

## ARTURO REGHINI A Modern Pythagorean

by Dana Lloyd Thomas, Summer 1997 / Gnosis Magazine 59

No study of esoteric culture in Italy in this century can fail to mention Arturo Reghini (1878-1946). Writer, translator, mathematician, and above all a Pythagorean, he played a key role in the revival of scholarship on esotericism in Italy as well as in the attempt to restore the spiritual traditions of Masonry.

Reghini's books and articles cover a variety of subjects including Masonic symbolism, Theosophy, Neoplatonism, Cornelius Agrippa, and Cagliostro. As editor of the magazines *Ignis* and *Atanor*, he published articles by the noted esotericists Rene Guenon and Julius Evola. Later he was to pay for his outspokenness--especially on behalf of freedom of conscience - when Freemasonry was outlawed by the Fascist regime.

Born in Florence on November 12, 1878, Reghini was the eldest of five children. His career as a philosopher, in the classical sense of "lover of wisdom," began early in life, when his aristocratic family sent him to the University of Pisa to study mathematics. The tall, thin young student was approached one evening by a stranger who singled him out as a candidate for initiation into the mysterious Pythagorean school, also known as the *Schola Italica*. The stranger turned out to be Amedeo Armentano (1886-1966), who fascinated literary circles in Florence with his abstruse, laconic reasoning about time, mind, and soul as well as with his psychic powers.

Reghini was initiated in the highest sense of the word. He experienced the trial of the five elements not only as a ceremony but as a profound reality. For him, passing beyond the threshold of death was a matter of experience, vision, and knowledge rather than a mere symbol. 1

## Politics and Secret Societies

To understand Reghini's role in the esoteric culture of his time, it is helpful to have some background on Italian Freemasonry and its connection to historical events. As in other countries, the Craft in Italy has so many facets that there is little point in overgeneralizing. For some, Masonry has commanded a virtually religious allegiance in the observance of the "ancient and accepted" rules and ceremonies, while others undoubtedly saw it as a means of improving society at large based on nineteenth-century rationalist beliefs in progress, education, and science. The ranks of Masonry have also included an eminent minority of philosophers and mystics, as well as the usual opportunists. Finally there are the anti-Masonic elements, initially Catholic and later spreading to both left and right-wing politicians and thinkers. In any case, the political and esoteric aspects of Freemasonry have often run parallel throughout Italian history.

The first known Italian lodge was founded in Florence by Charles Sackville, Earl of Middlesex, Henry Fox, and Sir Charles Mann in about 1730. 2 Although by this time Florentine Renaissance traditions were but a distant memory, Tuscany under the later Medici had still managed to preserve some independence, sparing it from the worst excesses of the Counter-Reformation. Lodges were soon opened in Rome, Naples, Turin, and elsewhere. But the Craft's connection with England--a major Protestant power--aroused the suspicions of both the rulers of the Italian states and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In 1738, when Pope Clement XII issued the bull *In eminenti*, which in practice banned Catholics from becoming Freemasons, he had reached the venerable age of 87 and was completely blind. Firmly continuing the papacy's penchant for power politics, the measure seems to have been initially rooted in concern about the situation in the pope's native Tuscany and was probably formulated mainly with Italy in mind. It may have been no coincidence that the last of the Medici, Gian Gastone, had died a year before; the move could have had the aim both of striking a blow against a suspiciously Protestant organization and of reasserting papal influence in relatively tolerant Tuscany. Nevertheless this independence persisted when Francis of Lorraine, himself a Freemason, became Tuscany's new ruler. 3

The papal stance marked the start of persecution; the poet Tommaso Crudeli, the first known Masonic martyr, was tortured to make him reveal "the secrets of the Freemasons," but he was released upon Francis's intervention. 4 Several decades later, the celebrated magus Count Alessandro Cagliostro was not to be so lucky, and would die in 1795 while imprisoned in the papal fortress of San Leo. Of the papal ban Reghini wrote, "The effect of the Church's hostility was to cause a reaction in some countries, with Freemasonry being forced to defend itself by becoming a secret society. Nevertheless, it never became sectarian, and the rituals were always characterized by the tolerance, nonsectarianism, and independence of the early period." 5

Masons and Masonic organizations played a significant role in the Italian Risorgimento ("Resurrection") of the nineteenth century. Freemasons actively promoted the unification of Italy's many states, thus winning them further condemnation for "subversion." Giuseppe Mazzini's political organization, *Giovine Italia* ("Young Italy"), dedicated to unification, shared Masonic ideals of humanity, progress, and secular government.

