "reactionary libertarianism." Indeed, Evola does not cease to point out what in his eyes appear to be "signs of the times" in the age of decadence. In this light he reads, for example, the great popularity of the program *Lascia o raddoppia?* in which he sees an anesthetized, materialistic and bourgeois form of "love of risk." Abandoning "living dangerously" for

the incipient consumer society, Western man can only experience the thrill risk through a transference, and what is more in the economic sphere, participating in the tension of the competitor confronted with the crossroads between being content with the loot won or risking doubling it, with the danger, however, of losing everything. , in the marriage between Grace Kelly and Rainier of Monaco, as well as in related news reports, he sees a "worlding up" of the European aristocracy, which in order to regain some of its former prestige must make itself more human, more popular, where once it drew charisma precisely from its remoteness and unapproachability.

Evolian *Kulturpessimismus*, however, distances itself significantly from the usual moralistic and conservative approaches typical of the genre. Indeed, the point of view from which he hurls his critique is always "other," the invective against decadence conceding nothing to the bourgeois moralizing itch that criticizes today in the name of the world in force just yesterday. And so the critique of automotive encroachment leads him to formulate thoughts that would not disfigure in the mouth of the postmodern protagonist of *Fight Club*: "Unfortunately, we live in times of well-organized public powers. If not, how nice a kind of omnipotent Saint Vehme would be, with various tasks: one might be to organize ubiquitous teams that would appear lightning-fast in the ultragreen parking lots in front of theaters, cinemas and nightclubs, set everything on fire and disappear in a flash: so much so that every car owner would live in constant anxiety." Similarly, when he speaks of the phenomenon of drug use, he seems to believe that it is more the modern world that has corrupted drugs than the opposite, not without polemicizing the "impertinent interference" of the state in a person's private life and habits, and the society that "sets itself up as a pedagogue with the whip, and just where it, with democracy, proclaims that the individual has now come to all responsibility and maturity."

A sensibility and point of view, as can be seen, decidedly far removed from those of the "indignant citizen" over the "corruption of customs." It is a bit of a pattern that will be repeated later, when Evola will express views that are utterly nonconformist, and very little akin to the dominant tendencies on the right, on divorce and the crisis of the family.

Of course, the general attitude of the Evola of the 1950s toward the world around him continues to be extremely negative and unambiguous. We are far from the experimental Evola of the avant-garde era, when in the "danger" of modernity he could see dawning, according to Hölderlin's well-known saying, even the glimmer of "salvation." Evola, like most of the thinkers of the Conservative Revolution who survived the catastrophe, also experienced 1945 as an existential *Kehre* and

philosophical more or less unconscious. The same physical impairment that had occurred in the meantime, although algidly belittled by the person concerned as a merely contingent fact, must somehow have altered his outlook on reality, which had now become an object of contemplation and no longer of action, despite the well-known Evolian predilection for the latter aspect over the former. This does not detract, however, from the fact that even the attested "defensive" Evola of this phase displayed a freedom of spirit and intellectual unscrupulousness far above the average of the human and political milieu he was addressing in those years.

Adriano Scianca

1. Top of the class

There are various indexes signaling the degree to which the intellectual level of the Italian public has descended. One of them is undoubtedly constituted by the success reported by the *Lascia o raddoppia* game show, supinely imported - as, moreover, a quantity of its other initiatives - by RAI from America.

Already in itself, radio, to which television has now been added, constitutes a kind of cancer of modern life; far more than an "instrument of culture," it is something, like a psychic narcotic added to so many others intended to methodically atrophy every disposition of modern man to recollection, to withdrawal into oneself, to intimacy, to pauses of fruitful silence. But with RAI's more recent and "popular" initiatives, it even reaches point of brutalization.

Even without resorting to psychoanalysis, it is known that in phenomena of collective interest -- that is, in those phenomena in which not the individual as personality but the individual as mass is at stake -- the foundation of all success is a phenomenon of *transfer*. In the same way that the dream often offers the fulfillment, through fantasy, of tendencies that the dreamer does not come to realize in ordinary waking life, likewise everything in a collectivizing civilization, such as the present one, that meets with the success of crowds has the function of a surrogate for a missed ideal or impulse of the individual. In the actor in vogue in the movies, in the glamorous diva, in the sports champion, in the recurring types in the magazines, the individual, male or female, projects himself; by identifying with, participating in, and tensely following all that they do and experience, he finds a compensation for an aspiration he cannot realize in himself, thus also a kind of alleviating escape.

To that extent, everything that-as it is vulgarly called-"cheers," has the value of an index. The analysis of these indices is not, today, edifying. The atmosphere in which the heroes of the cinema move by and large is more or less known to everyone. With the more popular varieties of sports it goes even lower. Then come the initiatives taken by radio to follow the current, even to open up new domains; thus, lastly, we come to phenomena, such as that of *Lascia o raddoppia* and its success.

Now, one wonders what it is about such contrivance that can turn the participants into a kind of "heroes," so much so that the winners become almost the focus of national attention: they receive avalanches of letters, gifts, invitations, offers of all kinds from impresarios, admirers or admirers, the news of their "triumphs" sometimes even appears on the front page of major newspapers, with the same prominence as prominent political or social events.

Referring to the "transfer" theory, in what of such heroes of a new popularity do all such enthusiasts recognize themselves, finding a part of themselves realized by proxy? What comes to move them to such a mark? Try as we might to think about it, we can find only one answer: *a first-class ideal*. In fact, in that game some exceptional quality of ingenuity, special intelligence or brilliance does not enter in the least: it all boils down to having, or not having, a certain inventory of common domain notions in some particular domain, as well as a sufficient memory, exactly as in a school examination in the subjects in which absolutely nothing creative or personal intervenes, where there is only to be mechanically reminded of what one has read or learned. But if all this is of such interest, why is there a tumultuous crush around the examination or graduation venues, or demand that television be implanted in them, since at least some more interesting tests will take place there, more indicative of truly intellectual and personal gifts? It must be acknowledged: the "cheering" brought into this domain attests to a disturbing degree of collective incretionization, in the sign of a typically US mentality.

