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**Introduction to Special Issue:
The “Racial Laws” of 1938 and Italian Universities.
The Universities of Sardinia and Sicily, and the University of Bari**

***Introduzione al Numero Monografico:
Le “Leggi Razziali” del 1938 e l’Università Italiana.
Le Università della Sardegna, della Sicilia e l’Università di Bari***

Tommaso Dell’Era*, David Meghnagi**

Abstract. The essays of this special issue no. 1/2020 of the journal *Trauma and Memory* represent the first part of a research on the topic “Year 1938 and Italian Universities” that started more than a year ago and conducted by a group of researchers after the International Meeting *Le “Leggi razziali” del 1938 e l’università italiana* [The “Racial Laws” of 1938 and Italian Universities] (Rome, December 3-5, 2018). The video-recording of the first day of the meeting is at the web site www.radioradicale.it/scheda/559163/le-leggi-razziali-del-1938-e-luniversita-italiana-prima-giornata.

Keywords: Antisemitism, “Racial Laws”, Fascism, Italian University, Shoah.

Riassunto. I saggi che compongono questo numero monografico costituiscono la prima parte di un lavoro di ricerca ed elaborazione scientifica sul tema “Il 1938 e l’università italiana” portato avanti da oltre un anno da un gruppo di studiose e di studiosi a partire dal convegno internazionale *Le “Leggi razziali” del 1938 e l’università italiana* (Roma, 3-5 dicembre 2018). La registrazione video della prima giornata del convegno è alla pagina internet <http://www.radioradicale.it/scheda/559163/le-leggi-razziali-del-1938-e-luniversita-italiana-prima-giornata>.

Parole chiave: Antisemitismo, “Leggi razziali”, Fascismo, Università italiana, Shoah.

I saggi che compongono questo numero monografico costituiscono la prima parte di un lavoro di ricerca ed elaborazione scientifica sul tema “Il 1938 e l’università italiana” portato avanti da oltre un anno da un gruppo di studiose e di studiosi a partire dal convegno internazionale *Le “Leggi razziali” del 1938 e l’università italiana* (Roma, 3-5 dicembre 2018). L’obiettivo del gruppo di ricerca è stato quello di ricostruire in maniera sistematica una mappatura nazionale, finora mancante, dell’applicazione e delle conseguenze delle politiche e della legislazione razzista e antisemita del fascismo nelle università e negli istituti d’istruzione superiore. In tale percorso si è tenuto conto del complesso degli aspetti implicati, dai più noti a quelli meno studiati, considerando allo stesso tempo la specificità delle situazioni locali. Questa prima parte raccoglie pertanto i risultati della ricerca relativi agli Atenei della Sardegna, della Sicilia e di Bari, area geografica caratterizzata da una scarsa presenza ebraica (il caso di Napoli, articolato e complesso, ha richiesto un supplemento d’indagine anche in considerazione dello stato delle fonti e verrà presentato nella seconda parte della ricerca). I lavori qui inclusi rappresentano un reale avanzamento nella ricerca e nella conoscenza dell’“arianizzazione” delle università italiane nel 1938 relativamente ai casi specifici analizzati, non solo per la ricostruzione del quadro complessivo locale e l’inserimento nell’ambito più generale della persecuzione in Italia, ma anche per la presentazione di nuovi dati al riguardo. Le principali novità

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dell'indagine emergono anzitutto in termini di reperimento e indicazione di fonti archivistiche delle istituzioni locali e nazionali, attinenti sia alla questione specifica universitaria sia al tema più generale della persecuzione antiebraica. In tal modo è stato possibile ricostruire i profili di alcuni protagonisti finora ignoti, collocando queste vicende nel quadro generale della fascistizzazione degli atenei italiani iniziata negli anni Venti e proseguita fino alla Seconda Guerra Mondiale.

