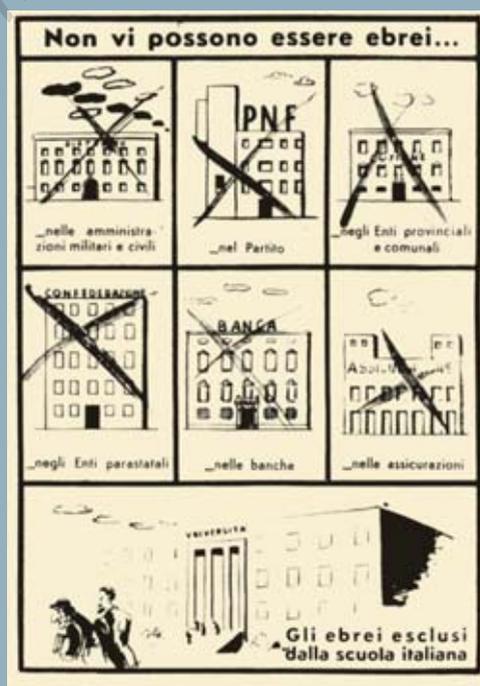




# The Racial Laws and the Jewish Community of Rome 1938-1945

*Editor* Manola Ida Venzo and Bice Migliau



viaggi nella **memoria**

4

Series of the Archivio di Stato di Roma

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Luigi Londei

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Daniela Sinisi, Maria Grazia Branchetti

*Graphics*

Simonetta Rossi

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Luisa Salvatori

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*Photographs*

Emilio Tedeschi

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### *Other publications*

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*Vivere in piazza nella Roma dei papi* by C. Genovese, D. Sinfisi (2002)

First Edition 2003

Second Edition 2004

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Corso Rinascimento 40, 00186 Roma

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Gangemi Editore spa  
Piazza San Pantaleo 4, Roma  
www.gangemieditore.it

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ISBN 978-88-492-1222-8

Front cover: from “La difesa della razza”, November 1938

The Racial Laws  
and the Jewish Community  
of Rome  
1938-1945

*Editor*

Manola Ida Venzo and Bice Migliau

*Essays*

Silvia Haia Antonucci,  
Claudio Procaccia, Luca Saletti,  
Giancarlo Spizzichino

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# Daily Life during the Racial Laws and the Nazi Occupation: Testimonies

Silvia Haia Antonucci – Giancarlo Spizzichino

The Jewish Community was genuinely disoriented by the promulgation of the racial laws. With the ensuing Nazi occupation, in order to elude deportation, the Jews were forced to live in hiding sometimes with false documents in order to elude deportation. Along with other difficulties caused by restrictions and the war, there was the daily struggle to avoid being arrested.

The Jewish Community was genuinely disoriented by the promulgation of the racial laws. With the ensuing Nazi occupation, the Jews were forced to live in hiding sometimes with false documents in order to elude deportation. Along with other difficulties caused by restrictions and the war, there was the daily struggle to avoid arrest.

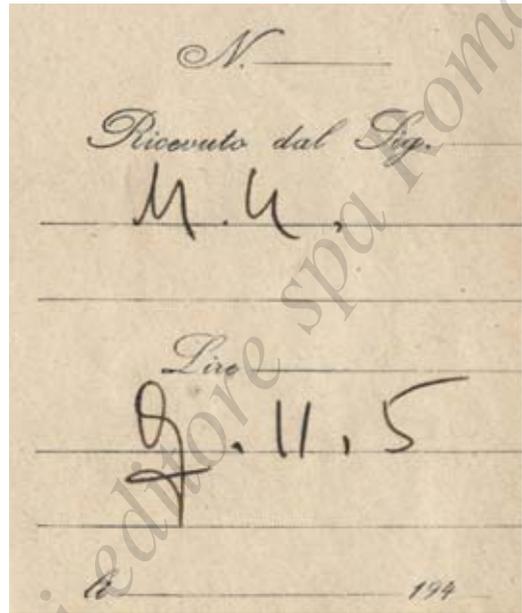
Many were captured, while others managed to escape by hiding in the house of friends, former servants, in the city and the country, pleading for hiding places in churches and convents. Mario Limentani, a survivor of Dachau, narrates, “Our odyssey began in 1938 when we were excluded from all jobs. The war broke out in 1940 and we were even prevented from taking part: as Jews, we were no longer part of citizens of the country. Our second odyssey, the worst, started when the Germans reached Rome. Colonel Kappler demanded 50 kg of gold, threatening to deport the Jews to Germany. With the help of non-Jews, we managed to collect the amount requested. On October



