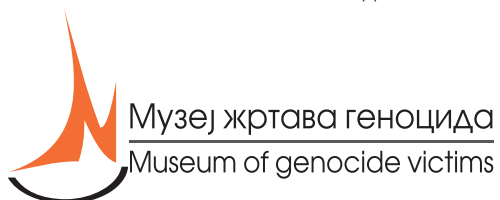


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POLYPERSPECTIVE I

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ПОЛИПЕРСПЕКТИВА I
Зборник радова

Уредио
Епископ пакрачко-славонски
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NEW MARTYRS:
POLYPERSPECTIVE I
Collected Papers

Edited by
Bishop of Pakrac and Slavonia
Jovan (Ćulibrk)

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ПРЕДГОВОР

Симпосион *Новомученици: њолийерсѡекѡива* – одржан у Спомен-поздручју Доња Градина у Републици Српској (БиХ) 13. септембра 2015. године – зачет је у сарадњи Одбора за Јасеновац Светог Архиепископског Сабора СПЦ и Музеја жртава геноцида из Београда као пионирски подухват на богословском и историографском пољу. Наиме, многе заједнице – црквене, националне, па и политичке – које су доживјеле масовно страдање у XX вијеку покушале су богословским параметрима да промисле и осмисле сопствено страдање. Зборник с првог Симпосиона *Новомученици: њолийерсѡекѡива* по први пут саставља та промишљања – заснована на библијском поимању себе и свијета – на једно мјесто и омогућава (им) да се сагледају међусобно, у компаративној перспективи. То промишљање могуће је само уколико је засновано на истинском догађају и зато ће основу како Симпосиона тако и будућих зборника и убудуће чинити како промишљања о суштини страдања тако и радови који проучавају историјске чињенице страдања до детаља и ригорозно их преиспитују.

+Јован (Ђулибрк), Епископ Пакрачко-славонски
Предсједник Одбора за Јасеновац



ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Симпозиум *Новомученики: полиперспектива* – состоявшийся в Мемориальном комплексе Доня Градина в Республике Сербской (БиГ) в 13. сентября 2015 года – начат в сотрудничестве Комитета по лагерю Ясеновац Священного Архиерейского Собора СПЦ и Музея жертв геноцида в Белграде как первопроходческое начинание на богословском и историографическом поле. А именно, ряд сообществ – церковных, национальных, а также политических, которым выпало пережить массовые страдания в XX веке сделали попытку в богословских параметрах переосмыслить и осознать собственные страдания. Сборник первого Симпозиума *Новомученики: полиперспектива* впервые собирает эти переосмысления, основанные на библейском понимании самих себя и мира, воедино и дает им возможность посмотреть друг на друга в компаративной перспективе. Такое переосмысление возможно лишь в том случае, если оно основано на подлинных событиях и поэтому, основой как Симпозиумов так и следующих сборников в будущем, станет и переосмысление сущности страданий и работы, которые изучают исторические факты страданий до мельчайших деталей и строго их пересматривают.

+Иоанн (Чулибрк), Епископ Пакрацко-славонский
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FOREWORD

Symposion *New Martyrs: Polyperspective*, held in the Memorial Area of Donja Gradina in Republika Srpska (Bosnia-Herzegovina) on September 13th 2015, started through the cooperation of the Jasenovac Committee of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Museum of Genocide Victims from Belgrade as a pioneering undertaking in the theological and historiographical fields. Namely, many communities – ecclesiastical, national, and even political – which have experienced massive persecution in the XX century, have been trying to contemplate and devise their own suffering through theological parameters. Collection of works from the first Symposion *New Martyrs: Polyperspective*, for the first time compiles these contemplations – based on the biblical understanding of oneself and the world – to a single spot and allows (them) to perceive each other in a comparative perspective. This contemplation is possible only if based on a true event and therefore the basis of both the Symposion and the prospective compilations will in the future continue to consist of contemplations on the essence of the suffering, as well as of the works that study the historical facts of the suffering to detail and challenge them rigorously.

+ Jovan (Ćulibrk), Bishop of Pakrac and Slavonia
Chairman of the Jasenovac Committee



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THE CAUSE FOR BEATIFICATION OF TERESIO OLIVELLI: CATHOLIC HISTORY AND THE MEMORY OF THE SHOAH

SUMMARY: *This work is dedicated to the critical reconstruction of Teresio Olivelli's existential journey and to the historical and historiographical implications of his cause for beatification, to its importance both for the Catholic memory of the Shoah and for the institutional attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Shoah in history after 1945.*

KEY WORDS: *Teresio Olivelli, True Fascist, True Catholic, Decontextualisation Beatification.*

1. Teresio Olivelli: the life and works of a Catholic Fascist.¹ Religious, cultural and political education (1916-1937)

Olivelli was born on 7 January 1916 near Como (Bellagio). All his biographers maintain that the figure of his maternal uncle, the priest Rocco Invernizzi, who was also his confessor and the promoter of his cause for beatification after his death,² was decisive in his religious and cultural education. After moving

¹ For the category of Catholic Fascism applied to Catholic youth “intellettuali cresciuti direttamente nel clima dello Stato totalitario” (“intellectuals grown up directly in the climate of the totalitarian state”) and in particular to Olivelli as a Catholic propagandist of antisemitic racism cf. R. Moro, *Propagandisti cattolici del razzismo antisemita in Italia (1937-1941)*, in Brice C.-Miccoli G. (eds.), *Les racines chrétiennes de l'antisémitisme politique (fin XIX^e-XX^e siècle)*, École française de Rome, Roma 2003, pp. 281, 331-332 n. 221; Id., *Chiesa, pregiudizio religioso e ideologia negli anni della pedagogia totalitaria*, in Pazzaglia L., *Chiesa, cultura e educazione in Italia tra le due guerre*, La Scuola, Brescia 2003, p. 426. For imperial and Catholic racism in Olivelli, see D. Menozzi, *La chiesa e gli ebrei*, in Regione Toscana (ed.), *Capire gli stermini. Per una didattica della Shoah. Dispense Pisa 29 agosto-3 settembre 2010*, Forum per i problemi della pace e della guerra, Firenze 2012, p. 34. For Olivelli's context in Pavia and his racism, see also G. Guderzo, *Cattolici e fascisti a Pavia tra le due guerre*, Istituto per la storia del movimento di liberazione nella provincia di Pavia-Società pavese di storia patria, Pavia 1978.

² In 1945 together with the then bishop of Pavia, Carlo Allorio, and Luigi Dughera, his parish priest at Mortara (cf. <http://www.teresioolivelli.it/documenti/fama-di-santita> official site of the

permanently with his family to Mortara near Pavia in 1926, Olivelli, with his enrolment in school, was from then on drawn into all the Fascist youth organisations.³ From 1927 to 1938 he was a member of the Catholic youth club of St. Lorenzo led by the parish priest Luigi Dughera. His membership of the *Azione Cattolica* (Catholic Action) with a series of tasks and commitments in other Catholic associations as well, marked the development of the young Olivelli, otherwise characterised by his constant presence in the Fascist groups in a way conforming to his school career and his age. On this point we need to notice that Olivelli's attachment to Fascism quickly became a profound conviction, which went beyond the obligations imposed upon all students and citizens by the dictatorial and Fascist totalitarian state as part of the project of Fascistization of schools and the entire Italian society.⁴ In the meantime, having finished his *gymnasium* studies in Mortara and his *liceo* studies at Vigevano, the young man decided to enroll in the study of jurisprudence at Pavia (1934), shortly afterwards also entering Ghislieri College. At Pavia he signed up to and participated in the activities of the *FUCI* – the Italian Catholic University Federation (*Federazione Universitaria Cattolica Italiana*) and at the same time joined the *GUF* – the Fascist University Groups (*Gruppi Universitari Fascisti*), where he played a full part in both sporting activities and those more directly political, not only local, but also increasingly national.⁵

cause for canonisation, consulted 17 June 2016). The different monographs dedicated to Olivelli are of a panegyric and in some cases hagiographic nature, albeit with different levels and presenting numerous and important documents; among the monographs are: A. Caracciolo, *Teresio Olivelli*, La Scuola, Brescia 1947 (1975²); L. Dughera, *Teresio Olivelli*, Edizioni Paoline, Milano 1950; P. Rizzi, *L'Amore che tutto vince. Vita ed eroismo cristiano di Teresio Olivelli*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 2004; G. Di Peio, *Teresio Olivelli. Tra storia e santità*, Effatà, Cantalupa (Torino) 2006. S. Marotta, *Olivelli Teresio*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. LXXIX *Nursio-Ottolini Visconti*, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, Roma 2013, pp. 223-224, accepts this line uncritically. See also the pages dedicated to Olivelli by F. Magri, *La Democrazia cristiana in Italia (1897-1949)*, vol. 1, La Fiaccola, Milano 1954, pp. 264-270. On Caracciolo's work and its historiographical implications, cf. L. La Rovere, *L'eredità del fascismo. Gli intellettuali, i giovani e la transizione al postfascismo 1943-1948*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 2008, pp. 304-311. The present work is a critical reconstruction and historical contextualization based on the existing original archive documents.