It will be said that the exciting side is also given by the risk, of putting, or not, the assured winnings up for grabs. But even in that we would not know how to see that there is any real interest, given the banality of what goes into deciding the outcome of the affair. One is really quite down in the matter of inventive spirit in the organizers if no other connection is known to be offered to the audience to arouse a certain tension: while, about the audience itself, it must be said that for it anything is good, as long as it has, by transfer, a share in the excitement of those who risk - without risking anything: because in any case they do not put themselves in danger and will not lose anything of their own. The great tension of "leave and double" comes down to seeing if

In either individual, the prudent and calculating or the carefree temperament prevails.

And given that this aspect has for its sole basis the financial side, and that in order to organize the game RAI spends millions upon millions, it would also be worth asking whether this parastatal institution, over which, when it suits it, the democratic government does not hesitate to exercise its control, is allowed to throw huge sums that could be used either to reduce the fee, or to raise considerably a part of the programs, full of trite things, often repeated and cobbled together, with seasonal gaps, with a closed turn of elements.

But if it is true that in a democratic regime the possibility of rectifying interventions in fields, such as this, is excluded, there is also to be said that such things develop "in a chain": that the public, after all, gets what it deserves. It is in this context that we said to be, the new forms of radio and television "cheering," an unedifying index of the collective intellectual level of Italians today.

(April 14, 1956)

2. *Rien ne va plus!*

Les jeux son fait, rien ne va plus! Let us hope, then, that this is the case, in the place where these words echo continuously, the game here being represented by the whole affair of Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier. With that concluded, we want to draw the sums from our point of view. This story has indeed aroused an echo and aroused an interest unmatched by those relating to other and far more illustrious connubi of the dynastic world. In itself, the affair in an operetta-like principality would not have much scope nor would it present much of an objectionable issue. We are not going to get rigorous by demanding that the law of caste is absolute and that a prince or aristocrat cannot also take as a lover or as a bride a girl, who, if not blue blood, has "race." But the thing here is different.

If one thoroughly analyzes the fact the special interest aroused by the Ranieri case, one finds that the decisive point is this: that the chosen bearer of an ancient European name is an American film diva. The mordant, the specific fact, is the implicit almost vassal-like homage paid to those who, as overseas stars and divas, becoming centers of the interest and enthusiasm of the modern masses, have taken the place of the ancient aristocracy. It may be that something of what the Germans call *Schadenfreude*, i.e., a semi-sadistic complacency, acted instinctively in this "cheering" for the Grace and

Ranieri. "Him, too!" will say smugly to himself-after having said it for the matter of Ali and the Aga Khan, Prince Maximus with Dawn and so many other similar cases-the public brutalized by cinema, radio and Americanism and blissful in this inostaculate of its brutalization.

So this is still an indication of the lack of sensitivity and line of the surviving nobility, of the renunciation, even by sovereigns, not only of "majesty" but of simple dignity. Kings ditching the same uniform and having their picture taken with wife and children in good middle-class family framing, yesterday the romantic renunciation of the Prince of Wales in the name of an American divorcee, and then the more recent affair, at great pains curbed, of Margaret, who had already taken performing as a *can-can* dancer; that king with the umbrella; that Nordic ruler who thought he was making an example of "democratic" good taste by bringing his suitcase to himself and apologizing with the words: "It's my suitcase" (based on the "servant of the nation" formula, it, after all, might as well have been someone else's suitcase); Otto of Habsburg going on about "social monarchy"; the Lollobrigida received and honored at court; the being photographed and letting photographs circulate in magazines, of a blood prince in slings and one of our blood princesses with bare legs and thighs, perhaps so that readers can establish comparisons with some "atomic" diva; more *flash* for a ruler in a nightclub and the gaggle of Italian aristocratic girls who, in such capacity, *tour as* models in America--and so on--and lastly adding the Ranieri-Grace affair: all of which we very much fear signifies the irrevocable end of an era and a type of civilization.

Recently, John Ansaldo gave himself, in the *Borghese*, to criticizing in a similar context customs and attitudes of people of the Royal House. Goffredo Pistoni, in the *Italian Whip*, asked him since when he had been appointed preceptor of that House, so much so as to afford such criticism. But precisely this is the sad thing: that those who in other times should have served everyone as a visible and unimpeachable model give, today, the first comer the opportunity to be their preceptor. And what Pistoni advances does not add up. He writes: "What is the fault of the members of today's royal families and a large part of the aristocracy, if not that of having assumed American tastes, of having adapted to a mental standard that is no longer even bourgeois, but collectivizing? What is their fault, if not to have given up their progeny rights for a far more vulgar dish of lentils? If not to no longer believe in their sacred value?" That's exactly right. But how can Pistoni expect that, in spite of everything, ancient respect will be maintained, based on the principle that "it is the worship of the faithful that makes the images of deities sacred"?

For this miraculous power of worship there are definite limits. In traditional civilizations, and even until yesterday, when the collective spiritual climate was quite different man could even fail to live up to the symbol or function without much harm following. Today, no more. Today, rather than man receiving prestige from the symbol, it is the symbol that should draw prestige from man, from a high human stature, if it is yet to impose itself, if it in spite of everything is to act. So today as much as ever self-discipline, a line, distancing sharply from others and from current custom, the exclusion of every concession and every human weakness should be absolute, inexorable law for those who are the heirs of a great name and a great past. Exactly the opposite happens. And in seeing this, the masses enjoy, feeling that they have no one more to measure their chain. Ranieri kneeling before the American diva, "more princess than a princess," with the intervention, rather than ostracism, of a large representation of the European high aristocracy, is the consecration of their religion.

(April 28, 1956)

3. May Day consecrated

Here is the beautiful news of the year of grace 1956: for the first time in history May Day, the feast of the proletariat already celebrated with hymn of the Communist International, will be an official Catholic holiday. Last year the first step had been taken, making that day the feast of St. Joseph the Craftsman. What had been openly called "the baptism of the labor movement" has now been brought to fruition by even presenting believers with the figure of Christ in the guise of a working-class worker. In the absence of available angels, perhaps employed elsewhere, it will be a helicopter that will mystically descend to Vatican soil a statue of Christ the worker equipped with a hammer and square, waiting, in a more up-to-date edition he will undoubtedly carry a hammer and sickle and have above him a Star of Bethlehem easily confused, apart from the tail, with the star of the Soviets.