Nel caso particolare delle Università di Cagliari e di Sassari va sottolineata la realizzazione della prima fase di costruzione di un repertorio archivistico specifico. Anche sul fronte della componente studentesca colpita dalle disposizioni delle leggi razziste e antisemite sono state apportate nuove conoscenze specialmente per quanto riguarda l'università di Palermo, nonostante le difficoltà dovute allo stato attuale delle fonti e alla loro disponibilità in tutta Italia che rende ancora oggi impossibile fornire un quadro esaustivo. Altri dati importanti che integrano aspetti in parte già noti sono quelli relativi all'introduzione, tra gli insegnamenti universitari, di materie razziste e ai corrispondenti docenti (in particolare per le Università di Catania e di Bari); alle sostituzioni delle persone espulse (soprattutto per le Università della Sardegna e di Bari); alle vicende di coloro che, tra le persone coinvolte dai provvedimenti antisemiti, furono per ragioni diverse in un primo momento considerati appartenenti alla razza ebraica e poi depennati dagli elenchi (particolarmente per le Università di Messina e di Bari).

Se estendiamo lo sguardo al resto delle università italiane, è facile osservare che i casi qui esaminati, in costante dialogo con la storiografia esistente sul tema, mostrano diversi punti in comune con quanto avvenuto altrove nello stesso periodo. Solo per citare alcuni aspetti, la già menzionata scarsa presenza ebraica negli Atenei delle isole e di Bari non ostacolò l'applicazione capillare della legislazione razzista con evidenti manifestazioni di zelo, anche laddove non vi furono espulsioni; e del resto lo stesso silenzio sugli espulsi, quando si verifica, come è stato osservato è una scelta funzionale alle politiche del regime. Ciò conferma le note considerazioni sul ruolo dei meccanismi e degli automatismi burocratici nel conferire "normalità" procedurale e sostanziale all'intera operazione antisemita, come pure le osservazioni sull'atteggiamento corporativo del mondo accademico allora e nell'immediato dopoguerra. Diversi sono poi gli spunti che corroborano la tesi della diffusione delle tematiche della "razza" in ambito accademico sia prima del 1938 sia dopo la fine della Seconda guerra mondiale con la sopravvivenza delle discipline razziste negli insegnamenti universitari (il che conduce a puntare l'attenzione sulle tradizioni di ricerca e le ideologie scientifiche in cui, come è stato da tempo accertato, il razzismo era già presente prima della seconda metà degli anni Trenta). Da questo punto di vista la diffusione del razzismo, il totale adeguamento alle disposizioni del regime in materia, lo sfruttamento della situazione da parte di molti per l'avanzamento nella carriera e l'ingiustizia e quasi assente riparazione che emergono dalle vicende dell'epurazione e dell'incompleta, diseguale o mancata reintegrazione delle persone espulse dimostrano che l'università italiana nel 1938 fu luogo di applicazione rigorosa e di promozione del razzismo e dell'antisemitismo, non semplicemente un'esecutrice tra gli altri di ordini provenienti dall'alto.

In alcuni dei saggi qui presentati è stata adottata la scelta di lasciare in italiano la terminologia relativa ai ruoli universitari, alla denominazione delle materie, delle facoltà e degli istituti non essendovi in quel periodo, soprattutto per le cariche accademiche, una reale e completa corrispondenza tra il mondo dell'istruzione superiore in Italia e nei paesi di lingua inglese. Una tabella esplicativa sarà comunque fornita al termine dell'intera ricerca che proseguirà con la pubblicazione completa, entro il 2020, dei lavori sulle altre università italiane e sarà arricchita da una bibliografia orientativa e un database con la raccolta su scala nazionale di tutti i corrispondenti dati.

Racial Laws in the Italian Universities of Cagliari and Sassari. For an Archive Directory

Mariangela Rapetti*

Abstract. By examining research published prior to this date and available archival documents, the aim of this contribution is to offer an up to date picture of the reality in Sardinian universities during the 1938 census of Jewish professors and, more generally, of the application of the racist policies. It aims to be the first step in the creation of an archival directory.

Keywords: Racial laws, suspended Jewish professors, University of Cagliari, University of Sassari, Archives.