³ On this subject cf. C. Betti, *L'Opera Nazionale Balilla e l'educazione fascista*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1984; on the school under Fascism: M. Ostenc, *La scuola italiana durante il fascismo*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 1980, J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime fascista (1922-1943)*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1996, G. Ricuperati, *Storia della scuola in Italia. Dall'Unità a oggi*, La Scuola, Brescia 2015.

⁴ On Fascist totalitarianism cf. E. Gentile, *La via italiana al totalitarismo. Il partito e lo Stato nel regime fascista*, Carocci, Roma 2008 (or. ed. 1995).

⁵ On the ideological nature of the *GUF*, including both sporting and cultural, of 'totalitarian organisation' and 'integral training' of the young in Fascism cf. L. La Rovere, *Storia dei Guf. Organizzazione, politica e miti della gioventù universitaria fascista 1919-1943*, Bollati Boringhieri,

It is not possible here to discuss the statements of some biographers according to whom Olivelli's decision to pledge himself to Fascism in order to Christianise it belongs to this university period and that he did this separately from the Pavian *FUCI* in opposition to the line taken by Montini.⁶ On the nature of this decision, however, we need to linger in order to underscore that, on the contrary, Olivelli supported and actively participated, ideologically and politically, in Fascism as a true Fascist and true Catholic. On his Fascism there can here be no doubt: the primacy he assigns to his Catholicism, which emerges from his letters as well as from the course of his training, is not incompatible with his being and declaring himself a Fascist. On a similar attitude, and in general on the relationship between Catholicism and Fascism, the Catholic justification of Fascism itself, following the strong alliance between the Catholic church and the regime signed in 1929, certainly carried weight, which went beyond the successive moments of conflict and opposition.⁷ The clear support for Fascism from the Catholic perspective, the affirmation not only of compatibility but also directly of the identification of Catholicism to Fascism in contrast to Nazism, and the interpretation of the Spanish Civil War as a religious war, a Catholic crusade

Torino 2003; S. Duranti, *Lo spirito gregario. I gruppi universitari fascisti tra politica e propaganda (1930-1940)*, Donzelli, Roma 2008.

⁶ Cf. for certain aspects A. Caracciolo, *Teresio Olivelli*, La Scuola, Brescia 1975, but above all P. Rizzi, *L'Amore che tutto vince. Vita ed eroismo cristiano di Teresio Olivelli*, pp. 194-204, and, as mentioned, S. Marotta, *Olivelli Teresio*. For a true historical reconstruction of the story of the Catholic Action during Fascism, cf. at least R. Moro, *Afascismo e antifascismo nei movimenti intellettuali di Azione cattolica dopo il 1931*, *Storia contemporanea*, a. VI, n. 4, dicembre 1975, pp. 733-799; Id., *La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica (1929-1937)*, il Mulino, Bologna 1979; Id., *La formazione giovanile di Aldo Moro*, «*Storia Contemporanea*», a. XIV, n. 4-5, ottobre 1983, pp. 803-968.

⁷ In 1944 Augusto Del Noce, the Italian Catholic philosopher, writing about the period of dictatorship and the behaviour of Catholics in Italy, criticised the Marxist interpretation of Fascism: «First and foremost, the reduction of the factors leading to Fascism to nothing more than crude economic interests is anything but clear. Because among the supporters of Fascism were forces that do not identify with the bourgeoisie. It should not be forgotten precisely how much energy that Fascism generated for itself by the politics of the Concordat. The war in East Africa, was not merely a simple justifiable colonial operation, but also the first act of the "war of Fascism" and was carried out in total contempt of the League of Nations. It would not have been possible if there had been religious conflict in Italy. It was religious peace, which essentially lasted in Italy until the alliance with Nazism, that made possible the onset of imperial policy. It may be answered that the clergy who supported Fascism were the reactionary clergy. Be that as it may; but the clergy's reaction was not directed against the economic demands of the proletariat, but rather against Freemasonry and "red atheism". That is to say the reactionary and theocratic nature of certain members of the clergy may be traced back to economic interests only by means of that interpretation of spiritual life and history that is historical materialism» (A. Del Noce, *La volontà morale nella situazione politica presente*, 1944, in A. Del Noce, *Scritti politici 1930-1950*, T. Dell'Era (ed.), Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro) 2001, p. 218). For an interpretation of Del Noce's political thought and his evaluation of Fascism, Nazism, the Racial Laws and Communism, see T. Dell'Era, *Augusto Del Noce filosofo della politica*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro) 2000.

against the anti-Christ (with clear reference to communism), are all elements which emerge from a number of Olivelli's letters in the years 1935-6.⁸ In the first of these, he likens Christian to Fascist authority, and, on the basis of Maritain's Thomism, which supports its distinction from idealism and socialism, sets it against the Nazi and pantheist concept of race, described as an anti-Roman, anti-Catholic and anti-Latin position. With these words he actually unites Catholicism and Fascist *Romanità* in the common defence of spiritual values and expresses an anti-protestant and anti-modern position in a philosophical and political sense.⁹ In the second letter, among other things, he reaffirms the traditional view of gender roles in the family. These are, therefore, the reasons that Renato Moro has justly defined Olivelli as a Catholic Fascist: «Nor in the end should the existence be forgotten of a portion of the Catholic world right inside Fascism by this time and completely addicted to its arguments. Typical of a large portion of Catholic youth is, for example, the case of Teresio Olivelli, the future partisan "rebel", but then a young Catholic university student and at the same time a young Fascist. Spiritual support for the war in Ethiopia, a true and intense participation in seeing the Spanish Civil War as a crusade (and in fact Olivelli, like so many young Catholic men, wanted to go there as a volunteer), total incomprehension of the anti-Franco attitude of French Catholics, and on the other hand a violent reaction against the *Anschluss* and, from the start, strong condemnation of Nazism: this is his political route. For Olivelli, therefore, the Fascist option was not contributory to his religious one: his was not a struggle to develop human and Christian elements in the Fascist environment, but a struggle completely "from inside", in which attempts at reform followed identification with the regime and its values. In short, Olivelli came from the world of Fascism, not from that of a-Fascism».¹⁰ To the essential elements of this journey was added Fascist racism.

⁸ Cf. Istoreco Pavia (Istituto Pavese per la Storia della Resistenza e dell'Età Contemporanea), Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 1, fasc. 1.9, Olivelli's letter to Ugoberto Alfassio Grimaldi 9 August 1935; Olivelli's letter to Rocco Invernizzi 19 July 1936 in Diocesi di Vigevano, *Processo di Canonizzazione del Servo di Dio Teresio Olivelli. Lettere*, vol. 1, pp. 50-53.