It has come to this. The alibi, with the approval given by the Pope to the ACLI, is of course the pragmatic one. Since the "labor movement" is a reality, let us bring it back into the lap of Holy Mother Church by welcoming and sanctifying myth-the myth of labor-and giving it a Christian chrism. But even tracing it back to a tactical expedient, quite naïve in truth, there must be very little sensitivity on the Catholic side not to feel a

profound defilement. Among other things, Christ, literally, means "the Anointed One," and anointing in Judaism was the customary rite for the consecration of King and Prophets. And here is Christ, The Anointed One of the Lord, exalted as a worker and made a symbol of the proletarian world of labor. Where has gone the Christ the King whom the evangelists had endeavored to make descend from the lineage of David and to whom so much emphasis was given yesterday, with precise intentions of political fringe? And where gone a doctrine to which the Church had already attributed unquestioned scriptural authority, namely, the doctrine that work means only a kind of chastisement and obscure atonement imposed on fallen man, thus not a value but, at best, a mere creature of necessity? Who does not see the gulf that separates such a conception, which meets with the meaning attributed by Greco-Roman antiquity to *ponos* and *labor*, from the conception of the modern proletarian world that makes of labor a mystique and a religion, which sees in it an instrument not of social subjugation but of elevation in a direction of contamination and we would even say sadism ("He who does not work does not eat") that could not desire better crowning than that gratuitously offered by the current representatives of Catholicism by fabricating the "Worker Christ" and making a Christian feast on the very day of the Red International?

What is important to note, is that here we are not dealing with a sporadic phenomenon, but rather with something that coherently falls within a group of similar indexes signaling an alarming descent in the level of the Church. This, today, instead of emphasizing more decisively than ever the values of high contemplation, true spirituality, transcendence and asceticism, has been reduced to a very mediocre plane of "social" care and petty parochial moralism, for the rest quietly letting well-known Catholics such as Maritain, proclaim democracy to be the only regime embodying the authentic spirit, and that other Catholic writers in the atheism and materialism of Marxism and communism see only moles or negligible childhood flaws in what, in essence, would be the modern form of appearing Christianity.

If De Gasperi spoke elegantly of "medievalistic remnants of Catholicism" corresponding, in reality, to what was the best Catholicism, the papal measure of abolishing certain noble titles of ancient tradition linked to certain bishop's offices because they "no longer conform to the spirit of the times" is recent. But if one must get with the times, how is it that one does not notice the anachronistic remnants present throughout Catholic theology? God as Lord and King of Heaven and, then, all the angelic, "closed class" hierarchies-what a horror! Doesn't all this smell strongly reactionary, if not also "monarchist-fascist"? A reform is necessary; it would be time to talk about a heavenly President of the Republic, to the angelic hierarchies giving the figure of

representations of the blessed with universal suffrage and, perhaps, to Satan that of legal head of the opposition or unions of the damned. Adding a working Christ with hammer and sickle, who can be made, too, patron of "Labor State" and true precursor of "labor humanism," no longer the patron of monarchies of divine right, the picture would indeed be complete and satisfactory.

Anyone with a theological sensibility cannot fail to notice that behind the whole so-called "workers' movement" there is not only a political surplus-value beyond the mere economic-social problem, but there is also, latent or declared, a true counter-religion, a kind of inverted mysticism, clearly visible where that movement reaches its logical consequences, that is, in authentic communism. With such a form, now bursting forth and overbearing, the Church today believes that it is juggling with tactical expedients of the naiveté the worker Christ and the new Christian labor festival. Now, a new law of superior justice dictates that all those who come to terms with subversion, believing they can tactically make use of it, are sooner or later inexorably overwhelmed by it. History shows us this without exception in the case of political regimes. The Church today is following the same line, whereas for centuries it had been able to keep relatively aloof, adapting but not yielding. Is this, perhaps, still one of the worrying signs of the closing of a cycle?

(May 5, 1956)

4. Rain of stars

The Social-Political Observatory has reported in recent days the latest shower of stars -- these are the "Stars of Social Merit" handed out in large numbers by the Head of State, taking, of course, the symbolic occasion offered by May 1, the international proletariat holiday.

Having never seen one, we do not know what precise shape such "Stars" have. Certainly they are pentagrammed, like the one taken as an insignia by the present Republic and like the one that in the Risorgimento the Carbonari elected and proposed as the Star of Italy. This does not detract from the fact that it is identical to the Star of the Soviets and, who knows, it may be that it has a blunted corner. Thus this would be fitting and would warn about the unfortunate incident that happened to Faust, who in marking the star in question on the threshold as a magical pentacle in defense against evil spirits, but having negligently failed to close one corner properly, thereby neutralized the effectiveness of the defense: hence the well-known visit of

Mephistopheles and all that follows, which need not be recalled here, especially in the conclusion despite everything having a happy ending, being rather worth remembering this line from Goethe: "From the spirits you summon, never again will you free yourself."

Might not such a verse have, perhaps, an interesting application in the case of the nonchalant flirtation woven by the Christian Democrat Republicans with the proletarian world against the backdrop of the "State of Labor," after the collusions of similar elements even with communism in the blissful era of Ciellenism: a legacy, this one, as we know, still very hard to die?

But let us return to the "Stars of Labor" to make some more serious remarks. Even in this field - in the field, that is, of "honors" - one can trace exactly the downward motion that characterizes the social-political developments of recent times. The starting point, one hardly remembers anymore. It is a forgotten antithesis: rank on the one hand, economic class and wealth on the other. It was a fruitful idea in all traditional civilizations, down to the last great European dynasties, that in a political body, "distinctions" are very important, which have nothing to do with wealth and economic position, which stand essentially "from above," which have an intangible character while conferring a "rank" and prestige that can be borrowed from nothing else. In the highest degree, such a nature had the titles of nobility, when nobility was not mere court nobility and, even less, calling card nobility, but had the face and function of a political class. In the second degree, came honors that, likewise, had nothing to do with the world of economics, wealth or mere labor, which went rather to mark proven qualities of loyalty, uprightness, and impersonal service to the state. Of this, the most prominent example was the custom, in force until yesterday in Central Europe, of conferring in such terms the privilege of having one's name preceded by a "von." It was a title of nobility in a minor degree, without a real title, but with the same character of heredity. An interesting point, this, because the recognition and the corresponding feeling of pride on the part of person who was the object of it translated in a certain way into a commitment to the descendants, that is, it went beyond the individual and tended to foster the formation of a family tradition of distinction and loyalty.