1. Preliminary remarks

The conference *Sardegna e Mezzogiorno nel ventennio fascista* (Sardinia and Southern Italy during the fascist regime) was held in 1998 and it was organised in Cagliari by the Istituto sardo per la storia della resistenza e dell'autonomia (Sardinian institute for the history of the resistance and of the autonomy, ISSRA for its acronym in Italian)¹. There, Eugenia Tognotti addressed a subject that until then had been "overlooked by historians studying fascism in Sardinia"²: The impact of racial laws on the two universities of the island. Tognotti, after recalling the steps that led to the proclamation of those laws, also presented the profiles of three professors from Cagliari and one from Sassari who were expelled (Teodoro Levi, Alberto Pincherle, Camillo Viterbo, and Michelangelo Ottolenghi), and delved into several events that marked the two universities during those years.

In 2001, thanks to the *Studi in onore di Manlio Brigaglia offerti dal Dipartimento di Storia dell'Università di Sassari* (Studies in honour of Manlio Brigaglia organised by the Department of History of the University of Sassari), Giuseppina Fois published an essay dedicated to Luigi Pinelli where she defined him as a "Jew by mistake"³. Due to an error he committed when filling in the form with his personal details, as requested by the Bottai circular letter dated 9 August 1938, for several months the Ministry of National Education considered Pinelli to be Jewish, a confusion that was nullified when it was discovered that he failed to register with the National Fascist Party (PNF for its acronym in Italian).

The investigation made by Tognotti and Fois was resumed in 2003 by Luciano Marrocu in his essay *Figure di intellettuali ebrei nel periodo delle Leggi Razziali* (Jewish intellectuals during the Racial Laws). Other examples of prosopographic studies are the essays by Martino Contu, *Dalla Sardegna all'Argentina per sfuggire alle leggi razziali del 1938. Breve profilo del giurista ed economista Camillo Viterbo* (From Sardinia to Argentina in order to escape the 1938 racial laws. A short profile of the lawyer and economist Camillo Viterbo), and by Simonetta Angiolillo, *Un ricordo*

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¹ The conference, organised by Luisa Maria Plaisant, Manlio Brigaglia, and Luciano Marrocu, took place on January 29-30, 1998.

² Tognotti (2000, p. 185).

³ Fois (2001).

di Doro Levi nel settantesimo anniversario della promulgazione delle leggi razziali (A remembrance of Doro Levi on the seventieth anniversary of the proclamation of the racial laws), both from 2009.

On 29 November 2018, from the initiative of *Rettore* Maria Del Zompo, during the opening of a documentary exhibition dedicated to the events of 1938, and in line with occasions organised by the *Conferenza dei rettori delle università italiane* (CRUI for its acronym in Italian) in 2018, the University of Cagliari officially apologised to the families of the professors who were suspended⁴.

This paper aims to contribute to a better knowledge and distribution of data related to the expulsion of Jewish professors, to the purge of fascist professors and their reinstatement in the universities of Cagliari and Sassari between 1938 and 1945, and to the racist policies in both universities. Eighty-two years after the racial laws and twenty-two years after the first lecture by Tognotti, we will try to consider what we know and how much can still be said about this subject. We will go back to all of the archival sources that have been analysed by scholars in the last decades and we will offer a short summary of collected data from several dossiers that still need to be analysed in depth, in the knowledge that compiling the list of sources will support and promote historical research. This task is nonetheless not an easy one. Even after the expiration of the non-consultation restraint⁵, the issue with Sardinian university archives is the inaccessibility of many sources which have not been organised or inventoried. Another problem that has been noticed, at least in regards to the Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari, is the absence of some documents, surely due to a decision to discard them that we cannot document at the moment, but we cannot exclude the possibility of manipulation of part of the dossiers related to those years. These doubts will be clarified only after the reorganisation of the series is complete.

This analysis is divided into three parts – one dedicated to Cagliari (§2); one to Sassari (§3); and one, more general, dedicated to the documents produced by both universities and by the Ministry of National Education (§4). The author has been allowed to consult part of the sources that are being reorganised in the Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari, quoted here pending provisional classification⁶. The University of Sassari, for its part, has a solid bibliographic background thanks to the documentary researches undertaken by the Interdisciplinary Centre on the History of the University of Sassari in cooperation with the Inter-University Centre on the History of Italian Universities (CISUI for its acronym in Italian).