⁹ On anti-Protestantism and its connections with antisemitism cf. R. Moro, *L'opposizione cattolica al metodismo tra gli anni Venti e Trenta*, in Chiarini F. (ed.), *Il metodismo italiano (1891-1991)*, Claudiana, Torino 1997, pp. 131-180; Id., *Pregiudizio religioso e ideologia: antiebraismo e antiprotestantesimo nel cattolicesimo italiano fra le due guerre*, in «Le Carte 3», Edizioni Quattroventi, Urbino 1998, pp. 17-66; Id., *Cattolicesimo e italianità. Antiprotestantesimo e antisemitismo nell'Italia "cattolica"*, in A. Acerbi, *La Chiesa e l'Italia. Per una storia dei loro rapporti negli ultimi due secoli*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2003, pp. 307-339.

¹⁰ R. Moro, *Azione cattolica, clero e laicato di fronte al fascismo*, in F. Malgeri (ed.), *Storia del movimento cattolico in Italia*, vol. IV *I cattolici dal fascismo alla resistenza*, Il Poligono, Roma 1981, p. 358. Moro emphasises how the war did not actually involve the end of the attachment to Fascism, but rather an acceptance of the essential propagandist reasons adopted by the regime to justify it (e.g., as a fight against demo-plutocracies).

2. *The official era of Catholic Fascist Racism and Anti-Semitism (1938-1939 and beyond)*

After having taken part in the Pavia *Prelittorali*¹¹ in February 1937, without winning, Olivelli graduated in administrative law in November 1938. Bridging this event are two letters in which he expresses his own reaction to the advent of Italian racism decided upon by the Fascist government.¹² In these letters a sort of anti-Semitic Roman-Italic Catholic nationalism emerges, which assigns to race a relative value in the formation of the nation, and rejects an exclusively biological notion to it.¹³ On this basis the young graduand makes obvious a clear contrast between two visions (spiritualistic and biologicistic) neither of which exclude racism even if understood and named in different ways. Moreover, acceptance of other ideological elements emerges, to which the regime links the racist and anti-Semitic campaign, namely autarchy and the struggle against the bourgeois spirit.

Fascism's racist and Anti-Semitic policy meant for Olivelli the occasion of starting his academic career. With the support of the Rector of Ghislieri College, Ciapessoni, the young graduate, notwithstanding his own misgivings on the «length, difficulty and unlikely success»¹⁴ of the path through university, received

¹¹ *Prelittorali* were local competitions organised by GUF in order to select the participants at the *Littorali* (national competitions for Fascist university students, in this case in Culture and Arts).

¹² Cf. Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letters to Charles Castaing 14 August and 21 December 1938 (copies of the letters to Castaing also in Istituto Storico della Resistenza bresciana, Archivio storico della Resistenza e dell'età contemporanea, Fondo Morelli, Sezione Q, b. 50).

¹³ For the historical and historiographic concept of Roman-Italic-spiritualistic racism and of biologicistic racism, over and above the trends of Italian racism, cf. M. Raspanti, *I razzismi del fascismo*, in Centro Furio Jesi (ed.), *La menzogna della razza. Documenti e immagini del razzismo e dell'antisemitismo fascista*, Grafis, Casalecchio di Reno (Bologna) 1994, pp. 73-89; G. Israel and P. Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, il Mulino, Bologna 1998; G. Israel, *Science and the Jewish Question in The Twentieth Century. The Case of Italy and What It Shows*, «Aleph. Historical Studies in Science and Judaism», vol. 4 (2004), pp. 191-261; Id., *Italian Mathematics, Fascism and Racial Policy*, in M. Emmer (ed.), *Mathematics and Culture I*, Springer-Verlag, Berlin-Heidelberg 2004, pp. 21-48; Id., *Il fascismo e la razza. La scienza italiana e le politiche razziali del regime*, il Mulino, Bologna 2010. For a general view of historiographic interpretations of Italian racism I allow myself to refer to T. Dell'Era, *Scienza, politica e propaganda. Il Manifesto del razzismo italiano: storiografia e nuovi documenti. Prima parte. La storiografia*, «SIFP», On-line Journal by the Società Italiana di Filosofia Politica, dicembre 2007, pp. 1-43, <http://www.sifp.it/articoli.php?idTem=3&idMess=577>; Id. *Razzismo e antisemitismo nella costruzione della nazione: analisi concettuale delle quattro principali interpretazioni storiografiche sul caso italiano*, in «Pot-pourri» *Studi in onore di Silvana Ferreri*, G. Platania (ed.), Sette Città, Viterbo 2016, pp. 85-98 (or. ed. 2012).

¹⁴ Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letter to Charles Castaing 14 August 1938. On this as on other occasions he shows a behaviour opposed to rebellion, that is, a faithful obedience to his own superiors in each field, religious and civil.

a scholarship which enabled him to complete post-graduate studies in public law at Turin with the supervisor of his thesis, Pietro Bodda, who had moved to Piedmont after the expulsion of Cino Vitta from the chair of administrative law in accordance with the racial legislation.¹⁵ Olivelli was therefore one of those who clearly gained advantage from the opportunities resulting from the expulsion of Jews from the universities in 1938. In the letter cited above of 21 December 1938 he defines the Arianization of the universities in this way: «capital execution of the (Jewish) culture in Italian universities».¹⁶ Apart from his position at the university (held from December 1938 until May 1940), he collaborated in the editing of Professor Bodda's entries for the PNF's (the National Fascist Party) *Dictionary of Politics*¹⁷ and of journals specialising in law, both of Fascist Italy and abroad; he conducted interpretative seminars on the sources of constitutional law;¹⁸ he was commissioned to teach the Fascist doctrine for courses of political preparation from January 1940; and finally, he collaborated actively in the Turin *FUCI* and also the *GUF*, where above all he concerned himself with racism, participating in a local conference on the subject at the beginning of 1939 and then giving a lecture on 'Romanità and race' during a series of lectures on race held by the Fascist party as a strengthening of the racist and anti-Semitic policies

¹⁵ Pending Bodda's official inauguration, Olivelli was first nominated as assistant to the chair of constitutional law. Vitta was one of 9 full professors expelled in 1938 from the university of Turin because they were considered of Jewish race (see V. Graffone, *L'espulsione e il ritorno dei docenti ebrei nelle carte conservate all'archivio storico dell'Università di Torino*, Laurea dissertation, Università di Torino 2011; Ead., *Espulsioni immediate. L'Università di Torino e le leggi razziali*, 1938, Zamorani, Torino, 2018). On the application of the racial laws to Turin, cf. F. Levi, *L'ebreo in oggetto: l'applicazione della normativa antiebraica a Torino, 1938-1943*, Zamorani, Torino 1991; Id., *Le case e le cose. La persecuzione degli ebrei torinesi nelle carte dell'EGELI 1938-1945*, Compagnia di San Paolo, Torino 1998; on the Arianisation of Italian universities, cf. R. Finzi, *L'università italiana e le leggi antiebraiche*, Editori Riuniti, Roma 1997; G. Israel and P. Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*; T. Dell'Era, *La storiografia sull'università italiana e la persecuzione antiebraica*, «Qualestoria», a. XXXII, n. 2, dicembre 2004, pp. 117-129. Vitta, president of the Jewish community of Florence during the Second World War, was then reinstated at Turin in 1945, but then in 1948, having reached the age limit allowed by the law, retired, having lost a great part of the last years of his career because of Fascist anti-Semitic legislation.

¹⁶ Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letter to Charles Castaing 21 December 1938.

¹⁷ Cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 2 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in copia 1921-1944, b. 4, fasc. 2.12, Olivelli's postcard (copy) to Rocco Invernizzi 20 May 1939; A. Caracciolo, *Teresio Olivelli*, La Scuola, Brescia 1975, p. 66; Partito Nazionale Fascista (ed.), *Dizionario di politica*, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, Roma 1940. On the Dictionary cf. A. Pedio, *La cultura del totalitarismo imperfetto: il Dizionario di politica del Partito nazionale fascista (1940)*, Unicopli, Milano 2000.