Especially in the face of this example, it becomes clear where we ended up instead with the advent of democracy and bourgeois civilization. Here, nothing of the old meaning became more bound up with the new distinctions and honors; which, moreover, became as accessible as ever to the first comers and more or less explicitly marketable. In Italy, it was almost a farcical travesty the title of "knight" (think of what the same word meant in the Middle Ages) conferred, yes, by the King, but practically insignificant, given its widespread

inflationary and given the categories that could easily benefit from it, so much so that "knights" and "commendators" were eventually to become favored figures in humorous newspapers and *sketches*.

One more step, and we come to the "distinctions" for the mere merit of labor, the glory modern man: just as after the world of the bourgeoisie and the Third Estate tends more and more now to assert itself, that of the working proletariat and the Fourth Estate. In such a sign, a new, abundant fall of "Stars" was thus reported in May 1 by us. As we know, in more drastic, less ceremonial terms, equivalents of this have long been in place in Soviet Russia. Distinctions bestowed on the stakanovist as a "hero" in it have taken the place of all that might have been the rank and prestige of an ancient title; matched by them, in the case of women, by other interesting "honors," "Stars" to the merit of the "Soviet woman heroine" and various others, bestowed in proportion to the high number of children produced by a female being, even as a girl-mother. Perfect liturgy of the world "production" taken in every sense, that is, in its full extent, to which certainly our liberated Italy will also know how to adapt better and better!

(May 12, 1956)

5. *Freedom from want*

We have an eye on the text of a lecture given by a certain Prof. Gardner at Columbia University, on the subject: *Atomic Economics and Freedom from Want*. Since there are set out there, in precise form, ideas that are surfacing in more than one environment today, it is worthwhile to report on them and see what one has to think about them.

Gardner moves within the framework of what we can call "technical messianism," an orientation common to both U.S. America and Soviet Russia. He says, "The industrial utilization of atomic energy now being implemented, together with the achievements of so-called 'automation,' will lead to such a point, that machines will work almost exclusively for man, that man only to a small extent will still be compelled to work directly. This will cause a profound revolution in the economy, with overcoming all the concepts that have been the basis of the economic and social struggles and tensions of recent times. The Atlantic formula "freedom from want" will be truly realized, and man will have a free way to build a higher existence for himself: superior and happy."

All this denotes shallowness and naive optimism characteristic of the American mindset. Two points here should be emphasized. The first is of a material order. It is clear that to approach the rosy horizons mentioned above would require seeing equally utopian conditions already realized. It would require, first, that capitalism be eliminated as a mentality. Then, it would be necessary that a system of a rationalized world economy be established that is entirely free of constraints and frontiers, such as would permit an even and disinterested distribution of goods on earth and obviate unemployment. For it is known that under present conditions the labor, which technical progress spares mankind, almost always results in increased unemployment, while if there subsisted on the one hand capitalism's desire for profit and profit, on the other hand, on the international level, the advantageous position which some nations may have over others in having better means and raw materials for the production of atomic energy, any social-economic development in the optimistic sense mentioned above would undoubtedly be hindered.

It can be seen, then, that "freedom from want" should have as its premise a reform as vast and general as that dreamed of by utopian Marxism. Otherwise, despite atomic energy and everything else, we would remain more or less where we were before.

The second point, which is the most important one for us, is a moral one. Let us also assume that Prof. Gardner's perspectives can be realized. Well, would a higher, fuller and happier existence, and the resurgence of higher forms of civilization, be to be expected "from this alone"?

It can be thought of in this way only by those who exchange the essential with what, possibly, can be a propitiatory circumstance. The fact is that the true premises for a higher existence and civilization are always "internal" in character: they depend on what man-a given human type-is spiritually, without necessarily being tied to external, economic and environmental circumstances: just the opposite of what Marxism and communism think.

Let us imagine the "modern man" relatively without needs, that is, without immediate material concerns that take up almost all of him. Well, what will he do? What will he care about? Today's world already promises an unedifying prognostication for the vast majority of cases: movies and magazines, sporting affairs, petty hedonism, radio and television (with *Lascia e raddoppia*), carefree proliferation and lambrettes, to which can be added, at most, for the hard-core palates, something of what "culture" and "intellectuality" have been reduced to today: here is all that from the hypothetical "freedom from need" would have a

unheard-of increase that would become within the reach of everyone, every class and every "civilized" people.

In other words: if the spiritual ravages, if the atrophy of every higher interest and every higher vocation, which characterize "modern man" in general, will persist, no change of level will be to be expected thanks to the changed economic-social conditions. And not only will not - magically - a superior civilization be born, but after an initial euphoric phase it may well be that, where mankind does not sink into a dull bliss, it encounter the most fearful of crises: that of the absolute "emptiness" of an existence, an emptiness no longer concealed, as before, by the pseudo-goals of a life grappling with necessities of all kinds.

We will perhaps have a situation analogous to that sketched by a priceless operetta, considered "provocative," by Brecht and Weill, *Mahagonny*: the imaginary country where everyone has women, game and whiskey at their disposal but where they, precisely because of the lack of needs, feel driven toward "white despair," at the dark feeling, expressed, by the motif-guide *Un doch es fehlt etwas!* - and yet something is missing! This something that is missing and which, going at this rate, modern man will increasingly lack, there is no "Atlantic freedom" or "atomic economy" that can give it: for it only by the ways of an inner awakening and an inner reintegration can be known. Now, for many the challenge and test constituted by a harsh climate can be "incentives" for that awakening: just as for others the materially easy life can propitiate, almost as an astonishment, an entire abdication and regression, the slow descent from the ideals of a true, heroic and upright humanity, to the "physical" ones that are the bottom of the gospel preached, albeit with different formulas, by both Russia (USSR) and America (USA)-by the two "civilizations of the future."

