THAT MEETING WITH JULIUS EVOLA BACK IN 1973

OTHER AUTHORSINTERVIEWS & MEMORIESA COMMENTJUNE 8, 2022

A few days after the anniversary of Julius Evola's earthly death, we are pleased to publish the unpublished memory of a meeting that took place in 1973, in the house of Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, between the baron and Umberto Salmeri, one of the many young militants thirsty for knowledge and of truth, which frequented the metapolitical circles of the seventies, such as that of the New Order and beyond.

Umberto Salmeri, whom we sincerely thank for his precious contribution, in which very interesting details emerge, sent us this writing of his, after having discovered the publication for Cinabro Edizioni of "A colloquio col Barone" , the book edited by RegenerAzione Evola who made public the content of a totally unpublished interview made to Julius Evola by some young Roman militants, also in 1973 at his Roman home, and kept for decades by the Heliodromos group.

The umpteenth testimony of how Evola has never refused to meet the many guys who knocked on her door looking for answers, a way, a guide to orient oneself among the ruins of the modern world, to always remain with the face turned to sun, even in the increasingly dense darkness of the present.

In the featured image, an exceptional vintage photo of Julius Evola in his studio, restored in color by Antonio Pires

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by Umberto Salmeri

It was 1973, that distant 1973, about half a century ago, when the signs of the Kali-yuga had not yet unfolded so aggressively, as in the present dark and painful period in which alas we are living. For that generation of ours, the Kali-yuga was a theoretical concept, albeit a disturbing one, yet we were not yet experiencing it as we do today on our skin.

The building where Julius Evola lived in Rome, in Corso Vittorio Emanuele n. 197

I met, from an intellectual point of view, Julius Evola around the age of eighteen , thanks to my dear friend Mauro, who unfortunately is no longer here. He was a convinced ordinist, a sympathizer of Franco Freda's theories, which in those years were very “trendy” among those young people who had tired of the pro-bourgeois and patriotic rhetoric carried out by Almirante's MSI. Mauro, passionate and great reader of philosophical texts, gave me the famous “Essays on Magical Idealism” . Well, that book exerted a particular fascination on me, an almost ecstatic openness, so much so that it made Nietzsche's titanic thought seem like something with its own limits, without prejudice to my great passion for the German thinker. So I continued with"Theory of the Absolute Individual" and so on, up to the reading of the great work "Revolt against the Modern World ". I keep that book where there are still the pencil annotations of my aforementioned late friend. I can say that I have read almost everything about Evola, even the “Dadaist” verses of “Raaga Blanda”.

That said, the desire and curiosity to know him personally was born in me at that time, to get to know the author of those works which by now formed the basis of my Weltanschauung up close .When I was a good twenty years old, I started pawing and at the same time working to ensure that that event would occur. In those years I attended the legendary Centro Studi Europa in via degli Scipioni in Rome, directed by Pino Rauti together with the fervent organizing mind of Nicola Cospito. At that location, among many others, initiatives were also taken relating to personally contacting Evola. I learned that some militants and intellectuals from our area had come to visit him. I remember that once a sort of “delegation” was formed in that environment, to which I joined, ready to carry out the long-awaited visit; but nothing came of it, because a few hours earlier we learned that the Master was not well.

After some time, I decided at this point to contact him personally. The first phone call, made with Francesco, my fraternal cousin, was not successful for the same reasons. I remember that we were very excited, we managed to miss a few words but on the other side of the telephone handset we were told the impossibility of being received. My cousin, however satisfied only for having heard Evola's voice on the telephone, exclaimed: "Maestro, I greet you in Rome" ... !!! After a few weeks, however, I intuitively felt, I would almost dare to say telepathically, that our health conditions were improving and therefore I decided, this time in complete solitude, to call back. I imposed a calm and calm tone of voice and then I asked him directly for an appointment, but after a few questions from him on the reasons for this request, which I managed to evade with elegance, I finally received this appointment.