Postal ID of Ada Pontecorvo, falsified with the name of Ada Cardinali, December 3, 1943. Jewish Cultural Center, Rome



Receipt to Alberto Fiano, issued by the Jewish Community, for the deposit of personal effects (a piece of a tooth and a cuff link) for the collection of the 50 kilos of gold demanded by the Nazis, 1943.  
Jewish Museum of Rome



Receipt to an unknown party, issued by the Jewish Community, for the deposit of 11.5 grams of gold 1943.  
Jewish Museum of Rome

16 we were living on Via della Reginella, right in the heart of the ghetto. At four o'clock in the morning, the Nazis surrounded our neighborhood and went from house to house, grabbing people. I escaped through a tunnel, but the Fascists, who received 5000 lire for every Jew they handed over, captured me six weeks later. I was taken to the *Regine Coeli* prison and on the morning of January 4, with 480 prisoners, deported to Dachau in a cattle car".

Lia Levi, journalist and writer, says, "In September 1943, just a few days after the armistice, my mother contacted the nuns of the Convent of San Giuseppe al Casaletto asking if they would be willing to give shelter to her daughters and nieces if danger arose.

The Mother Superior agreed. At the end of September, the Nazis made their demand for gold and my parents interpreted the event as the beginning of persecutions yet to come. My mother, my sisters and I took refuge in the Convent. The nuns were always polite and respectful of our religious identity, and even created a dormitory of for Jewish girls where we all recited the nighttime "Shema" before going to sleep. They also gave us documents left at the convent by girls from southern Italy unable to return to the convent after summer vacation". On August 26, 1997, Yad Vashem awarded Sister Ferdinanda Maria Coretti,

one of the nuns who did the most to help save the Jews, the title of Righteous Among the Nations.

Anna Blayer, Director of the Jewish Museum of Rome, narrates: “In 1938, my father, Arnaldo Vittorio Ascarelli, was expelled from the Regina Elena Hospital where he was head physician, but he managed to open an office at home. That way, we were able to continue an apparently ‘normal’ life. But after the demand for gold, my parents decided to move to the my nanny’s house of my nanny.

That was the beginning of an endless series of moves: to the house of Mafredonia, a lawyer, where we only stayed for two or three days, for fear that the Mafredonia’s German nanny would inform on us. Then we took shelter at the house of Dr. Tuena, an antique dealer and Swiss guard, and then elsewhere. When someone informed on us, the Italian SS came to arrest my father, who escapes/escaped. My parents also tried to get us into a convent on Via Cicerone. The nuns seemed to agreed at first, but when my parents took us there, the nuns demanded that we convert, and we were forced to leave. We finally entered a convent in Piazza delle Muse, where we stayed for three months.

Miriam Dell’Ariccia Nacamulli, saved by their maid, narrates: “Teresa Giovannucci, my grandfather’s maid, moved to Fiano Flamínio, a village near Rome, after she married. She had heard strange rumors from others in the village who had worked in Germany

26 Agosto 1940. XVIII\*

558

All'Ec.c.za Gr.Cr.Dante Almansi  
Presidente dell'Unione delle Comunità  
Israelitiche Italiane

R O M A

Mi preme segnalargli la disposizione recente per cui tutti i cittadini italiani di razza ebraica sono allontanati da varie località di mare e di villeggiature, con la giustificazione che trattasi di zone di operazioni belliche. Tale limitazione lede al massimo grado materialmente i soggetti di questo divieto e li offende moralmente facendoli apparire come "ospetti" assieme con vari individui ritenuti sovversivi o indesiderabili. Anche in un passato prossimo, come ricorderete, furono emanate disposizioni di sorveglianza, da parte dei portieri, per gli inquilini durante le incursioni aeree nemiche.

E si dice - ma non ho avuto modo di controllarlo - che perfino sarebbe inibite il precario soggiorno giornaliero sulle spiagge marine agli israeliti, con quanto danno per la salute di innumerevoli persone (specie bambini, che non possono beneficiare dell'assistenza nelle colonie estive di mare) e con quante amarezza per noi tutti è facile immaginare.

Potrete, con la Vostra autorità appurare quanto sopra e far comprendere che il provvedimento è, anche stavolta, eccessivo e mortificante?

Sonaste la noia e con profonda osservanza.