While not falling into the opposite excess, even zealots of "social progress" would be well reminded of such things from time to time.

(May 19, 1956)

6. The boomerang

The Cyprus affair is still in its acute state. The irredentist movement in French North Africa is in full swing, with little likelihood that it will be stifled once and for all. For these, as for a host of other similar phenomena occurred especially after the Second war

world, in regard to a certain part of white humanity the saying, "You reap what you sow," applies, or the other, "The meshes of Heaven's net are wide, but no one passes them."

The starting point was, of course, the proclamation of the so-called "principle of nationalities" as an ideological weapon used during World War I by the Allies against the Central Empires. Ostensibly, they were defending freedom and autonomy of peoples; in reality, they were aiming to undermine any supernational principle of order and authority, to let democracies (and, behind them, economic hegemonism) have free rein. It was not thought that this principle, once emphatically defended and legitimized with regard to some European peoples, could not fail to apply to every other people as well, including those subjected to colonial rule: all the more so since the poisoning of war by the hatred and contempt cast by some white peoples on others of the same race had been thought to eliminate the remnants of the prestige which that race as a whole might also have enjoyed outside Europe.

The crisis of European hegemony and colonialism was thus the first fruit to be harvested. The fruit that at the same time ripened in Asia, but also in regard to some European peoples who had become "free" (notably those formerly included in the Habsburg Empire), was the making of them potential objects precisely of the antagonists of the hypocritical zealots of peoples' democratic freedoms, i.e., communists. In fact, fall processes are always chain processes. By a play of chained actions and reactions or, if you prefer, immanent justice, one degree leads to the other. Having passed the stage of a regime based on a superior and detached principle of authority, one does not stop at that of nationalisms: one goes further down.

It is known that in Leninist orthodox doctrine, nationalism, regarded as a "counter-revolutionary" phenomenon if it manifests itself in the already communist area, is instead conceived as something to be fomented and sustained if it manifests itself outside this area, especially then if among black peoples, in order to undermine so-called "capitalist imperialism" in anticipation that at a later time the communist virus can be injected into the liberated peoples and the transitional phase constituted by the nationalist states liquidated. But apart from these international tactical expedients of the Red leadership, an internal logic prepares the further process of fall. Nationalism, at the same time that it creates new autonomies and new particularisms intolerant of any higher principle of order, by its centralizing, anti-traditional, totalitarian, Europeanizing character, acts within each individual people in a disarticulating and leveling sense, takes away from them any residual form of hierarchy and organic spirituality.

Of which, China, India and the Arab countries show us a clear example. Just in one of the major Italian newspapers, along with the latest news about Cyprus and Algeria, we read a correspondence from Egypt with this verbatim headline: *Egypt feels lonely after driving out the elites. There are no more Englishmen, no more pashas, and no more Europeans, who constituted the leaven of the country: today only the exterminated amorphous mass of the Fourth Estate and at its head the meager new caste of the military.* For India, it is equally recent to hear of Pandit Nehru who, bored with receiving information about the religious life of a region he visited, asked instead how many factories had sprung up in it. The exploits of certain Europeanized Eastern rulers on the Riviera, arm in arm with American divas, are well known. About peculiarities of "free" China and Indochina sending their traditions to hell, it is superfluous to speak. The same path will fatally be taken by the other peoples who are raising their heads demanding to be absolute arbiters of themselves: they will not be so as true, traditional nations, but only as "modern" nations according to the European figurine, that is, boned; after the eventual interregnum of centralist and leveling regimes, rapid progress in social reformism and industrialization will lead them to gravitate toward communism. This is the second degree of the *boomerang* process, or immanent justice, now unfolding within.

For the rest, we thus note that after the first effect of the democratic ideology of "free nationalities"-the waning of European hegemony, the European reduced, as in the case of us in Somalia, to the part of educator, waiting to be thrown out the door tomorrow-the second effect beginning to emerge is a very visible threat to the same democratic array having at its head the first and highest asseverator of that ideology: U.S.A. To limit ourselves to today's example: the Greek implications of the Cyprus affair are very unlikely not to result in a very serious blow to "Atlantic" positions in the Balkan-Mediterranean area. Nor will it stop there.

(May 26, 1956)

7. *The same evil*

The city in which we momentarily find ourselves, although it has illustrious and ancient traditions, is not among the largest in Italy, it is not among the "industrial" ones, its area has relatively limited development, and yet in it such are also the distances. For all that, in it the spread of automobiles presents even more prominently than elsewhere the manic features proper to such a phenomenon. Species

on festive evenings, the squares are crammed to the brim with cars of all kinds, which then gather in endless rows on either side of the main thoroughfares.

Indeed, we have, here, the index of a mentality. The way things stand with us is that, in general, owning a "machine" or not owning it goes to establish a kind of ontological distinction among mortals; it is much the same difference that yesterday existed between the poor bourgeois and the "gentleman," the man of a higher caste. The mechanical device gives its owner a kind of mystical prestige, makes him "modern," makes him in fact the exponent of a different outlook on life, for which the standard is naturally more or less the American standard. Let us not speak, then, of what in the eyes of almost every woman today means that a "boy" has or does not have a "car" and vice versa: the transfiguration into a higher world enjoyed by the girl who has a device marked by that mysterious numbering, or even an "off-the-shelf."

In the face of this, the consequences and inconsistencies of the spread of the phenomenon in our cities fade into the background. As "progressive" administrations come forward, they will not hesitate to study master plans which, on the basis of gutting, will eliminate the absurdity of the subsistence of ancient, venerable, monumental nuclei, with their small streets, their corners, their "irrational" layouts, in order to make room for cars, in order to initiate what in more than one case is well evident, namely, that given these anachronistic survivals, the gridlock of vehicles in the centers of many of our large cities means that those who go by car often lose more time than if they used any ordinary means of locomotion.