¹⁸ Cf. Olivelli's letter (copy) to Pietro Ciapessoni 31 May 1940 in Diocesi di Vigevano, *Processo di Canonizzazione del Servo di Dio Teresio Olivelli. Lettere*, vol. 1, p. 206. This subject naturally also deals with the Fascist system.

of the regime.¹⁹ It is important to note that his objective in this last action, namely «to correct certain ideas, in a word, to perform Christian acts» given that «freedom of opinion has been granted»²⁰ does not in any way mean rejecting racism and anti-Semitism *tout court*.

In fact, the freedom of opinion cited is to be understood as the possibility only of ranging between the positions permitted by the regime, that is, within the limits of the Fascist ideology and system, particularly as regards the bans which Fascism had earlier placed upon the publication in the Catholic press of the Pope's statements on racism (of criticism of Fascist racism because equivalent to the German kind). At this time, in the period of Olivelli's lecture between the end of January and the beginning of February 1939, the negotiations with the Holy See on racism and the question of Catholic Action had been concluded long since, with the position of the Church for many months now fixed upon the defence of privileges obtained from the Concordat (a position which surfaced from the second half of 1938).²¹ In January 1939, moreover, the "Osservatore Romano" had published lengthy extracts from the homily on this subject by the Bishop of Cremona, Cazzani, delivered at the beginning of the month and favourably received by Farinacci.²² Therefore, a position of Catholic racism like that expressed by Olivelli in Turin was accepted as legitimate within Fascism, even with the reactions it could provoke in the *GUF* environment, given the recent clash with Catholic Action. And it is exactly with this lecture that the young assistant expresses the true meaning of the whole operation: to accommodate racism and Christianity in a clear context of spiritualistic orientation of Fascist racism (a tendency, moreover, which after the initial biologicistic swerve, to use a useful formula of Israel and Nastasi, becomes affirmed within Fascism).²³ Therefore, both in his scholarly academic activity and in his more ample cultural activity, Olivelli is fully implanted within the ideology and political life of Fascism, to which he makes his own contribution as a Catholic, in particular taking part in a

¹⁹ Cf. Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letters to Charles Castaing 22 March 1940 and to Rocco Invernizzi 5 February 1939 respectively (copy in Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 2 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in copia 1921-1944, b. 4, fasc. 2.12).

²⁰ Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letter to Rocco Invernizzi 5 February 1939.

²¹ Cf. G. Fabre, *Un «accordo felicemente conchiuso»*, «Quaderni di storia», a. 38, n. 76, luglio-dicembre 2012, pp. 83-154 and R. Perin, *Pio XI e la mancata lettera sugli ebrei a Mussolini (agosto 1938)*, «Rivista di Storia del Cristianesimo», vol. 10, n. 1/2013, pp. 181-206.

²² On this address, Farinacci's judgement and the earlier confrontation with Cazzani on Fascist racism, cf. recently E. Mazzini, *Ostilità convergenti. Stampa diocesana, razzismo e antisemitismo nell'Italia fascista (1937-1939)*, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, Napoli 2013.

²³ Cf. Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letter to Rocco Invernizzi 5 February 1939; G. Israel and P. Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*.

number of initiatives resulting from the racist and anti-Semitic policy of the regime.

The fact that Olivelli's view of racism cannot in any way be considered anti-racist, let alone, as the apologist biographers would have it, non-Fascist or directly anti-Fascist, is shown by the reality that the Turin *GUF* leaders, according to what Olivelli himself says in the correspondence just cited, invited him to put himself forward for the local *Prelittoriali* in March 1939, at which he was chosen for the *Littoriali* of culture and art which was to take place in Trieste from 30 March to 1 April that year on the topic 'Formation and fundamental biological character of the Italian race'. On this occasion Olivelli, following the lines of one of the assigned topics, presented an exposition on 'Racism as spiritual and political principle of the revolution: its relation to the values of tradition, Romanità, Catholicism, Renaissance and Risorgimento'.²⁴ From the title it is clear that racism is accepted and spread by Olivelli in a spiritualistic version (which absolutely does not remove its racist nature nor its capacity to generate a racist policy) in the context of its combination with the Catholic and Italian historical tradition. His reasoning on racism develops entirely within the Fascist doctrine, in particular in its voluntaristic and universalistic aspect. The purpose is to show the originality of Fascist racism and the perfect harmony of the racist principle with the fundamental characteristics of the Fascist doctrine together with its compatibility with the Catholic doctrine. We are talking of a real exercise of conceptual analysis of the notion of racism within the Fascist and Catholic doctrinal system. That is, of the presentation of the aspects of compatibility of the concept of race with the Fascist doctrine and with Catholicism on the basis of a number of classic patterns: the connections with Romanità; modernity and therefore the tradition and analysis of the intension and extension of the notion of race. Compatibility with the faith is shown both by respect for the universalism of the spirit affirmed by Christianity, which establishes the notion of human dignity (not to be confused with the affirmation of human rights), and towards the acceptance of a non-absolute notion of race, namely of a recognition of racial differences and diversity as material and biological data (morphological, physical, hereditary psychological). The opposing views of materialism and idealism are

²⁴ Cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 3 Scritti e appunti di Teresio Olivelli 1931-1944, b. 7, fasc. 6 and fasc. 8 Olivelli, *Dottrina del fascismo*. For the publication of the text at the time, cf. below. This paper is now available, in a slightly different version, in P. Rizzi, *L'Amore che tutto vince. Vita ed eroismo cristiano di Teresio Olivelli*, pp. 319-324. On the *Littoriali* of culture and art, including those held at Trieste, cf. L. La Rovere, *Storia dei Guf. Organizzazione, politica e miti della gioventù universitaria fascista 1919-1943*, pp. 265-289. On Olivelli's racism see also the Elisa Signori's interpretation (which is impossible to discuss here): E. Signori, *La gioventù universitaria italiana di fronte alle leggi antiebraiche*, in *A settant'anni dalle leggi razziali. Profili culturali, giuridici e istituzionali dell'antisemitismo*, a cura di D. Menozzi e A. Mariuzzo, Roma, Carocci, 2010, pp. 267-303.

overcome by the Thomist synthesis that leads to a dynamic, evolutionary and 'synthetic' notion of race that expresses itself through «biological conditioning to the realisation of a particular form of civilisation».²⁵ From which follows the full recognition of the legitimacy of the Fascist policy of race, both for reasons of principle (the Italian state has a right to determine politically the races that can be assimilated and not assimilated to the Italic tradition, the so-called *italicità*), and for reasons of fact (because of a policy of defence of the Italian race linked to the Italic, Roman, Catholic, Renaissance and Risorgimento tradition). The racism is basically an organising of the «coexistence of the groups», in accordance with the organic distribution of functions resulting from their characteristics, because not all ethnic groups can aspire to have an «imperial vocation». The conclusive result therefore consists of affirming «the objectivity, the universality, and so the *italicità* and absolute originality of Fascist racism». In such a way Olivelli actually justified and legitimised colonial and imperial racism along with the racist anti-Semitism of Fascism. Once he had been declared the winner of the *Littoriali*, he was entrusted with the drafting of the final text of the competition: the conclusions of the whole convention were to be entirely consistent with his affirmations and, with the description of Judaism as «a continuous expression of anti-Romanità», he was to explain anti-Semitism as a component in its own right of Italian Fascist racism.²⁶

3. Conferences, writings, Fascist party appointments, Nazi Germany and the war (1939-1941)

The victory at the Trieste *Littoriali* led Olivelli to go on to attend conferences and give lectures on the Fascist law, state and racism throughout Italy in an official capacity and cleared the way for him to a career within the national Fascist institutions, just at the time of the strengthening of the alliance between

²⁵ Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 3 Scritti e appunti di Teresio Olivelli 1931-1944, b. 7, fasc. 6 and fasc. 8 Olivelli, *Dottrina del fascismo*. This dynamic concept of race (on which see also R. Moro, *Cattolicesimo e italianità. Antiprotestantesimo e antisemitismo nell'Italia "cattolica"*, p. 334) is in some ways similar to that spread by the Catholic scientist Nicola Pende in contrast to the biologicistic interpretation (on Pende cf. G. Israel and P. Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*; G. Israel, *Science and the Jewish Question in The Twentieth Century. The Case of Italy and What It Shows*; T. Dell'Era, *Strategie politiche ed esigenze scientifiche: il ruolo di Nicola Pende nell'istituzione e nell'organizzazione dell'Università di Bari*, in Angelo Massafrà (ed.), *L'Università di Bari fra Otto e Novecento: politica, società e cultura*, Annali di storia delle università italiane, 17, Clueb, Bologna 2013, pp. 45-67).