The Italian Grand Orient was founded in 1859. 6 In 1862, a Sovereign Council of the Scottish Rite convened in Palermo under the guidance of the patriot Giuseppe Garibaldi, and in 1864 the first Congress of Italian Freemasonry met in Florence and elected Garibaldi as Grand Master.

Perhaps even more than the French Revolution, the Risorgimento was a "bourgeois" revolution, and Freemasonry

attracted Italy's small but active middle class. It was seen as a means of keeping together forces as diverse as Mazzini's republicans, monarchists who supported the House of Savoy, and Garibaldi's "Redshirts." As one scholar points out, "in a country where all the forms of political conflicts had a regional basis, . . . the lodges were the only real school of national unity." 7 As a result of the Church's continuing opposition to unification, Masonry persisted in its anticlerical stance. In the decades following the country's unification in 1870, numerous members of the new class of politicians and administrators were Freemasons. By the end of the nineteenth century, Freemasonry was widely perceived as part of the establishment and as affording advantages that were often more material than spiritual. Financial scandals and political instability had made establishment politicians vulnerable to attack, and Freemasonry, previously seen as the champion of independence and democracy, was now accused of being class-ridden and corrupt. As in other Latin countries, many anti-Masonic pamphlets were circulated, generally based on conspiracy charges by the Abbe Barruel and Leo Taxil and creating the impression that the institution was much more powerful and monolithic than it actually was.

These ideas undoubtedly influenced Benito Mussolini in his early years in the Socialist Party and were to resurface in the Fascist period (1922-43) despite the Masonic connections of many Fascist leaders. 8 The Fascist movement, founded in 1919, counted a number of Freemasons among its first members, who were attracted by a variety of factors, including the movement's early anticlerical and revolutionary leanings. Persecution, though not always systematic continued until the fall of the regime.

Paradoxically, as soon as World War II ended, anti-Masonic literature was revived, this time with accusations of collaboration with Fascism. In recent decades, historical research on Italian Freemasonry has largely been monopolized by Catholic and Communist-oriented writers who are for different reasons hostile to the institution. 9 It is therefore no wonder that a Masonic writer has observed that "Italian Masonry is probably the most misrepresented and misunderstood in the world." 10

### Esoteric Societies

Italian Freemasonry was not all politics, however, and has always had a strong esoteric strain. Together with the specifically Masonic symbolism of building and architecture, probably rooted in medieval guilds, various esoteric traditions including Rosicrucian, Kabbalistic, Templar, and Pythagorean lines have converged in the Craft.

>From the earliest times Freemasonry has considered geometric symbolism to be of the highest importance, with the Pythagorean theorem being widely depicted in Masonic art. It has been suggested that some form of Pythagorean initiation survived through the centuries, first in the Byzantine Empire and later, as the Ottoman Turks advanced, in Italy, where the Greek intellectual elite took refuge.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, Sir Thomas Bodley is said to have been initiated in the northern Italian city of Forlì into the Pythagorean Brotherhood of the Fratelli Obscuri, having "the laudable object of propagating the Sciences and love of Virtue" and "established in imitation of an older Society which had existed since before the fall of the Grecian Empire in the towns of Constantinople and Thessalonica." In the eighteenth century, the British and French Pythagoreans came to be known as "Snuff-Takers" when they adopted the tobacco plant as their symbol. 11

Naples was the home of Egyptian Freemasonry, a tradition claiming descent from the Hermetic community dating back to Hellenistic Egypt: there is still a "Nile Square" in the city, and Giordano Bruno, who exalted the "wisdom of Egypt," was from nearby Nola. The school subsequently came to light through the work of Cagliostro and later of Giuliano Kremmerz, founder of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Myriam. 12 Cagliostro's "Gospel," first published in Italian in 1914 and later commented on by Reghini, uses alchemical terminology to describe a path to immortality as well as propounding the use of magical seals, meditation, fasting, and a vegetarian diet.

The esoteric Order of Misraim (whose name is derived from the Hebrew name for Egypt) seems to have had Italian origins. The Misraim first emerged in Italy in the eighteenth century, when it was associated with Cagliostro who brought it to Venice around 1788. 13 Because both Egyptian Freemasonry and the Order of Misraim allow the admission of women--thus violating the basic Masonic guidelines known as the "Landmarks"--and because they work degrees beyond the third, they are generally classified as part of "fringe Masonry."