It seems that until recently in some Russian-controlled areas to buy a car it was not enough to have money; one needed a declaration of office showing that such a purchase was justified by the needs of one's business or profession. For once in a while, such a situation seems more sympathetic to us than that of a bourgeois "liberalism" intended only to feed a vanity fair, to multiply artificial needs even where, as with us, the economic situation is strained and bill of exchange protests every month reach astronomical figures.

So, it is not the reasonable use of cars when they hoard time to be well spent and, in addition to the real need, provide distractions. It is the parasitic and "wanton" spread of them, with the "intellectual" implications mentioned above, that is to be deplored. Unfortunately, we live in times of well-organized public powers. If not, how nice a kind of all-powerful Saint Vehme would be, with various tasks: one might be to organize ubiquitous teams that would appear lightning-fast in the

ultra-remote parking lots in front of theaters, movie theaters, and nightclubs, focus everything and disappear in an instant: so much so that every car owner lives in constant anxiety.

That in tracing the premises of such an order of ideas one arrives at entirely counter-current principles is natural, and on the part of the writer is certainly to be expected. Two systems stand in stark contrast: that of a healthy balanced consumer economy having as its basis a standard of living in accordance with one's real status and needs, and, as an advantage, a maximum of individual freedom, a minimum of social subjugation, and, on the other hand, an unsized economy of superproduction which, in the sign of capitalism, artfully nurtures a growing need for products for their greater disposal by putting forth the chimera of well-being, comfort or even luxury within the reach of all, while remaining silent about the quid pro quo: Intellectual dispersion, social unrest, dissatisfaction with one's own state, non-resistance in the face of a concatenation that increasingly collectivizes the individual and takes one further and further into a process devoid of all limits, all stability, all restraint.

Go behind the facade at our place: you will practically find communism and capitalism in convergence. The most fertile seed the good "comrades" sow not, in Italy, among the truly destitute, who often do not even realize their need, but among those who consider it a "social injustice" not to have a car if they have only a lambretta, having to go to third-run instead of first- or second-run cinemas, not crowding the human vermin of large beaches in due season, not having - if they are girls - lipsticks, "perm," underwear and silk stockings, and so on.

The initiate knows well where this regime of "claims" projected to the masses leads even in countries where, as with us, the national economy is almost in a liquidation regime. The world overseas, the realm of democratic *prosperity*, someone has called it "socialism without socialists" -- which is as much as to say: the same evil, but in depth, without even the need for diffusers of the infection. The initiate knows this: after that, one more push, and you will be in the desired spot.

(June 9, 1956)

8. *The first vote*

Now that the election carnival is over, it is worth reporting an episode that really lived up to it. From the *People* we learned how the nice initiative of a "Freshman Voting Party" had been organized, dedicated to all those young men or women who this year for the first time were called upon to exercise their right to vote. The party lived up to the austerity of that right: again from the same Christian Democrat newspaper, we learned that it included, "in a setting of vivid enthusiasm," jazz music, sketches, macchiettes, comic imitations and other pleasantries designed to promote the deepest political meditations. The organizer of the ensemble was, consistently, called the "Mike" of the day, in reference to the priceless Bongiorno of the *Lascia o raddoppia*; nor was the coadjutor girl absent, in the person of a delegate.

After all, such an episode might even be a comforting symptom: it might tell us of the semi-conscious dawning of some sense of what indiscriminate universal suffrage voting means today in a regime of absolute democracy. For, if not, we should really ask ourselves whether individual dignity has sunk so low, that one would consent to play such a game -- we mean: that one would certainly accept a system in which the weight of one's voice is absolutely identical not say to that of a street girl (for for for such a category we have every consideration), but of a semi-deficient, a scullery maid, a drunkard, a sellout, in short, of the first comer. Personally, every time we receive our ballot, we do not waste a single moment in reducing it into minute pieces.

One will say, "But that means abandoning the struggle! With abstentionism and indifferentism you leave the ground in the hands of the enemy!" This is questionable. Let us first suppose that, on the basis of the spread of that sense of dignity of which we have just now spoken, that is, out of a resolute protest against the existing system of absolute democracy, a fifty percent abstention of the number of voters would occur. Well, then the system itself would go into crisis; it would become clear that the "legal" representations are not the "real" ones at all; there would be a feeling of an "unrepresented" national force ready to assert itself at the appropriate time. Could not the election strike as an ideal protest be an accurate and effective anti-democratic weapon?

It will be objected, however, that only the best, i.e., a minority, will be able to follow this line; the great number, necessarily consisting of a social sawdust, an almost shapeless mass in the hands of the politicians, will not at all give up the right to vote by universal suffrage, who will flatter it, exercise it, bring forth those whom their proxies desire, with the chrism of legality and

"will of the people." By freeing the field from the antagonism of the Right, the "legal" ascent to the state by socialists and communists would become very rapid.

Well, our answer is: given the way things are in Italy, perhaps this is not the best, after all, one could wish for? It is a rosy illusion that, that national forces can ever win the game on the democratic basis of sheer numbers: not even to count the insidious danger of becoming infected with the very evil one would like to fight - democracy, partisanship - when one agrees to play the same game; of which, as of now, examples are unfortunately not lacking. Instead, the best card of national forces is tied precisely to the eventual precipitation of the domestic situation. Here comes the advantage that, for once, offers our being in loving, disinterested tutelage under the "Atlantic" sign. Since for "Atlanteans" Italy is not a politically and strategically indifferent area, at the point when the rise power of communism through legal, "democratic" ways would be announced by us, America and its acolytes would not fail to call to order their homegrown servants who play the game of democracy; put before an *aut-aut*, they would be forced to get serious; legal means to declare communism illegal and ban it, certainly, would not be lacking. This would also be the hour of the forces of the true national Right.

But even apart from such a particular conjuncture of international order, for us the only interesting, important, serious thing is for these forces to remain united and organized, outside electoral and parliamentary masquerades. The Christian Democrats and others may well put in place every expedient to "make up the numbers," mobilizing hospitals, convents, petty bourgeoisie, populace. But in the case of emergency all this fictitious electoral number potential will melt away like snow in the sun. And the decision will be in other hands, it will be in the hands those who have kept themselves out of the equivocation, who have absolutely rejected the farces of this interregnum: resisting even the seduction of the "freshman voting party" and other similar initiatives.