²⁶ Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 3 Scritti e appunti di Teresio Olivelli 1931-1944, b. 7, fasc. 6 and fasc. 8 Olivelli, *Dottrina del fascismo*. I postpone to a further work analyses of these conclusions as regards the text of the Manifesto of the race (1938). For an apologist and distorted version of this comparison, in the context of a hagiography, cf. P. Rizzi, *L'Amore che tutto vince. Vita ed eroismo cristiano di Teresio Olivelli*, pp. 284-285.

Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Against this background, the young university assistant's clear pursuit was that of building a Fascist and Catholic, racist and anti-Semitic society, in the full consciousness of the claimed compatibility of these elements and of the nature and features of the institutions in which he carried out his own activity. In May 1939 he took part in an inter-university conference on law in Genoa as representative of the Turin *GUF* meeting Gemelli, with whom he remained in contact through correspondence.²⁷ In August 1939 he went to Berlin, thanks to a study bursary from Ghislieri College in Pavia, for a course in national socialist politics for foreigners organised by the Nazi Party's *Hochschule für Politik*. In Germany he met Carl Schmitt, travelled in the country and, as war began, on his way home also visited Praga and Vienna with the authorisation of the Gestapo.²⁸ Participation in Nazi activities should be viewed in the context of the policies of cultural collaboration between the two regimes within the terms of the political alliance in pursuit of the creation of a new European order at every level, a theme to which Olivelli is sensitive and to which he is committed as an exponent of the Fascist policy on race and as a representative of Fascist youth.²⁹ It is against this background that Olivelli's academic and

²⁷ Cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 2 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in copia 1921-1944, b. 4, fasc. 2.12, Olivelli's postcard (copy) to Rocco Invernizzi 20 May 1939; Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's postcard to Rocco Invernizzi 3 June 1939; P. Rizzi, *L'Amore che tutto vince*, pp. 288-289. On Agostino Gemelli cf. M. Bocci, *Agostino Gemelli rettore e francescano. Chiesa, regime, democrazia*, Morcelliana, Brescia 2003 and, for a more appropriate interpretation as regards **anti-Semitism**, A. Foa, *Gemelli e l'antisemitismo*, in M. Bocci (ed.), *Agostino Gemelli e il suo tempo*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2009, pp. 211-220.

²⁸ Cf. ACS (Central State Archives, Rome), Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.13, Olivelli's postcard to Domenico Olivelli 15 July 1939; Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's postcard to Rocco Invernizzi 15 July 1939; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.13, Olivelli's postcards to Domenico Olivelli 17 July 1939 and to Rocco Invernizzi 24 July 1939; Olivelli's letters to Domenico Olivelli 21 August 1939 and to Rocco Invernizzi 23 August 1939; Olivelli's postcards to Domenico Olivelli 28 August 1939, to Clelia Olivelli 1 September 1939 and to Rocco Invernizzi 1 September 1939; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 2 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in copia 1921-1944, b. 4, fasc. 2.12, Olivelli's postcard (copy) to Domenico Olivelli 15 September 1939; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.13, Olivelli's postcards to Rocco Invernizzi 21-24 September 1939; Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letter to Charles Castaing 22 March 1940.

²⁹ On the subject of the new Mediterranean and European order and the space which Fascist Italy carved out as regards their Nazi ally from an ideological and military point of view, cf. D. Rodogno, *Il nuovo ordine mediterraneo. Le politiche di occupazione dell'Italia fascista in Europa*

university activities abroad are to be set, in a racist and anti-Semitic country, Nazi Germany, which had just unleashed the Second World War. In Italy too his activities take on an unambiguous political character, given the nature of the totalitarian Fascist state, the Fascistization of Italian universities and Olivelli's fully official and substantial inclusion in the youth structure of the party.

In October 1939 he gave a lecture at Vigevano on Fascism in the European context. In November in Rome he took part in another inter-university conference on law on Fascist political representation, giving a lecture on corporative syndicalism. At the beginning of December he was commissioner of the provincial conference on race at Alessandria, while in mid-December he went to Naples to another university conference on the state's authority in Fascism as regards social justice.³⁰ After beginning courses in the doctrine of Fascism at Turin, in mid-January 1940 he went once again to Germany for a brief period as a delegate of the Fascist party for legal studies on Nazism (on the role of the Nazi party as regards the legislative power).³¹ At the end of the month Olivelli was the official representative of the Turin *GUF* at the national convention for Fascist mysticism in Milan.³² As commissioner of the *Littoriali* of culture and art in Bologna in April 1940, he met Giuseppe Bottai, Minister of National Education, and Camillo Pellizzi, head of the National Institute of Fascist Culture.³³ Finally, on 20 May 1940 in Turin he gave the closing lecture of the study meetings on the Fascist policy of race, organised by the local section of the National Institute of Fascist Culture, in front of the city's authorities, university teachers and other scholars,

(1940-1943), Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 2003 (En. ed.: *Fascism's European Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006).

³⁰ For these activities cf. Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Prima serie, b. 424, fasc. 51 Teresio Olivelli; Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Seconda serie a, b. 15, fasc. Olivelli Teresio; Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.13, Olivelli's letter to Carl Schmitt 16 November 1939 and A. Caracciolo, *Teresio Olivelli*, La Scuola, Brescia 1975.

³¹ Cf. Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Prima serie, b. 424, fasc. 51 Teresio Olivelli; Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia.

³² Cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.14, Olivelli's letter to Ugoberto Alfassio Grimaldi 9 January 1940; Olivelli's postcard to Domenico Olivelli 27 or 28 January 1940; Olivelli's postcard to Rocco Invernizzi 2 February 1940. For the convention and the school of Fascist mysticism, cf. D. Marchesini, *La scuola dei gerarchi. Mistica fascista: storia, problemi, istituzioni*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1976.

³³ Cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.14, Olivelli's letter to Rocco Invernizzi 2 May 1940. On the Institute cf. A. Vittoria, *Totalitarismo e intellettuali. L'Istituto nazionale fascista di cultura dal 1925 al 1937*, «Studi storici», a. XXIII, n. 4, ottobre-dicembre 1982, pp. 897-918; G. Longo, *L'Istituto nazionale fascista di cultura. Gli intellettuali tra partito e regime*, Pellicani, Roma 2000.

reaffirming the compatibility between 'Racial separatism and the universality of values'.³⁴

All this intense conference activity, officially organised by the party and attributable to it, was undertaken with a deep consciousness of the true duty of a member charged with the building of the regime and of a faithful Catholic, to such an extent that in a letter of the period he defines himself as «a travelling salesman through Italy of legal-social-racial studies». ³⁵ At this same time all this activity made Olivelli into an exponent, and in fact a propagandist, of the Fascist Catholic political doctrine of race and the state. This is confirmed by his writings of this period in the journals of the Milan and Turin *GUF: Our policy of race* (a summary of the *Littoriali* competition at Trieste in 1939); *Racism as spiritual and political principle of the Revolution* (which combines Olivelli's paper with the final document); and *Race and custom* (a real manifesto of his conception of spiritualistic Roman-Italic-Catholic-Fascist racism).³⁶ In these articles he fully showed his own commitment to Fascist racism (of which anti-Semitism was an integral part) as well as his identification of *italicità* with Catholicism, contributing to what was defined as the anthropological experiment of the creation of the new Fascist man.³⁷

In June 1940, after a series of contacts made in the preceding months, the young Fascist was summoned by the then President Camillo Pellizzi to the INCF (National Institute of Fascist Culture), where he worked as secretary of the Research Department, attached to the Central Presidency. In December of the same year, the secretary of the Fascist Party summoned him to work at the Office of Research and Legislation of the National Directorate of the party, directed by Guido Mancini (who was also director of the *Dictionary of Politics* edited by the PNF), to which he was seconded, then remaining in the roles and activities of the INCF, collaborating in a number of projects on Fascist laws. In 1941 he was nominated as representative of the PNF to the Higher Council of Demography

³⁴ Cf. *L'ultima conversazione del Ciclo sulla Razza. Il vivo successo della manifestazione organizzata dall'Istituto di Cultura Fascista*, «La Stampa», martedì 21 Maggio 1940, a. 74, n. 122, p. 5. Cf. also Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.14, Olivelli's postcard to Rocco Invernizzi 2 February 1940; Olivelli's letters to Domenico Olivelli 23 May 1940 and to Rocco Invernizzi 23 May 1940.