The Order of Misraim was introduced into France after 1813 by the Bedarride brothers; afterwards it spread to Belgium, Switzerland, Britain, and the U.S. It consists of two forms of practice: the Kabbalistic form adopted by the Bedarrides and the Egyptian-Hellenistic form of the highest degrees known as the Arcana Arcanorum. 14

Politics again crossed paths with the esoteric when Garibaldi was appointed Grand Hierophant of the Misraim in 1880. At that time the order was joined with the Order of Memphis, whose rituals are inspired by Egyptian imagery. By the end of the century, the combined order was to provide a link between Freemasonry and Theosophy in Italy: both H.P. Blavatsky and Annie Besant held high degrees.

### Theosophist and Freemason

When he was only eighteen, Reghini went to Rome, where he was introduced to Isabel Cooper-Oakley, Blavatsky's delegate to Italy, and in 1898 the two were among the founders of the Italian branch of the Theosophical Society. (Blavatsky had always had a weakness for Italy; she even claimed to have fought with Garibaldi against French and papal

forces at the Battle of Mentana in 1867.)<sup>15</sup> Theosophy too was soon open to accusations of heresy, if not outright paganism, thus attracting the hostility of the Church. Yet the Theosophical Society proved to be an important vehicle for broadening the horizons of educated and open-minded Italians by introducing the study of oriental philosophy and religion--until then largely limited to academic circles--to a wider public.

While already receiving instruction on the Pythagorean tradition, Reghini started his Masonic career with initiation into the Order of Memphis and Misraim in 1902. What did he find in this esoteric form of Freemasonry? He was probably told something like these comments by a modern Masonic writer:

The Rite of Memphis and Misraim is not suited to every Mason, but is intended for those few Brothers who, following the many indications and revelations to be found in their rituals, genuinely aspire to enter into resonance with the higher planes of existence, and to overcome their individuality. In this case the Rite is a visible, tangible link between the lower sphere and the upper sphere. It provides the key to the Arcana, the way in which they can be revealed and practiced. 16 The order's Osirian ritual contains suggestive references Egypt, as when the aspiring Master is told:

Brother, you have entered this Temple which is the Middle Chamber of the Pyramid, aspiring to become Osiris, and to achieve this privilege you have recited the negative confession, well aware that it was only symbolic, the confession that every deceased person recites when reaching the world of shadows and coming before the tribunal of Osiris to identify himself with Osiris if his life has been pure. 17

In 1903 Reghini joined a lodge in Florence that owed allegiance to the Italian Grand Orient; two years later this was reorganized as the Lucifero Lodge, with Reghini as one of the founders. At the same time lodges in Milan merged with the Rome Grand Orient, with headquarters in Rome's Palazzo Giustiniani.

Writing in 1906, Reghini censured opposition to the higher degrees (from the fourth up to the 95th in orders like the Misraim) and expressed regret over the failure of Mazzini and the American Albert Pike to create "a secret rite above all others, a sort of Masonry within Masonry, which would have unified the divided Masonic family." 18 In 1908 a number of dissidents, led by a Protestant minister, broke away from the Grand Orient in protest against its overly materialistic and radical political stance. They set up a new Masonic organization with its headquarters at Piazza del Gesu in Rome.

Subsequently Italy's two branches of Masonry were to be known as "Palazzo Giustiniani" and "Piazza del Gesu" after the location of their Rome headquarters.

An attempt to promote unification of the splintered Masonic groups by returning to the Craft's early spiritual roots was undertaken with the Italian Philosophic Rite, of which Reghini was one of the founders. (The name calls to mind the Scottish Philosophic Rite, thought to have some connection with British Pythagoreans.) The Italian rite had seven degrees and has been described as a mixture of Pythagorean and Gnostic elements. In 1911 Reghini and Armentano rewrote the rite's statutes, dictating that a copy of the Golden Verses of Pythagoras was to be placed in the temple together with the other objects used in lodge work.

This experience was interrupted by World War I, which disrupted international fraternal contacts; Reghini himself served in the army. The Philosophic Rite came to an end in 1919, when it was merged with the Grand Lodge Scottish Rite.

Afterwards Reghini, while remaining a Freemason, would be more cautious about any "universal reformation" of the Craft.