(June 12, 1956)

9. *Hunting for distractions*

For certain ideas to which we have already had the opportunity to refer here, it is interesting to make a comparison between the meaning that certain words had in the ancient Latin language and that which is proper to them in their modern current use. Let us choose the case consisting of the terms *labor* and *otium*.

Labor, that is, work, in the ancient Latin language had predominantly a negative meaning; like the equivalent Greek word, *ponos*, it expressed the idea of fatigue, toil, unpleasant exertion, not only, but sometimes also that of misfortune, harassment, or pain. Thus the verb *laborare* could also mean to suffer, to be in distress, to be tormented. *Quid ego laboravi?* means: for what did I torment myself? *Labor itineris* means the fatigue, the discomfort of a journey; *laborare ex renis*, you see, means to suffer from kidney or headache, and so on.

Therefore, never would it have occurred to an ancient Roman to make *labor* a kind of social ideal. We are not going to be told that ancient Roman civilization was a civilization of time-wasters, slackers, "idlers." The truth is that, back then, there was a sense of distance. *Laborare* was contrasted with *agere* acting in a higher sense. "Work" corresponded to the obscure, material, servile, anodyne forms of human activity, in a relationship with those whose acting connected only with a need, necessity or inauspicious fate. Opposite to them stood those who acted in the proper sense, who carried out free, nonphysical, conscious, disinterested forms of activity; already for those who exercised a material activity, yes, but qualitatively and on the basis of a true, free vocation, the term "work" did not apply; he was an *artifex*. The change in the meaning of the word in question - whereby it became possible to speak of a "religion of work," a "state of work," a "humanism of work," so much so as to make work an insolent ethical-social imperative for everyone - is thus a very clear sign of the plebeization that has occurred in the Western world, of a social civilization that is taking shape as a function of the lowest strata of every social hierarchy.

Let us now take the Latin term *otium*, idleness. For it, the opposite of the previous term has happened, for it has nowadays almost without exception taken on a negative meaning: to be idle is to be useless to oneself and to others; to be idle is to be indolent; to be listless, inactive, prone to the "dolce far niente" of mandolinistic Italy for tourists, is now more or less the same thing. Instead, in Latin *otium* meant a leisure time, corresponding essentially to a state of recollection, of relaxation, of transparent, lucid contemplativeness. Idleness in a bad sense - a sense, known even to antiquity - appeared only as what it can lead to when misused: only then could it be said, for example, *hebescere otio* or *otio diffluere*, that is, to become stupefied or undone by idleness. But this is not the prevailing meaning. By a Cicero, a Seneca and various other classics *otium* came to be understood above all as the necessary healthy and normal counterpart of all that is external activity, indeed as the condition for it to have precisely the character of activity, not agitation, not "work."

Moreover, in the Catholic tradition itself (when the May 1 Worker Jesus had not yet been devised) the expression *sacrum otio* had been preserved with reference, precisely, to a contemplative activity. But in a civilization in which every action ended taking on the gray, physical, mechanistic and industrialized features of a "work," even when it is produced by the mind (the "intellectual workers"), the very positive meaning of *otium* was to be lost. And so it is the case that in regard to the modern one it is appropriate to speak not so much of an "active civilization" as of a civilization of agitators and neuropaths. As a compensation to "work" and responsive to the wear and tear of a life brutalized in a vague acting and producing, modern man does not in fact know the classical *otium*, the recollection, the silence, the state of calm and pause in which one returns to oneself. No: he knows only "distraction" in the literal sense, which means dispersion; he seeks sensations, he seeks other tensions, he seeks new excitants almost in a framework of intellectual or emotional stupefaction. Everything in order to escape from oneself, in order not to be alone with oneself, isolated from the din of the outside world and promiscuity with one's "neighbor." Hence radio, television, cinema, frenzy of sports or political *meetings* in a regime of the masses, the need to hear, the hunt for the new fact, "cheers" of all kinds, and so on. Every expedient seems to have been devilishly put in place to the end that any truly inner life be destroyed, to the end that any internal defense of personality be prevented in advance, to the end that, almost like an artificially galvanized being, the individual be carried along by the collective current which, of course, proceeds toward unlimited progress.

(June 16, 1956)

10. The Robeson case

L'Unità placed special emphasis on "Robeson's courageous defiance of the McCarthyist inquisition" and the subsequent indictment of the "great Negro singer," a propagandist abroad, as well as of jazz, of communism. It is an episode in which once again the congenital contradictions of overseas "democracy" come to the fore. Asked whether or not he was a communist, the Robeson retorted it was the right of the citizen of a free democratic country not to disclose the nature of his political beliefs, like his religious beliefs, in the same way that one does not go to the booth to see who one votes for. "My beliefs are none of your business," he added. And, escalating his speech, he told the members of the senatorial committee for the investigation of the

"Anti-American activities: 'You are the real enemies of the homeland, you are the anti-Americans. You should be ashamed of yourselves.'" And he did not leave out the racial sting: "American society is based on racial oppression."

It serves them right - one would say in English, that is: it serves them right. The country that, nominally at least, had its greatest war in the terms of a civil war for the liberation of "poor Negroes," the country that gets Negroes, like Bunches, elected as UN ambassadors, in which writers such as the Caldwell or the author of *The Road of Freedom* present whites as sadistic thugs, arsonists and rapists at the expense of Negroes, by the very Negro, a precipitous exponent of "jazz civilization," a most essential part of Americanism, is sent to school to take lessons in "democracy."

It is the old, but by no means expired, antinomy: either democracy is consistent, and then it must admit its own denial, in the name of the citizen's inescapable freedom of opinion; or it is meant to the physical defense of a given organized national community, and then it must, in a certain way, contradict itself and place a definite limit on "democratic freedoms." This limit, it must be acknowledged U.S. America is now placing it in a sufficiently brutal way, in cases, such as the one now mentioned: in an almost "inquisitorial" way. For that matter, the business of checking the creed and political background of ordinary foreign travelers or tourists, with the associated possible quarantine at Ellis Island, sets a precedent along the same lines. In the face this "democratic" practice, the behavior of the Italian government toward the Communist Party and its activities, overt and covert, is well to be said to be boned.