³⁵ Archivio Storico Diocesano di Vigevano, fondo Teresio Olivelli, Archivio storico della Causa di Canonizzazione, Originali di Telesio, Olivelli's letter to Charles Castaing 22 March 1940.

³⁶ Cf. T. Olivelli, *La nostra politica della razza*, «Libro e Moschetto» Giornale dei Gruppi Fascisti Universitari, a. XIII, n. 24, 8 aprile 1939, p. 1; T. Olivelli, *Il razzismo, principio spirituale e politico della Rivoluzione*, «Il Lambello» Quindicinale dei Fascisti Universitari del Piemonte, a. III, n. 11, 15 aprile 1939, p. 6; T. Olivelli, *Razza e costume*, «Libro e Moschetto» Giornale dei Gruppi Fascisti Universitari, a. XIV, n. 14, 27 gennaio 1940, p. 3 (this issue was dedicated to *Littoriali* under the title: *The Littoriali of Culture and Art implement Revolution in the field of spirit and knowledge. Squaddist thought - Culture and Propaganda*).

³⁷ Cf. E. Gentile, *Il fascismo. Storia e interpretazione*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2002.

and Race, an official body of the Ministry of the Interior, to advise on general questions of demography and race composed by experts in the subject, largely from the universities.³⁸ The process of the critique and revision of the Manifesto of the race of 1938, with the reworking of a new text in 1942, went in precisely the direction of spiritualistic racism followed by Olivelli and already promoted by several exponents of Italian science and culture.³⁹

In the period 1940-41 he continued his participation in conferences and Fascist publications. In October 1940, appointed by the National Secretariat of GUF, he took part in the first Italian-German university convention in Bologna, on the theme of the creation of the new European order ('From the policy of the state to the policy of the continent'). His lecture on 'Relations between People and State' was published in November in the journal of the Roman GUF, "Roma Fascista", and constituted a justification of the building of the new continental structure that Italy and Germany were realising with the war. All that went together with the exaltation of voluntaristic and spiritualistic aspects of Fascism as regards the notion of the nation, also worked out in a racist key, and in competition with Nazism.⁴⁰ The same theme was discussed in the article 'State-Empire-Continent' published that month in the journal "Civiltà Fascista", in which Olivelli expounds the Fascist principles of organisation of the new Europe

³⁸ On the composition of the Council in 1938 and its functions cf. R. De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo*, Einaudi, Torino 1993 (or. ed. 1961), p. 581; G. Israel and P. Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, pp. 247-248; S. Gentile, *La legalità del male: l'offensiva mussoliniana contro gli ebrei nella prospettiva storico-giuridica (1938-1945)*, Giappichelli, Torino 2013, pp. 132-133. For information on Olivelli's participation cf. Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Prima serie, b. 424, fasc. 51 Teresio Olivelli; Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia; R. De Felice *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo*, p. 389 (who erroneously believes in Olivelli's condemnation of anti-Semitism).

³⁹ Cf. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce (1929-1940)*, vol. II *Lo Stato totalitario (1936-1940)*, Einaudi, Torino 1981, pp. 868-877; G. Israel and P. Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, pp. 225-230. The interpretation of G. Di Peio, *Teresio Olivelli. Tra storia e santità*, pp. 71-72, is completely distorted.

⁴⁰ Cf. T. Olivelli, *I rapporti tra Popolo e Stato Die Beziehungen zwischen Staat und Volk*, «Roma Fascista. Settimanale del G.U.F. dell'Urbe», Supplemento al n. 3 - 15 novembre 1940, pp. 11-13, 15 and Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.14, Olivelli's letters to Clelia Olivelli 2 October 1940 and to Rocco Invernizzi 3 October 1940; Olivelli's postcards to Carlettore Olivelli 21 October 1940 and to Rocco Invernizzi 21 October 1940. This ideological competition between Italian Fascism and Nazism, for Olivelli, did not jeopardize military cooperation and alliance. The cover image of the "Supplemento" shows the head of two soldiers (one with a Fascist, the other with a Nazi helmet) with a map of Europe in the background. The title of the image was: *Lavorare insieme: combattere insieme Zusammen arbeiten: zusammen kämpfen*. On this topic also cf. R. Moro *Chiesa, pregiudizio religioso e ideologia negli anni della pedagogia totalitaria*, p. 426 who sees Olivelli's case as an «instance of Christian, spiritualistic and voluntaristic interpretation of racism».

resulting from the future end of the world conflict on the basis of an imperial hierarchy of nations, which is also a hierarchy of race.⁴¹ The construction of the new European order, it must not be forgotten, was to be brought about by two states, Italy and Germany, colonial, racist and anti-Semitic: Olivelli's theoretical justification, made in this article, of imperial power, of the policy of the Axis, of the Italian-German alliance and of the foundation of the Fascist state (together with the incorporation of political liberty and individual into the Fascist state on the basis of the Thomist viewpoint expressed in another work of 1940)⁴² represented therefore an authentic justification of racism, including colonial, and of anti-Semitism. In February 1941, commissioned by the Fascist party, he participated in a course on Nazi social politics in Berlin.⁴³ On the other hand, his participation in the second Italian-German university convention in Turin in November 1941 belongs to the period of his military service.⁴⁴ Finally, when he had already decided to volunteer for the Russian front, he was commissioner of the inter-university convention in Padua in February 1942, still on the theme of the new Nazi and Fascist European order.⁴⁵

4. *On the Russian front, the Resistance, deportation and death (1942-1945)*

These ideological premises explain Olivelli's involvement in the Second World War, accepted since the very beginning as part of the propagandist tenets of the regime, and obviously by Fascism in order to fulfil that project of the

⁴¹ Cf. T. Olivelli, *Stato-Impero-Continente*, «Civiltà fascista», a. VII, n. 11, novembre 1940, pp. 875-890.

⁴² Cf. T. Olivelli, G. Silvano Spinetti, *Fascismo e libertà (verso una nuova sintesi)*. Padova, Cedam, 1940-XVIII, «Civiltà fascista», a. VII, n. 10, ottobre 1940, pp. 812-816. On this review also cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.14, Olivelli's letter to Rocco Invernizzi 3 October 1940.

⁴³ Cf. Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.15, Olivelli's postcards to Rocco Invernizzi 4 February 1941 and Domenico Olivelli 5 February 1941.

⁴⁴ Cf. Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Prima serie, b. 424, fasc. 51 Teresio Olivelli; Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 2, fasc. 1.15, Olivelli's postcards to Rocco Invernizzi 27 November 1941 and to Franco Dordoni 29 November 1941.