### **Occultism and the Esoteric**

In Italy, as in the rest of Europe around the turn of the century, popular interest in the occult was largely focused on phenomena like hypnotism and spiritualism. Astrological and magical manuals copied from classics such as those by Cornelius Agrippa and Giovanni Battista della Porta abounded. At the same time the works of French writers like Eliphas Levi, Henri Durville, and Papus were gaining a considerable readership, and there were a number of esoteric journals. Reghini himself translated Swami Vivekananda, the Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge, and Robert Louis Stevenson's occult tales.

Both Reghini and Giuliano Kremmerz, active in Naples during the same period, stressed that theirs was a quest for knowledge and warned against the confusion between spiritual achievement and bouts of emotional excitement. In this respect they rejected the occultism of seances and sects, sharing the position of Levi, who insisted that his occultism (a term he coined) was based on faith, science, and reason. 19

This experimental method makes use not only of logic but of analogy. Early in his career Reghini had written, "The symbolism of architecture, ceremonies, and images is superior to ordinary language due to the multitude of meanings which only symbolism can express, since it works through analogy; the hieroglyphic and ideogram forms of writing are superior to ordinary writing due to the breadth and precision of their meaning." 20

Twenty years later, Reghini expressed much the same idea: "There exists an oral tradition of hidden knowledge which cannot be transmitted with words (perceived and interpreted in the profane sense). There is still a serious tradition in the West which has nothing to do with the circuslike uproar, the parody and pretense, of today's so-called occultism." 21 Reghini also sometimes retired with his friends Armentano and Giulio Parise to an isolated tower on the coast of Calabria, ideal for study and meditation. Reghini was also no stranger to ceremonial magic, though one of the few direct references he makes to it has humorous overtones, mentioning some of the practical difficulties of pre-dawn rituals, with alarm

clocks, cups of hot coffee, sputtering oil lamps, incense failing to burn, and candles going out, all to the detriment of the necessary "spiritual concentration."<sup>22</sup>

Throughout all this activity Reghini remained a Pythagorean. What did this mean for him in practical terms? He engaged in the daily recollection of his deeds--a practice that has been traced back to Pythagoras--as well as "philosophical ecstasy," which was actually a type of meditation. The practitioner was to sit comfortably in a quiet place, emptying himself of all thoughts and emotions; he could either be in the dark or have a light behind him. "Then, when the soul is purified, a bright and shining light from which nothing can be hidden seems to appear," says one old text. "And then a sweet pleasure is felt, incomparable to anything in this world, and . . . an extremely pleasurable itch is felt inside the head.... The persons most suited to this ecstasy are those whose skull is open, through which the spirits can escape .... I believe that this is the Platonic ecstasy, the one mentioned by Porphyry as having overcome Plotinus seven times."

This practice has important implications as a form of "Western yoga." It does not so much connote an evaluation of deeds as good or bad but rather stresses the importance of remembering itself. The Renaissance mages Tommaso Campanella and Giordano Bruno were probably familiar with this meditation. <sup>23</sup>

Reghini also stressed that the seeker aimed at the transformation of his soul by such techniques as breath control, meditation, and recollection, and that this transformation had to take place during one's lifetime.

### **The Pagan Utopia**

In Reghini's time the word "pagan" still had largely negative connotations, and was widely used not to indicate a historically documented religion but rather as a synonym for immorality and materialism. Nevertheless he found it to be the best term to sum up his own position. In a 1914 article entitled "Imperialismo pagano," he called for the spiritual rebirth of Italian culture in a new type of "empire" that would entail excellence in every field of human endeavor. This achievement would require freedom and tolerance, although history showed that, unlike Greco-Roman paganism, the Abrahamic religions had all too often borne the bitter fruit of religious intolerance. Reghini agreed with Gibbon that the fanatical attitude of the Christians from the earliest times had led to the fall of Rome and later to the papal policy of preventing Italy's unification. <sup>24</sup>

The avant-garde milieu in which Reghini's ideas had matured was also focused on the problem of creating a new "secular religion," free from the defects of Catholicism yet based on spiritual values. <sup>25</sup> Nevertheless for Reghini any anti-Christian "crusade" would have been a contradiction in terms; rather he called for the classical distinction between popular and initiatic religion, subsequently developed by Guenon and others. He likewise condemned the materialism and rabid anticlericalism of some in the Masonic community, and may have even cherished a dream of the day when the Catholic Church would have adopted the policy of St. Francis of Assisi, abandoning political and financial power to devote itself to good works.