⁴ The documentary exhibition *A 80 anni dalle leggi razziali. L'Università di Cagliari ricorda D. Levi, A. Pincherle, Camillo Viterbo* (80 years after the racial laws. The University of Cagliari remembers D. Levi, A. Pincherle, Camillo Viterbo), curated by Eleonora Todde, Gianluca Scroccu, and Mariangela Rapetti under the scientific supervision of Francesco Atzeni, was set up in Palazzo Belgrano, which hosts the office of the *Rettore*, and was open to visitors until 18 February 2019. "In memoriam of the Italian racial laws, established by the fascist dictatorship and signed by King Victor Emmanuel III on 5 September 1938, the *rettore*, on behalf of the University of Cagliari, recognises the responsibilities of the university within the passivity and complicity of the academic world towards the choices of the regime, which ended in the proclamation of the racial laws, and apologises officially to the families of the professors removed from university teaching in 1938: Doro Levi, Alberto Pincherle, and Camillo Viterbo". This is a translation of the text on the scroll given to Alberto Pincherle's children, Marcella and Giovanni Alberto, and delivered to Doro Levi's nephew, Roberto E. Kostoris.

⁵ The time restraint is 40 years, but the documents relating to domestic (and foreign) policy of the State can be consulted 50 years after their date, while the non-consultation period for documents regarding sensitive data such as health conditions, sex life or private family relations is 70 years (art. 21 of the Presidential Decree (D.P.R. for its acronym in Italian) 30 September 1963, no 1409; art. 122 of the legislative decree (d.lgs.) 22 January 2004, no 42 and subsequent modifications and additions).

⁶ We would like to thank Professor Cecilia Tasca, scientific director of the Historical Archive; Professor Francesco Atzeni, previously director of the Department of *Storia, Beni culturali e Territorio* of the University of Cagliari; and Eleonora Todde, *ricercatrice* of Archival Science in charge of reorganising the Archive who allowed us to mention here what is part of a wider project. A special thanks also goes to Nicola Tronci and Rossella Cuneo, *tirocinanti* who helped during the census and research phases, and to fellow colleagues Luca Lecis, Valeria Deplano, Gianluca Scroccu, and Tommaso Dell'Era for their bibliographical suggestions. We would also like to thank Emma Becciu for the translation of this article.

2. University of Cagliari

2.1. Racist policy

On 19 August 1938, in a confidential letter, the Royal Carabinieri provided the Prefect of Cagliari with a list of Jews counted in the census of the province. The list was extremely short, as was to be expected, since for many centuries there had not been a real Sardinian Jewish community⁷. Among the six people of "Jewish race", at the top of the list were Teodoro Levi and Camillo Viterbo, professors at the University of Cagliari. They were followed by Eugenio Lewin, a private teacher of German (born in Berlin in 1883 and resident in Cagliari since 1935); Giuliano Massarani, engineer (born in Milan in 1869 and resident in Cagliari); Aldo Beer, engineer (born in Ancona in 1897 and resident in Sant'Antioco); and Livio Massarini, engineer (born in Brescia in 1907 and resident in Oristano). The document also stated that two more professors of the Royal University of Cagliari were also considered of "Jewish race": Alberto Pincherle and Carlo Maiorca, but "about them it [had] not been possible to obtain more details of their belonging to the Jewish race or to determine what religion they profess"⁸.

The Prefect had already been aware about the university professors for three days: Giuseppe Brotzu, at that time *Rettore* of the University of Cagliari, had informed him that he believed Professors Teodoro Levi, *straordinario* of *Archeologia* at the Faculty of *Lettere e Filosofia*, and Camillo Viterbo, *straordinario* of *Diritto commerciale* at the Faculty of *Giurisprudenza*, belonged to the "Israelitic race". Brotzu also added: "(because of his surname) I am keen to believe that Professor Alberto Pincherle is also of Jewish race (...) albeit to the best of my knowledge he professes the Catholic religion. I haven't got clear information about Professor Carlo Maiorca (...) but I have nonetheless noticed some dubious details regarding his mother's name"⁹. Pincherle was *straordinario* of *Storia delle religioni* at the Faculty of *Lettere e Filosofia*, Carlo Maiorca was *straordinario* of *Istituzioni di Diritto privato* at the Faculty of *Giurisprudenza*.