It was an early autumn afternoon, I arrived in front of this ancient "Umbertine" building in Corso Vittorio Emanuele , I rang the intercom and ran all the stairs on foot, it was the third or perhaps the fourth floor. At the entrance I received a distinguished-looking lady, presumably her caregiver, who introduced me into the room where he was unfortunately forced to stay due to his notorious paralysis. Julius Evola lay on the bed, under the covers, with his torso half erect, propped up on two slightly padded pillows. Yet he had a hieratic aspect , despite the situation of physical disability. He slowly turned his head towards me and stared intently at me with two non-human eyes (1): in his gaze I saw the same of those Hindu ascetics in the act of absolute identification with the inner eye of Shiva. A slightly dolichocephalic skull, he looked like an extraterrestrial from who knows what ancient and mysterious solar race. I greeted him calling him Master and he immediately proved courteous and helpful and, therefore, I felt at ease and even thought of a kind of elective affinity existing with the one who was in front of me. He asked me again the reasons for the visit and I, citing some of his works that I had read, I replied that there were some issues that I would have liked to investigate. I vaguely remember that we talked about Platonic archetypes and Platonic philosophy in general, then about the Samkhya and theVedanta. In fact in his "Yoga of Power " He had foreshadowed some points regarding these doctrines that were not very clear to me. Then, with a pindaric leap, we came to talk about Existentialism, because I quoted "Riding the Tiger" . I realized that he did not have much sympathy for Heidegger and when I asked him what he thought of Sartre, he rightly replied that his whole thought was aimed at destabilizing the existing and therefore the Being, which precisely for the philosopher in question was the same thing. He concluded that after all Sartre's was a one-dimensional nihilism, from which therefore there was no way out. From philosophical and theoretical speculation he moved on to dialogue about Artand of Painting. This intrigued me as I was and am a visual artist. I told him and his gaze was very pleased. Obviously we came to talk about his Dadaist experience of him. In his narration I understood that that experience had not denied it at all, but had served him to go further in his inner search, according to a dimension and a metaphysical vocation.

The conversation ended with the topic of Politics. He asked me about my political orientation and I naively replied that I was on the right. At that point he again stared at me with those large, hyperluminous and slightly dilated eyes of his and with a stern tone this time he said: “Which right, which right are we referring to ”?I quickly realized that I had been stupidly vague and promptly replied that I was a sympathizer, indeed an activist of the New Order. The Master therefore, also on this occasion, showed himself pleased and with that soundless but deep voice he murmured: ... "then yes, now we understand each other"! Consequently he wanted to know if I had read his "Fascism seen from the Right and Notes on the Third Reich". I replied in the affirmative, underlining that in principle I shared his line of thought, although I wanted to clarify that, however, I did not disdain certain populist and socialist forms typical of National Socialism, such as the organization of national-racial and other agricultural communities. initiatives of this kind. I remember he smiled nice at me, shaking his head slightly (I knew he didn't quite agree on certain issues). I was anchored to "New Order" but in part I also winked at extra-parliamentary political movements of the time such as "Lotta di Popolo". I had several friends who called themselves "Nazi-Maoists" and we all know how Evola was not very tender towards certain hybrid findings.

After more than an hour of conversation, I noticed a certain physical fatigue in him and therefore I understood that it was time to take my leave. So I did and greeted him almost affectionately as he was a relative. I took from my jacket pocket a copy, a little crumpled up, of the newspaper of the New Order, the one with the bicuspid ax, so to speak, and left it on the bedside table. He made me understand that he had enjoyed that visit and that I could even come back.

A small note: a few months later I recall that "New Order" was dissolved by the Minister of the Interior, a certain Taviani, and also "Lotta di Popolo" I seem to remember that it was dissolved that year.

It goes without saying how I felt after my personal acquaintance with Julius Evola, as well as the "courtship" received from various friends who militated in the same political area as me. They were terribly curious and wanted to know everything about that fateful meeting. However, they did not have great satisfaction because I internalized the fact so much, as something precious, that just talking about it gave me the impression of devaluing what for me was a very special event . In other words, I told them only a small part of that event, which for me is so important and particularly suggestive.

Unfortunately for a whole series of reasons, including my own, there were no other occasions for meeting afterwards except that which occurred at his death, in which I went with other people to pay homage to the body. On that occasion I noticed that the lid of the coffin leaning against the wall was without the crucifix. Some of those present told me that it had recently been uprooted by the express will of the Master. I shuddered and thought about his great work "Pagan Imperialism" and his stupendous consistency demonstrated to the end!

There was a great coming and going of people in that house, when we left my cousin Francesco pointed out to me that in the attendance book, placed at the entrance of the house, one could read the name of a certain Lucilla Hess . Intrigued, we wondered who she was, if so many times that name was connected to that of Rudolf Hess, but honestly we could not find an answer.

Evola was cremated and her ashes were scattered on her beloved Monte Rosa, although many of us at that time thought, I don't know why, that it was Mont Blanc.

My personal story ends here and it goes without saying that, given the long time that has elapsed, the present narrative has been limited to the succinct exposition of only some fragments of my no longer young memory, leaving out many other topics that, in a hour and a half of conversation, we will certainly have faced, topics that unfortunately the aforementioned time has dragged into oblivion.

I thank the Editors of RegenerazionEvola for allowing me to rework these small memories and to have been able to externalize them, so as to make an equally small tribute to the memory of the great Julius Evola, a man who went beyond his human garment to become something semi-divine .

Editorial note

(1) Umberto Salmeri's testimony also confirms the "superhuman" magnetism of Evola's gaze, a fact confirmed by many who had the opportunity to meet him and talk to CD. "Law of entities" , in which some of these personal memories are mentioned.