While aiming at spiritual perfection, Reghini believed, Masonry should be nonsectarian. In his 1922 work on the meaning of the three basic Masonic degrees, he analyzes the symbolism of the initiation of a Master Mason, with the ritual death and resurrection of Hiram calling to mind Osiris, Dionysus, and Jesus; the initiate, he says, should become aware that the conscious mind does not depend on physical existence alone. He likewise chides some of his Anglo-American brothers for interpreting the Nineteenth Landmark, requiring belief in God, as meaning that Masons must necessarily be Christians, reminding them that the square and compass are placed on top of the Bible. <sup>26</sup> He also comments that both continental and Anglo-American Masonry are more obsessed with high-sounding titles than with the spiritual perfection of the initiate.

### **THE DISSAPPOINTMENT OF FASCISM**

After moving to Rome in 1921, Reghini devoted considerable attention to Fascism and to the relationship developing between Mussolini and the Vatican.

Most of Italian Freemasonry, along with the Nationalist and Socialist dissidents led by Mussolini, had backed intervention in World War I, above all to wrest the cities of Trent and Trieste from Italy's old enemy Austria. After the war, in 1920, the Grand Orient supported the occupation of the city of Fiume on the Adriatic in defiance of Italy's allies France and Britain; this event was considered to be the final step in national unification.

When Mussolini's Fascist government came to power in 1922, there was little hint of the disaster that was to befall Freemasonry. None of the betterknown Fascists were practicing Catholics, and indeed some were known to be Freemasons. Unfortunately, however, Reghini's warnings that the Craft required spiritual renewal had gone unheeded, as would his attempts to prevent the regime from coming to an agreement with the Church. In addition, the Masonic hierarchy did not prove to be as skillful as their predecessors in avoiding a "divide and conquer" policy.

Since the French Revolution, the fasces, the ancient insignia of Roman power consisting of twelve birch rods bound together with an ax had had revolutionary, antimonarchist connotations, initially inspiring its adoption by the Fascist Party. For men like Reghini, however, the symbol also evoked the ancient Roman concept of *res publica*, in which power was invested both in the people and in an aristocratic Senate. Reghini did not want to propose some new system of government; rather he hoped that a spiritually oriented and Pythagorean Masonry would foster an elite political class whose members would be endowed with superior values.

Nineteen twenty-four was a crucial year for Reghini. In that year the government decreed Masonic affiliation to be incompatible with Fascist Party membership. A Jesuit journal published an article condemning Freemasonry on the grounds that, being international, it was therefore "unItalian"; this line was soon officially adopted by the Fascists. 27 Reghini, a member of the Supreme Council of the Piazza del Gesu Grand Lodge, replied that Masonry's key role in promoting the Risorgimento disproved this accusation beyond any doubt. By this time, however, historical arguments were of no avail, making him almost inadvertently a political dissident. In May, his friend Armentano, who had continued to work with him in an abortive attempt to reunify the two main branches of Italian Masonry, left for Brazil. Any hopes that Freemasons may have nourished for a change of heart in the regime were dashed by the antiMasonic violence unleashed in November 1925. A new law against "secret societies" did not specifically mention Freemasons, but the regime made it clear that they were the intended target. 28 Mussolini asserted that the measures were to prevent political plots and not to suppress Freemasonry as a spiritual institution, but there was little difference when it came to police suppression. A number of top Grand Orient officials went into exile in France, while after an unsuccessful attempt to reorganize as the "Order of St. John of Scotland," the Piazza del Gesu was also forced to close. Ironically, the lack of systematic persecution against ordinary Freemasons led Pope Pius XI to criticize the Fascist regime for being "too soft." In an article published in *Fascism and the Vatican* in 1927-28, Reghini, foreseeing the imminent alliance between Freemasonry and the Vatican, commented:

The current conditions of our country in relation to the political situation in Europe and the world would be favorable to someone who was willing and able to exploit them to create a new universal civilization starting from Rome. However . . . this type of imperialism could not be subservient to a force which is universal in name only, whose innate and incurable intolerance is unacceptable to both the rest of Western civilization and to the Oriental civilizations.... We would proudly say more, if we were not obliged today to use more prudent language than Agrippa was able to use four centuries ago.