As requested by the minister, on 22 August the *rettore* of Cagliari had sent the form for the census of staff of Jewish race to all members of the university. The form was complemented by a short note that said: "Following the orders of the Superior Ministry, I am sending You the attached form that will have to be filled in and signed under Your own responsibility, and returned to this Office no later than 5 September"¹⁰.

A few days later, on 25 August 1938, the Royal Prefecture had transmitted to the Ministry of Interior the data from the census of Jewish families who resided in the Cagliari province up to midnight of 22 August. Among them – 22 in total, some of them unclear due to lack of data – were the families of Professor Pincherle and Professor Maiorca, both resident in Rome. Of the latter, though, it said that he was "reported only as probably Jewish"¹¹. During the following month, the police commissioner confirmed to the Prefect that "in the province, the Jews [were] very few and all of them from other places in the kingdom", while there was only one foreign Jew, the above mentioned Lewin. "No Jew [retained] political, administrative or union positions" and, moreover, it declared the presence of four Chinese working as hawkers, converted from Buddhism to Catholicism, and of two "Libyan niggers"¹². A comparison between these and other notices brings to light the small number of Jews resident in the Cagliari province (49 in total, as confirmed by Sarfatti¹³), to which we

⁷ For more information about the Jewish communities that existed in Sardinia during the late Middle Ages, broken apart after the expulsion decrees were issued for the *Regnum Sardiniae et Corsicae* by King Ferdinand of Aragon, please refer to the published studies by Cecilia Tasca (*Gli Ebrei in Sardegna nel XIV secolo: società, cultura, istituzioni*, Deputazione di storia patria per la Sardegna 1992; *Ebrei e società in Sardegna nel XV secolo*, Giuntina 2009).

⁸ Cagliari, Archivio di Stato (ASCa). Prefettura, IV Versamento, Gabinetto 6-6 epurazioni, c. 374rv.

⁹ ASCa. Prefettura, IV Versamento, Gabinetto 6-6 epurazioni, c. 375rv.

¹⁰ Cagliari, Archivio Storico dell'Università (ASUCa). Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 299, n. 3089, c. 116.

¹¹ ASCa. Prefettura, IV Versamento, Gabinetto 6-6 epurazioni, cc. 339-340.

¹² ASCa. Prefettura, IV Versamento, Gabinetto 6-6 epurazioni, c. 140r, 1938 settembre 26.

¹³ Sarfatti (2018), pp. 32-33, tab. 2.

need to also add a small number of non-resident Jews and, furthermore, the doubt about several "escaped", "particularly Jews who had abjured their faith and Jewish women married to Christians"¹⁴.

Even without a Jewish community, many Jews went to Sardinia – in particular to the capital – for professional reasons.

In the 1890s, the University of Cagliari listed among its professors Gino Segrè, who would be expelled from the learned societies and from the register of lawyers in 1938¹⁵; Alessandro Lattes and Beppo Levi, joint authors of *Cenni storici della Regia Università di Cagliari, compilati dal Prof. A. Lattes per il periodo che va dalla fondazione dello Studio al 1848 e dal Prof. B. Levi per il periodo che va dal 1848 ai nostri giorni* (Brief history of the Royal University of Cagliari, compiled by Professor A. Lattes for the period from its founding to 1848 and by Professor B. Levi for the period from 1848 to the present day), published in the yearbook for the year 1909-1910, their last academic year in Cagliari. Alessandro Lattes, law historian, moved to Modena, then Parma until 1914. He finished his career at the University of Genoa, retiring in 1933 and being appointed emeritus professor¹⁶. Levi, a mathematician, professor of *Geometria proiettiva e descrittiva* since 1906, moved to Parma in 1910 and then, in 1928, to Bologna, the university from which he would then be removed in the autumn of 1938. Due to the racial laws, Beppo Levi emigrated to Rosario in Argentina¹⁷.