Still on the subject of democratic antinomies, another example is offered to us in a different domain. As many know, a new science is flourishing in America, that of "corporate morphology" and *human relations* in industry and factories. We recently had at our fingertips one of the major works in progress of such research, research promoted in America by universities and business groups. Well, one of the main findings arrived at is that companies, in America, present an essentially "self-critical" and hierarchical structure; *managerial hierarchy* has very firm, rigid structures in them; the principle of authority, either pure and simple or in relation to the "esoteric" group of technicians, has almost unlimited efficiency there; in large complexes, controls from below in the union sense or from "internal committees" have an extension not at all comparable to what happens among us. Even the American myth of yesterday, the "way open to all" in the ascending ladder of companies, is increasingly taking on an anachronistic and utopian character.

This being the case, in the work mentioned above, one could not help but notice a fundamental inconsistency: America, ostentatiously democratic in official political ideology, is anti-democratic in fact in its most concrete substance, which is its industrial, corporate and productive world; as noted, in the latter "autocracy" instead prevails in the closed hierarchies of *managers*, *big bosses* and *technicians*. Thus the question arises as to how to put things in order. The alternative is clear: either downsize the economic world, i.e., the political ideology facade, or adapt the anti-democracy of the former to the democracy of the latter, or vice versa, then setting aside many forbidding democratic *slogans* and seeking to come, even in the political realm, to an ideology that conforms to structures that have taken shape spontaneously and necessarily through the economic process.

We thus find ourselves, again, in a blocked path, due to the congenital contradictions of a system and ideology. As for an eventual consistent and victorious McCarthyism, as long as it deals with pure American domestic affairs, we might well rejoice. Not so, however, when considering America in the capacity of one of the powers vying for world hegemony. Instead, the words written by precisely one of America's best minds, J. Burham, always apply in this regard: "There is no one who, after listening to an American radio station, can suppress a shudder at the thought that the price of the survival of a non-communist civilization is the Americanization of the world."

(June 23, 1956)

11. Causes and effects

Already on other occasions, before devoting our attention to a given topic, we have intentionally waited for it to lose its character of more immediate, crass topicality. This is the turn of the narcotics affair, brought back to the forefront because of the well-known, recent police operation. Here again, it is different views from the usual, conformist ones that we will assert, emphasizing three points.

The first concerns the comedy of "democratic freedoms." Not unlike the American law of 1914, on which it was traced, our law curiously affects not only the drug dealer but also those who personally use drugs. Which is one of the instances of the impertinent meddling that, deprecated as long as one is dealing with "totalitarian states," is only reaffirmed in a democratic climate. "Society" gets to be a pedagogue with a whip, and right there

where it, with democracy, proclaims that the individual has now come to all responsibility and maturity in America, in addition to the law prosecuting those who use drugs, there had been attempts to impose the prohibitionist law, and lastly, the law against prostitution was added (to which, "Senator" Merlin of course immediately echoed).

Second point. Recently we have had in our hands the results of medical, psychoanalytic and psychiatric research carried out by Dr. D. Powell Wilson in a U.S. "model penitentiary" (that of Fort Leavenworth) on drug addicts therein imprisoned under said law. They agree with the results of every other serious research done in that domain: in the overwhelming majority of cases neurosis is not the *effect* but the *cause* drug use. That is to say: what lies first is an unbearable inner discomfort, an ongoing or latent spiritual crisis. To alleviate it, albeit in a momentary and illusory way, one turns narcotics. But at this point the problem widens and becomes more complicated. The narcotic, in the specific sense, appears to be only a special case in a much larger category of narcotics. The primary and most real fact is the need to compensate for the emptiness of an existence that has become devoid of any deeper meaning. In place of such a sense, not only the addict but Western man in general seeks a sensation, some artificial way to stun, escape, lose himself. Malraux puts these words into the mouth of one of his characters, "We all need a narcotic; we Chinese use opium, the Arabs use hashish, the narcotic that the Westerner uses above all is woman." The woman-but add in sports and movies, American-style used alcohol and everything else. In borderline cases the actual drug will take over. And the more modern civilization with its technicistic, materialistic and collectivizing structures will be incapable of giving true meaning to human life, the more to be expected will be the spread of "narcotics," of one kind or another. With one door closed, another will open: precisely because the root cause is not removed.

The third point is reserved for the "initiated." Because of their dull and dumb conception of the human being, there is no psychiatrist, doctor or psychologist today who does not utter platitudes about narcotics. It is known that in ancient times (and even today among certain so-called "primitive" peoples) narcotics were known. But of them (as of wine itself) an essentially "sacred" use was made. A not dissimilar use concerned, moreover, many rhythms today degraded into jazz, first used to reach ecstasy, and even tobacco which, in extracts, in Central and North America was also used as an adjuvant in processes intended to reach lucid and illuminating visions. In the uses now mentioned, si aimed at a contact, not theoretical but experimental, with the

supersensible. And it is by no means attested that the consequences were vicious addiction and degradation. A great authority on toxicology, L. Lewin, spoke of the "toxic equation," that is, the absolutely different reactions that the same substance can produce depending on the person and his or her orientation. We will add two interesting facts: the well-known novelist Aldous Huxley in his very recent book *The Gates of Sensitive Perception*, described experiences he undertook, far from vice and sensation seeking, with exotic narcotics. Second fact: We read a report by a Hamburg physician, Walter Frederking, who used mescaline clinically and obtained with it the resolution of psychically original physical disorders, almost in the same sense as psychoanalytic treatment. He noted the

"striking resemblance" of patients' reported experiences with the "mystery of transformation, such as is of paramount importance in all the great religions and especially in the Mysteries."

With that, one can conclude. Like everything, modern man has also profaned this. The confusing contacts he makes with a nonphysical reality through them serve him not as an eventual, exceptional avenue of internal liberation but as a spasmodic and "euphoric" substitute for the lost sense of life and become a push for the ultimate downfall.

(August 4, 1956)

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