29

By this time there could be no doubt that Reghini's position was highly unorthodox. In a short time he had graduated from being a gifted writer on rather obscure subjects to being an unflinching public opponent of Mussolini's rapprochement with the Vatican, culminating in the 1929 Lateran Treaty. How could a self-declared pagan be allowed to publish freely after an alliance between the Church and Fascism? Reghini's courage in the defense of Masonry was all the more remarkable considering his dim view of the Craft as a whole for failing to fulfill its mission of perfecting the individual.

Faced with such a difficult situation, much of the Masonic hierarchy preferred to temporize, but after unsuccessful attempts to come to terms with the government, both of the major Masonic branches declared themselves to be dissolved and would only reemerge in 1945. Reghini's sacrifice gained him few friends either before or after the war.

Attacks in the press continued, and Parise writes of attempts "to save my soul and Reghini's with pistol shots.. surveillance was so close and overwhelming as to limit our contacts, since we were even afraid of compromising people who just happened to greet us" 30 Reghini was dismissed as a mathematics teacher in a public school in November 1928 and had to make a living by teaching privately.

In a disgraceful episode, Reghini's former friend Julius Evola publicly denounced him for Masonic affiliation. 31 Curiously, Evola had just published *Imperialismo pagano*, a set of articles borrowing considerably from Reghini's essay with the same title and calling on the Fascists to avoid political and ideological compromise with Catholicism. Decades later, Evola would acknowledge that he owed his awareness of genuine initiation to Reghini and Guenon.

## Epilogue

At this stage Reghini, Guenon, and Evola went on separate paths. In 1930 Guenon, who continued to be ambivalent about Masonry as a true source of initiation, left Europe to devote himself completely to Islamic studies in Cairo. Evola would soon drop his intransigent "pagan imperialism" and condemn Freemasonry on the grounds that it could not provide any genuine spiritual initiation. He would go on to cultivate a view diametrically opposite to that of Reghini's, seeing the Catholic Church as the successor to the Roman Empire as well as developing his own peculiar brand of racism that was to influence the Fascist regime.

In the 1930s Reghini devoted himself to teaching and to the study of the Pythagorean interpretation of numbers, proportion, and harmony, seen not simply as an intellectual game but as the key to life. His approach somewhat resembles that of the nineteenth-century English Neoplatonist Thomas Taylor (whose works he quotes) in correlating spiritual and material reality with numbers and proportions. Reghini's book on the reconstruction of Pythagorean geometry, containing notions "on which Freemasons would do well to meditate," 32 was published in 1935 and was praised for its scientific value by the Accademia d'Italia, Italy's equivalent of the Royal Society.

As World War II came to an end, Reghini intensified his work on Pythagorean numbers. Perhaps sensing that his time was short, he left detailed instructions concerning his manuscripts. 33 At five o'clock on the hot afternoon of July 1, 1946, in a country villa near Bologna, he died standing in his study, facing the westering sun.

In one of his later works on the relationship between mathematics and the spiritual quest, Reghini stressed that true philosophy involved the direct experience of the seeker:

Modern Western science is objective experimental science, achieved externally by instruments which aid the senses; its purpose is to observe, understand, taking into account the inevitable alteration (the Heisenberg principle) made on the observed conditions by the observer. In Masonry, Hermeticism, Pythagoreanism, and esoteric science of all times, the observer is also the object of the experience, considered internally and directly without limiting the field to any imaginary columns of Hercules; not so much a matter of theorizing as of feeling and living. 34

And what indeed is the purpose of philosophy--the love of wisdom--if not, as the Neoplatonist Porphyry said, "to free our mind from limitations and chains"?<sup>35</sup> u

California-born Dana Lloyd Thomas now lives in Rome. He has written articles on Pythagoreanism, alchemy, and oriental medicine and is writing a book on Arturo Reghini and esoteric traditions in Italy.