⁴⁵ Cf. Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Prima serie, b. 424, fasc. 51 Teresio Olivelli; Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia. In another work I shall discuss the precise determination of what Olivelli actually knew, before taking part directly in the war, of Nazi behaviour in their own country and on the war fronts, and of the conduct of the Italian army, subjects on which he was, however, informed through his activities in Rome, Italy and Germany.

construction of a Fascist Catholic civilisation and a new European order. Having decided no longer to take advantage of the deferment of military service, he was called to arms in the Alpini towards the end of February 1941 and spent the rest of that year, together with his cultural and university work already described, in military training (which also included a brief spell in occupied France). At the end of January 1942 he volunteered for the Russian front. This decision, backed up by the ideological and propagandist arguments of the regime on the Axis mission in the war,⁴⁶ clearly had a precise significance. It meant, that is, taking part as a volunteer in the army of a racist and anti-Semitic state like the Italian in a war of aggression initiated by its German ally, a racist and anti-Semitic state, against the Soviet Union, a totalitarian state previously allied to Nazi Germany. Olivelli's Catholicism does not constitute a moral reservation, in the name of human dignity, about participation in the war for the creation of a new Europe on the basis of a racial hierarchy. On the contrary, he derives from his Catholicism a stimulus to fight as a volunteer against atheist totalitarianism, in a constant identification of the Fascist with the Christian vision of heroism. Enlisted as an *Alpino* officer in the "Tridentina" division he left for Russia at the end of July 1942, after having applied for the rectorship of Ghislieri College of Pavia with the support and recommendation of Ciapessoni himself, of a number of local and national Fascist authorities, and of Gemelli.

Olivelli fought in Russia and took part in the withdrawal, returning to Italy in March 1943. In the meantime, in January of that year, he had been nominated as Rector of Ghislieri College of Pavia, thanks to the recommendations received, to his own Fascist political activity, and to the decisive support of Bottai.⁴⁷ He successfully became Rector in May, after the death of Ciapessoni at the end of April 1943, and held the post until the collapse of Fascism at the end of July.

Arrested and deported to Austria after the fall of Fascism and the German occupation of Italy (following his refusal to serve in the new Fascist Republic army), Olivelli came back to Italy as a fugitive and joined the Italian resistance movement in a Catholic unit near Brescia. He was arrested again in April 1944 in Milan and sent to several Italian and German concentration camps. He died in the Hersbruck camp in January 1945.⁴⁸ In March 1952 the President of the

⁴⁶ Cf. Acs, Partito Nazionale Fascista, Direttorio Nazionale, Servizi vari (1923-1943), Prima serie, b. 424, fasc. 51 Teresio Olivelli; Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia; Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 1 Corrispondenza di Teresio Olivelli in originale 1920-1944, b. 3, fasc. 1.16, Olivelli's postcard to Rocco Invernizzi 3 January 1942.

⁴⁷ Cf. Acs, Segreteria particolare del duce, Carteggio ordinario (1922-1943), b. 1034, fasc. 509150, Roma Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista Varia; Acs, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri 1940-1943, b. 2811, fasc. 1/3-1 n. 1175 sottofasc. 2/9-10, Pavia Collegio Ghislieri.

⁴⁸ For this information cf. A. Caracciolo, *Teresio Olivelli*, La Scuola, Brescia 1975, Olivelli's papers at Pavia, Brescia and Vigevano and the documents cited in P. Rizzi, *L'Amore che tutto vince. Vita ed eroismo cristiano di Teresio Olivelli*.

Republic awarded Olivelli the posthumous *medaglia d'oro* for his military valour.⁴⁹ With this action Olivelli's participation in the Fascist regime and his collaboration with the racist and anti-Semitic campaign and policy were totally removed.

5. The cause for beatification of a Catholic, racist, anti-Semitic Fascist and partisan

The cause for his beatification, promoted by a number of individuals immediately after the end of the war, was officially initiated in 1987, even though the gathering of documents and evidence had begun in 1971. The diocesan stage was closed in 1989, with the delivery of the documents to Rome to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. In 2004 part of the enquiry documentation was published by *Libreria Editrice Vaticana* in a biography of Olivelli written by Don Paolo Rizzi, first collaborator and then postulator of the cause and final author of the *positio* (the biography and synthesis of the enquiry). The documentation passed the historical (i.e. Vatican) and theological examination and in 2015, by decree authorised by Pope Francis, the 'heroic exercise of virtue' was recognised and Olivelli received the title of Venerable. In June 2017 the same Pope Francis authorized the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate the decree of martyrdom of Olivelli 'killed in hatred of the faith'.⁵⁰ As a result, Olivelli was beatified on 3 February 2018, almost 80 years after the enactment of the anti-Jewish legislation in Italy (1938). In 2007 the then Pope Benedict XVI had defined Olivelli as a «model» (of Christian virtues), while years earlier John Paul II had compared him to Maximilian Kolbe and Paul VI had declared him as a sample of Christian heroism and patriotism.⁵¹ The beatification and possible canonisation of Olivelli entail an extremely detailed historiographic operation, which makes use of mechanisms that we can find in the apologist biographies published from 1947 onwards. Such an operation is evident in the hagiographic work of Rizzi, part of the enquiry documentation, as stated above, for the cause of Olivelli's beatification. Rizzi's approach is basically to superimpose the method, regulations and procedures of the processes of canonisation on historical research, lending,

⁴⁹ Cf. President of the Republic's decree on 29 March 1952 (copy) in Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 4 Documenti personali di Teresio Olivelli 1922-1989, b. 8, fasc. 23; issued in Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana a. 94, n. 101, lunedì 4 maggio 1953, Parte Prima, p. 1678.

⁵⁰ For the canonization policy of "partisan saints" cf. T. Calò, *I santi della Resistenza. Nascita e sviluppi di una proposta agiografica dal dopoguerra al pontificato wojtyliano*, «Italia contemporanea», aprile 2017, n. 283, pp. 41-65.

⁵¹ Cf. Benedict XVI, *Homily*, Vigevano, 21 April 2007 (http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20070421_vigevano.html); John Paul II, *Alla famiglia dell'Istituto Borromeo*, Pavia, 3 November 1984 (http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1984/november/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19841103_collegio-borromeo.html); Paul VI, *Agli alunni del collegio Ghislieri di Pavia*, 5 April 1966 (http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/speeches/1966/documents/hf_p-vi_spe_19660405_collegio-ghislieri.html).

for example, absolute historical weight to testimonies received years and decades after the facts in an era totally different from that in question. Another fundamental element is the selection of facts and above all of historiographic sources in favour of a less negative and more positive interpretation of Fascism and its racism, but above all absolutely positive on the role played by the Catholic church in the period of the regime. To do this, it is necessary to identify this role with the defence of human dignity and human rights, distorting the historical perspective with the superimposition of the contemporary view of rights onto Catholic thinking of that period. For this and other reasons the apparent contextualisation is transformed into a real abstraction from the historical context. In this operation, intentions are attributed to Olivelli which are in direct contradiction to his own actions, are indeed disincarnate. So much so that his person assumes paradoxical and contradictory characteristics: the recovery of categories of a revisionist origin (the anomalous Fascist because he was Catholic) and of arguments used by the Fascists as self-defence in the immediate post-war period (the identification of racism and anti-Semitism with Nazism, or the affirmation of racism on a cultural, but not a political, level) makes him a non-Fascist Fascist or, according to the period, a Catholic engaged in Christianising Fascism without sharing its ideology, or even a defender of the compatibility of racism and Christianity without being either a racist or an anti-Semite. In this anti-historical construct the mechanism which makes the operation possible is the use of the category of universalism, namely the capacity of Christianity, by means of the affirmation of the universality of values, to take into account and even embrace racism. And this leads to affirming the possibility of turning Fascist with the Fascists, realising a Christianisation of Fascism, without however accepting essential elements of its ideology, especially after 1938. In this way, the removal of racism and anti-Semitism from Fascism is replaced by their distortion, which actually constitutes a denial of the role in the Shoah played by Fascism, by the Italians, and by a particular form of racism compatible with Christianity. Not to speak of the weight of Christian and Catholic anti-Jewish attitude and its connections to anti-Semitism.