Among the Jewish professors there was also pathologist Cesare Sacerdotti, who graduated with Camillo Golgi, in Pavia, in 1892. After teaching in Ferrara, he arrived in Cagliari. Between 1910 and 1912, he was *preside* of the Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia*, then *rettore* of the university between 1911-1913. He moved to Siena and then Pisa, where he worked until October 1938 and where, in 1946, he would be appointed emeritus professor¹⁸. Having been a *rettore*, his portrait, inventoried in 1914, was included in the painting collection of the University of Cagliari¹⁹. The painting was then removed at a date that is uncertain, probably in July 1939, after a confidential letter that Minister Bottai sent to the universities asking them to remove all dedications to Jewish professors²⁰. To this date, the painting portraying Sacerdotti is missing from the collection in the antechamber to the office of the *rettore* in Cagliari – the only one missing among those who held the title in the 20th century.

Other professors who had previously worked in Cagliari, instead, where among those who, in 1938, signed the *Manifesto of Race* (it is the case of Lino Businco, *aiuto incaricato* at the *Istituto di Patologia generale* until 1937²¹) and the bill on the defence of the race (Senator Salvatore Di Marzo, who had been a professor of *Istituzioni di diritto romano* in Cagliari at the beginning of the century, had been one of the rapporteurs of the bill in November 1938²²). Nonetheless, due to the mechanics behind the competitive examinations and the mobility of university professors – especially before the so called "alignment" of the University of Cagliari in 1902²³ – this piece of information is not significant.

Another aspect to be taken into consideration briefly is the presence of Jews among the students of the University of Cagliari, that included some foreigners among the students enrolled. Even before the racial laws, from 6 August 1938, the university had to follow rules that dictated a "ban on the enrolment of students of Jewish race", allowing those already enrolled to complete the exams of the autumn session of 1937-1938, with some other dispensations and temporary rules. The promise to

¹⁴ ASCa. Prefettura, IV Versamento, Gabinetto 6-6 epurazioni, c. 321r, 1938 agosto 24.

¹⁵ Acerbi (2011), p. 215.

¹⁶ <https://www.accademiadelle scienze.it/accademia/soci/Alessandro-Lattes>.

¹⁷ Coen (2005).

¹⁸ http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cesare-sacerdotti_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/.

¹⁹ Inventario n. 1003 del 6 aprile 1914, cit. Bullita (2005).

²⁰ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 295, n. 3048, *Disposizioni di massima*, 1939 luglio 4.

²¹ Stiglitz (2012); Tognotti (2000) p. 186.

²² Gentile (2013) p. 146, n. 161.

²³ The law of 31 July 1862, no. 719 regarding university fees, known as Law Matteucci from the name of the minister who implemented it, recognised two categories of universities, called "A" and "B". Universities in category B had less financing from the ministry and lower salaries for all the staff. Cagliari was included in category B and, between 1882 and 1902, *rettori*, mayors, and local politicians were engaged in promoting the university to category A; this promotion – *alignment* – was obtained with the law 19 June 1902, no. 252, refer to Rapetti (2016).

comply from *rettore* Brotzu suggests the presence of Jewish students without confirming or providing objective data. The only dossier that has been located so far only includes letters and notices without any references to the actual number enrolled²⁴.

After abiding to the fascist dictates, the University of Cagliari, as did all the other universities of the kingdom, adapted to the racial policy. Since the publication of the first issue of the journal *La Difesa della Razza* (The defence of race), several institutes and institutional libraries, following the invitation sent by the minister and shared by *rettore* Brotzu, signed up for the subscription. The *Biblioteca Universitaria* had to abide – as did all the others – to the circulation ban for works written or printed by Jews (but it had already been following the same orders for the lists of books inconsistent with the regime)²⁵.

In Cagliari as well, the course of *Biologia delle razze umane* was added to the curriculum of the Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia* and of the newly created Faculty of *Magistero*. The course programme for the Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia*, taught by anatomist Luigi Castaldi, also included topics like «The defence of race, the improvement of race, related measures and results obtained»²⁶. The course programme of the Faculty of *Magistero* taught by Giuseppe Fadda, which was more structured, included topics about «Colonising virtues of the Italian Race - The Libyans - The Abyssinians - The Somalis - The Jews and the Jewish issue in the world and in Italy - Setting, continuity, and development of the actions of the Regime in defence of the Race - Improvement of the Race - Measures and institutions of the Regime for the improvement of the physical and moral health of the Italian people - New aspects and new importance of the issue of Race after the conquering of the Empire - Conscience of the issue of Race related to the spiritual Autarky of the Nation - The issues of Race and Sardinia»²⁷.