IL PRESIDENTE  
(Comm.Avv.Aldo R.Ascoli)

Letter from the President of the Community, Aldo Ascoli, to the President of the Union of Italian Israelite Communities, Dante Almansi, regarding the law forbidding Jews to stay in seaside resorts, August 26, 1940. ASCER, folder n. 110, Rome.

|   |                      |                              |                   |
|---|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Name: <i>Calò</i>   |                      | Dienstgrad: <i>Student</i>   | Zelle: <i>385</i> |
| Vorname: <i>Angelo</i>  |                      | Beruf: <i>Student</i>        |                   |
| Einheit, Wohnung: <i>Rom, Via Aldo Moro 16</i>                |                      | Geboren am: <i>31. 7. 37</i> | in: <i>Rom</i>    |
| (Offene Angabe), (Ort, Strasse, Nr.)                          |                      |                              |                   |
| <b>Einlieferung</b>   |                      | <b>Entlassung</b>            |                   |
| am: <i>28. 5. 44</i>  | um: <i>11.00</i> Uhr | Abgenommene Gegenstände:     |                   |
| durch: <i>Sargner</i>   | (Name, Dienstgrad.)  | <i>Keine</i>                 |                   |
|   | (Dienststelle)       |                              |                   |
| Wegen: <i>Yevre</i>   |                      | aut Grund:                   |                   |
| Untersuchungshaft - Strafmass: (Zutreffendes unterstreichen)  |                      | Abgeholt von: _____          |                   |
|   |                      | (Name Dienstgrad)            |                   |
|   |                      | (Dienststelle)               |                   |
| Strafende:  |                      | Empfangsbescheinigung:       |                   |
|   |                      | Unterschrift: _____          |                   |
|   |                      | (Wenden)                     |                   |
| Vermerk über Teilrückgabe (z. B. bei Geld) auf der Rückseite. |                      |                              |                   |
| Abgelieferte Gegenstände zurückerhalten                       |                      |                              |                   |
| am _____, Unterschrift _____                                  |                      |                              |                   |

File on Angelo Calò, held in the prison of Via Tasso, May 28, 1944.  
Jewish Museum of Rome

about strange rumors on the fate of Jews who were taken to Germany and then 'disappeared'. So, the day after the gold was delivered, she suggested that we move in with her and she hid us until the liberation. To defend us from curious neighbors, Teresa said that we were evacuees from Rome. And as well as sharing her home with us, she also gave us some of the little food she found without ever asking for or receiving any sort of compensation". Teresa Giovannucci was granted the title of Righteous Among the Nations from Yad Vashem on June 30, 1993.

In ogni modo mia sorella mi ha dato un non-  
Se hai ricevuto la mia saprai le mie pen-  
sioni di 45 giorni di carcere. Sono partito da  
Roma il 3 sera ed ho fatto un magnifico viaggio  
in torbidone attraverso la magnifica campagna

*Front cover:* from "La difesa della razza", November 1938

*Back cover:* Telegram of the Minister of the Interior who invites the Prefects to exacerbate the racial policy against the Jews, 1941. ASR, Prefettura, Gabinetto, folder n. 1515

The years between 1938 and 1943 witnessed the approval of a massive, detailed set of laws discriminating against the Jews. While there were indeed moments of anti-Semitism in Italy after unification – fed primarily by some Catholic groups – the leitmotifs so dear to anti-Jewish propaganda only began to appear widely in the Italian press with the rise of Fascism. In 1933, Telesio Interlandi, writing for *Il Tevere* and Roberto Farinacci for *Il regime fascista*, triggered a furious press campaign against the Jews. The campaign quickly spread to the other Fascist papers.

TELEGRAMMA

N. \_\_\_\_\_ di recapito - Rimessi al fattorino alle ore \_\_\_\_\_  
Falle il dote al fattorino per recapito. Il fatto risulta una ricevuta  
concedo il contratto di una PIRELLINA.

34 6 19  
Mod. 30 (1940-XVIII)

INDICAZIONI DI URGENZA  
592

QUALIFICA DESTINAZIONE

PREFETTI REGNO A SO VOI 3

DE 14 1 1943

TELEGRAMMA

SCSDS ROMA MI 194175 112 14 1330-

NR 2223 ALT DALLE OSSERVAZIONI DI BVESTI ULTIMI TEMPI RISULTA

inequivocabilmente che non pochi Ebrei hanno ancora una volta  
dimostrata la loro più ottusa - incomprensione di fronte agli eventi  
politici et storici in corso confermandosi - costituzionalmente  
avversi ad ogni sentimento Nazionale Alt Occorre pertanto che la  
politica Razziale - contro gli Ebrei venga sempre più energicamente  
perseguita Alt Esaminate pertanto la opportunità di inviare ai Campi  
di concentramento gli elementi locali Ebraici che più danno luogo at -  
sospetti con i loro sentimenti et la loro condotta Alt

Pel Min Interno Buffarini