In effect, one of the aspects which makes the apologist interpretation of Rizzi and other biographers possible is actually the decontextualisation or abstraction of the true historical context of the persecution of the Jews: Fascist racism meant, openly and officially, the persecution of the Jews and Africans in Italy and its colonies, also involving others such as Sinti and Roma, Slavs and gay. This aspect in particular is often silenced or becomes totally sidelined in the works of Rizzi and the others or, when it is spoken of is shrunk in its reality, importance and significance. As a result, Olivelli's racism and anti-Semitism are also denied, or at least drastically reduced. From the authentic Fascist, racist and anti-Semite, the person of Olivelli, thanks to this decontextualisation, becomes an ideal figure who moves outside the events of history, specifically in a supernatural form to

direct these events towards the divine will. And this is precisely due to the distortion of the historical phenomenon of spiritualistic racism. The unfounded argument of the apologists that Olivelli chose to work within Fascism in order to Christianise it, or at least in order to correct the 'Nazi' drifts of Italian racism, thus carrying out an anti-racist action, is a clear distortion of the historical events and has its roots in De Felice's interpretation. He really understands spiritualistic racism as a form of inside resistance to Fascist racism and an attempt to carry the discussion to a higher cultural level. But this is not the only possible explanation. According to the most recent and apposite readings, Italian spiritualistic racism is an authentic racism, of which anti-Semitism is an integral part and which, not at all eliminating the biological data, is neither less racist nor less anti-Semitic than biologicistic racism. The Italian anti-Semitic legislation itself and the real persecutory praxis cannot be strictly understood as purely biologicistic.

Spiritualistic racism also marked a significant period of the most important racist and anti-Semitic institutions of the Fascist regime and was promoted by, among others, scientists and Catholic scholars with the mediation of important ecclesiastical figures. We are dealing with a type of racism compatible with a religious view, and thereby more acceptable to Catholicism, which in the 1930s, on the other hand and really in reaction to Nazi racism, had formulated, at a theological level, a distinction between extreme racism and moderate racism which it had then also used in propaganda, in the training of the clergy and faithful, and in diplomatic dealings.⁵² In spite of conflicts and Pope Pius XI's initial condemnation (worried above all by the introduction to Italy of a form of racism analogous to the German kind, presented and perceived as a real religion of race), these two views ended up by coinciding and actually combining without, on the part of the church after the death of Ratti and under Pius XII, the question of race being raised to a question of principle. This happened not only because of interests and aims that were political, diplomatic and related to the national and international context, but also for reasons of a theoretical, theological and religious nature. Among these, as the historiography has amply underscored, is

⁵² On this point cf. T. Dell'Era, *Razza*, in A. Prosperi (dir.), Tedeschi J., Lavenia V. (eds.), *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, Edizioni della Normale, Pisa 2010, vol. III, pp. 1300-1302. On the theological documentation cf. P. Godman, *Der Vatikan und Hitler. Die geheimen Archive*, Droemer Knaur Verlag, München 2004; H. Wolf, *Pius XI und die «Zeitirrtümer». Die Initiativen der römischen Inquisition gegen Rassismus und Nationalismus*, «Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte», a. 53, n. 1, pp. 1-42, Januar 2005; Id., *Papst und Teufel. Die Archive des Vatikan und das Dritte Reich*, C.H. Beck, München 2008. On the fact that this distinction reached Olivelli we have evidence in a document contained in his archive and cited by Di Peio, who however interprets it in an apologist sense (cf. G. Di Peio, *Teresio Olivelli. Tra storia e santità*, p. 67 and Istoreco Pavia, Fondo Teresio Olivelli, Serie 3 Scritti e appunti di Teresio Olivelli 1931-1944, b. 7, fasc. 6 and fasc. 8 Olivelli, *Dottrina del fascismo*).

the two-thousand-year Christian tradition of religious anti-Jewish attitude, with all its transformations in a contemporary age after the emancipation of the Jews, including the growth of trends of real Christian anti-Semitism and the more than tight links with anti-Semitism of a racial kind. From this point of view, it is noticeable that the traditional Christian anti-Jewish attitude consists of a centuries-old institutionalisation of the religious hostility to the Jews from a theological-doctrinal, pastoral and liturgical perspective, with all the political and practical consequences that this involves. In this period of the 1930s it took on an active role to revive, renew and lend a new character to the hostility against the Jews. This goes together with the persistent condemnation of modernity and with the primacy of anticommunism, which is an essential aspect of the alliance between the Church and the right-wing totalitarian regimes and in the attitude towards the Second World War.⁵³ Olivelli operated in precisely this sense, promoting a Catholic Fascist racism of a spiritualistic type, an integral part of which was definitely anti-Semitism: the defence of the Italian race, the core of Fascism's racist policy, is actually indivisible from persecution of the Jews.

The distinction recalled above, between exaggerated and moderate racism, used in several discourses published by Pius XI and also spread by the "Osservatore Romano" and by a number of Italian bishops, had the double effect of making a form of racism acceptable, the Fascist one, different in many ways from Nazi racism, and of allowing the theological anti-Jewish component to be kept unaltered. In this way it allowed the myth of the wholeness and immutability of the Catholic doctrine to be saved. One of the main reasons that the Catholic Church still today continues to beatify and canonise faithful who have clearly taken part in the persecution of the Jews in various ways over the centuries, including genuine racists and anti-Semites, such as Kolbe, Olivelli, Cazzani (for whom the enquiry recently started) etc., is exactly this: the reluctance to condemn centuries of religious anti-Jewish attitude, behaviour and persecution, with all the consequences that would entail. Among these, the fact that such condemnation would be in itself the end of the myth of the sanctity of the ecclesiastical institution, of the protection of the clergy and, above all, of the continuity and consistency of the

⁵³ Cf. G. Miccoli, *Santa Sede e Chiesa italiana di fronte alle leggi antiebraiche del 1938*, in *La legislazione antiebraica in Italia e in Europa*, Camera dei Deputati, Roma 1989, pp. 163-274; Id., *L'atteggiamento delle Chiese durante la Shoah*, in M. Cattaruzza, M. Flores, S. Levis Sullam, E. Traverso (eds.), *Storia della Shoah*, vol. I *La crisi dell'Europa e lo sterminio degli ebrei*, Utet, Torino 2005, pp. 1077-1119; Id., *I dilemmi e i silenzi di Pio XII. Vaticano, Seconda Guerra Mondiale e Shoah*, Rizzoli, Milano 2007 (or. ed. 2000); D. Menozzi, *La chiesa cattolica*, in G. Filoramo-D. Menozzi (eds.), *Storia del cristianesimo. Età contemporanea*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2006, pp. 131-257; Id., *Chiesa e diritti umani. Legge naturale e modernità politica dalla Rivoluzione francese ai nostri giorni*, il Mulino, Bologna 2012; Id., «Giudaica Perfidia». *Uno stereotipo antisemita fra liturgia e storia*, il Mulino, Bologna 2014.

doctrine. A doctrine, it is as well to stress once more, in which an anti-Jewish attitude was an integral and constituent part up until the Second Vatican Council, and from which the Church as an institution did not clearly and wholly distance itself afterwards, not even under John Paul II.

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КАУЗА ЗА БЕАТИФИКАЦИЈУ ТЕРЕЗИЈА ОЛИВЕЛИЈА: КАТОЛИЧКА ИСТОРИЈА И СЈЕЋАЊЕ НА ШОА

САЖЕТАК: *Текст се бави критичком реконструкцијом животног иућа Терезија Оливелија и историјским и историографским импликацијама каузе за његову беатификацију, као и значајем те каузе за католичко сјећање на Шоа као за институционални став Католичке цркве према мјесцу холокауста у историји који је она заузимала после краја Другог свјетског рата.*

КЉУЧНЕ РИЈЕЧИ: *Терезио Оливели, истински католик, истински фашиста, деконтекстуализација, беатификација.*

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КРАТКАЯ АНОТАЦИЯ: *В тексте рассматривается критическая реконструкция жизненного пути Терезио Оливелли, а также историческая и историографическая импликация каузы его беатификации, и значением этой каузы для католической памяти о Шoa как институциональной позиции Католической церкви по отношению к холокаусту и его места в истории после окончания Второй Мировой войны.*

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