2.2. Suspensions

Staff	Jewish by both father and mother		Suspended
228	3 Professori Straordinari	Members of the Israelite community	3
		Teodoro (Doro) Levi	
		Alberto Pincherle	
		Camillo Viterbo	

Table 1: Census of Jewish professors at the University of Cagliari, 1938

Having collected almost all the census forms, on 27 September 1938 Brotzu informed the minister that there were no *presidi* of faculty of "Jewish race"; he sent the list of professors – Doro Levi, Alberto Pincherle, and Camillo Viterbo – who would be suspended from 16 October; he also promised to replace, by 15 October, all persons of "Jewish race" already appointed to any roles in the University²⁸. Pincherle and Viterbo, also, were married to Jewish women.

²⁴ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 295, n. 3048, *Disposizioni di massima - studenti di razza ebraica*.

²⁵ Cagliari, Archivio della Biblioteca Universitaria. Fasc. R. I. *Divieto di diffusione*.

²⁶ Regia Università degli studi di Cagliari. *Annuario per l'anno scolastico 1938-1939*, p. 290. For Luigi Castaldi refer to Taccari (1978).

²⁷ Regia Università degli studi di Cagliari. *Annuario per l'anno scolastico 1938-1939*, p. 287. Giuseppe Fadda, with a degree in *Scienze Naturali*, held his position until the academic year 1941-42. He swore the oath on 10 May 1939. During those years, he was the royal superintendent of studies in Cagliari and, after the war, he became superintendent in Siena. ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Giuseppe Fadda.

²⁸ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 299, n. 3089, c. 65.

Professor Teodoro Levi, known as Doro, was born in Trieste in 1898²⁹. He studied in Florence and graduated in *Lettere* at the Royal Institute for Superior Studies in 1920 after serving in the First World War and having been part of the irredentist volunteers. In 1924 he specialised in Archaeology in Athens at the Italian School of Archaeology. After participating in several excavations in Greece, he returned to Italy, where he was appointed as Inspector and then Director of the Inspectorate for Antiquities in Etruria. In 1931, he was appointed *libero docente* of *Archeologia e storia dell'arte greca e romana*, and he enrolled in the PNF in 1933. In 1935, he won the competitive examination in Cagliari, was appointed *professore straordinario* on 16 November 1935, and swore his oath on 8 of February the following year³⁰. Meanwhile, on 27 December, he was also appointed Interim Superintendent of Art and Antiquities in Sardinia. When the census of Jewish professors started, in 1938, Levi was close to becoming a *professore ordinario* and was contemplating a transfer to the University of Florence. When he received the notice of 19 October by which the *rettore* informed him he had been suspended from his duties with effect from the 16th of that month, Doro Levi replied to Brotzu by attaching a certified copy of the decree granting a "Medal of Merit for having been an irredentist volunteer in the Italian-Austrian War", asking him to forward it to the Ministry, "explaining the impoverished financial situation caused by the seizure of family assets by the former Austrian government (...), reminding them of the unpaid work done as a Superintendent (...) that could possibly support his reinstatement in the management of Arts and Antiquities"³¹. Brotzu did not hesitate to write to the minister to support Levi's request: "If these merits might help the reinstatement of Professor Levi in a position in the management of Arts and Antiquities, a position that he abandoned in 1935 when he obtained the professorship in this city, I would be glad for him to be reinstated as a Superintendent of Arts and Antiquities and to be granted the VI degree, a level he would have reached in November after completing three years of teaching if he had stayed in his position as a *professore straordinario* of *Archeologia e storia dell'arte antica*"³². This intent to obtain a non-applicability was in vain and Doro Levi was replaced in his duties by Bachisio Raimondo Motzo. He left Cagliari and headed to the United States, where he taught at the Institute for Advanced studies in Princeton³³ and, at the same time, he collaborated with the U.S. Department of Defence to map the Italian monuments that the air force would have had to spare during the bombings. He was allowed to move back to Italy in 1945 at the end of the war. He arrived in Florence in November, where he met Minister Arangio-Ruiz, and immediately informed the new *rettore* in Cagliari, Ernesto Puxeddu, of the results of the meeting: "Due to the uncertainty of my position and to my hard situation at the moment because of upheaval caused by the war, the minister decided to temporarily transfer me to the Arts and Antiquities Directorate of the Ministry in Rome with special duties. You will receive an official communication from the minister himself as soon as the legislative decree can be proclaimed. I wanted to inform you personally of this step, hoping that you will understand the reasons that pushed me to support it despite my strong desire to visit Sardinia again as soon as possible, as I am attached to it by strong personal and professional links"³⁴. Since then and for several years, Levi worked for the Ministry "with inspection, technical, and liaison duties with the allied commission in order to recover the artistic and archaeological material that had been taken by the Germans". Levi kept his university position without actually carrying out any duties and returned to Cagliari only for a few days in order to prevent – with success – the demolition of the Roman Amphitheatre in the city³⁵. From 1 July 1947 to 1977, he was the Director of the Italian School of Archaeology at Athens. After retiring, he moved to Rome and continued his collaboration with professors and students. He died in 1991. On the eightieth anniversary of the racial laws, the *rettore* of the University of Cagliari, Maria