## NOTES

1. One of the main sources for Reghini's biography was written by his friend Giulio Parise and published as an introduction to Arturo Reghini, *Considerazioni sul rituale dell' apprendista libero muratore* (Genoa: Phoenix, 1981), pp i-xv.
2. Bernard E. Jones, *Freemasons' Guide and Compendium* (London: Harrap, 1986), p. 204.
3. There is extensive literature on Clement XII's "excommunication" of Freemasonry. The events of this period are far from simple; the Catholic Jacobites were conspiring against the Protestant Hanover dynasty in England, and the Jacobite association with early Freemasonry also deserves attention.
4. Aldo A. Mola, *Storia della massoneria italiana: Dalle origini ai nostri giorni* (Milan: Bompiani, 1994), pp. 53-54.
5. Reghini, pp. 13-14.
6. Divisions in "official" Freemasonry have persisted up to recent years. Because of the dispute over "accepted" and "irregular" lodges and the disagreement over the position of higher-degree or "fringe" Masonry, English-language Masonic literature has perhaps not dealt with Italian history as extensively as it could.
7. Mola, p. 61. Lodges were named after such heretics as Tommaso Campanella and Giordano Bruno and after patriots like Cavour, Mazzini, and Garibaldi.
8. Ibid. pp. 48ff.
9. Augusto Comba, "La Massoneria in Italia dal Risorgimento alla Grande Guerra", in *La massoneria nell' storia d'Italia*, ed. Aldo A. Mola (Rome: Atanor, 1981), pp. 82-83. Among these were the famous Communist intellectual Antonio Gramsci and a number of Jesuit writers.
10. Kent Henderson, "A Visit to Italy" in *Masonic Square*, March 1987. p. 28.
11. R.F. Wallace-James, "Les Nicotiates, or the Order of the Priests," in *Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge*, vol. 27 (1915), pp. 168-88. The order was said to adopt different names for reasons of safety, becoming the Nicotiates or Priests ("snuff-takers") in France and the Tobacco-logical Society in England. See also J.M. Ragon, "Notice historique sur les Pedosophes (enfants de la sagesse) et sur la Tabacologie, dernier voile de la doctrine pythagoricienne" in *Monde Maconnique*, no. 12, April 1859. Ragon traces the history of the order from antiquity and hypothesizes contacts in the Near East between the "children of wisdom" and the Templars.
12. Dana Lloyd Thomas, "Hermetic Healing in Italy: The Magical Therapeutic Brotherhood of Myriam" in *GNOSIS* #34, pp. 46-49.
13. F. Brunelli, *Rituali dei gMdi simbolici di Memphis e Misraim* (Foggia: Bastogi, 1981), p. 45. See Ellic Howe, "Fringe Masonry in England, 1870-85" in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, vol. 85 (1972), pp. 242-95.
14. Brunelli, p. 46.
15. Paul Johnson, *In Search of the Masters: Behind the Ordeal Myth* (South Boston, Va.: self-published, 1990), pp. 37-40.
16. Brunelli, p. 73.
17. Ibid., pp. 205-06.
18. Arturo Reghini, "La massoneria come fattore intellettuale" in *Leonardo*, Oct.-Dec. 1906, p. 297.
19. Parise, in Reghini, p. vi.
20. Arturo Reghini, "Il punto di vista dell' occultismo," in *Leonardo*, April 1907, p. 144.
21. Arturo Reghini, in Cornelius Agrippa, *La filosofia occulta o la magia* (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1972), p. Ixxxvii.
22. Arturo Reghini, "Avventure e disavventure in magia" in *Il Gruppo di Ur, Introduzione alla magia* (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1978), vol. I, p. 388.
23. Roberto Sestito, "Le basi pitagoriche dell' estasi filosofica" in *Ignis*, June 21, 1991, p. 4-5.
24. Parise, p. viii.
25. Walter L. Adamson, *Avant-Carde Florence: From Modernism to Fascism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 64ff.
26. Arturo Reghini, *Le parole sacre e di passo dei primi tre gradi ed il massimo mistero massonico* (Rome: Atanor, 1981).
27. The article appeared in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, Aug. 2, 1924. After Reghini's reply, a counterreply appeared in October in the monthly *Cerchia*, edited by Mussolini; signed with a pseudonym, it may have been written by Mussolini himself.
28. Mola, pp. 138-39.

29. Reghini, in Agrippa, pp. cxxxvi-vii.
30. Parise, pp. xi-xii. Reghini's paganism has recently been reproved by Catholic anticult writer Massimo Introvigne, n ~appello del mago (Milall: SugarCo, 1990).
31. Letter of April 6, 1929 from Rene Guenon to Guido de Giorgio, in De Giorgio, L'Instant et l'eternite (Milan: Arche, 1987), p. 294.
32. Parise, p. xii.
33. Partially published as Arturo Reghini, Dei ~lu~neri pitagoriri: Prologo (Allcona: Casa Editrice Ignis, 1991).
34. Arturo Reghini, I numen saai nella tradizione pitagorira e massonira (Rome: Casa Editrice Ignis, 1947), p. 143.
35. Porphyry, Lfe of Pythagoras, 46.

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