²⁹ For Teodoro Levi, refer to Angiolillo (2009); Marrocu (2003); Tognotti (2000); La Rosa (2005).

³⁰ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Teodoro Levi.

³¹ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Teodoro Levi. Teodoro Levi to Giuseppe Brotzu, 26 October 1938.

³² ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Teodoro Levi. Giuseppe Brotzu to Giuseppe Bottai, 29 October 1938.

³³ <https://www.ias.edu/scholars/doro-levi>.

³⁴ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Teodoro Levi. Teodoro Levi to Ernesto Puxeddu, 22 November 1945.

³⁵ Letter written by Teodoro Levi to Paola Pala on 23 May 1986 and quoted in Angiolillo (2009).

Del Zompo, sent an official apology on behalf of the university to one of Doro Levi's nephews, his sister's son, Professor Roberto E. Kostoris.

Alberto Pincherle (1894-1979), from Milan, graduated in *Giurisprudenza* in Rome in 1912³⁶. After that, he enrolled at the Faculty of *Lettere e Filosofia* and attended the courses of *Storia delle religioni* by Raffaele Pettazzoni and of *Storia del cristianesimo* by Ernesto Buonaiuti. After specialising at Harvard University, he dedicated himself to studying the New Testament. He became a *libero docente* in 1925 and, from the following year, he started teaching some courses by replacing Buonaiuti, who had had a confrontation with Agostino Gemelli that caused his excommunication and banned him from wearing the ecclesiastical robes³⁷. A few years later, he was ordered to work as an editor of the *Enciclopedia Italiana*, where he was appointed director of the section on *Storia delle religioni e folklore*. After Buonaiuti's final downfall when he failed to swear his allegiance to the fascist party as a professor in 1931, Pincherle obtained the role for *Storia del cristianesimo* at the University of Rome. The appointment of a Jew and a pupil of Ernesto Buonaiuti to teach *Storia del cristianesimo*, though, caused the discontent of the Apostolic See and a clash with the *rettore* of the university, a confrontation that included the then Minister for National Education, Francesco Ercole. Pincherle, a practicing Catholic, managed nonetheless to obtain the paid position³⁸.

A member of the PNF since 1932, he was appointed *professore straordinario* of *Storia delle religioni* at the University of Cagliari on 29 October 1937 and swore his oath the following January. On 30 March 1938, in the auditorium of the university, "the fascist professor Alberto Pincherle" taught a lesson on the extra-European relationships and issues of the empire³⁹. In August, as for everyone, he was requested to fill in the census form. His Jewish origins were known but, because Pincherle was not receiving his mail due to some misunderstandings, he was requested several times to fill in the form. He was not in Cagliari when the investigation took place and he received several telegrams requesting him to do so, which is the reason why the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (Central State Archive, hereafter ACS) has two copies, both filled in and signed by him⁴⁰. To one of them, Professor Pincherle attached a letter in which he wrote "that it is not correct to scientifically talk about a Jewish race; what is instead correct and should be said is that there is a Jewish nation which is formed by all those who profess Judaism, that is all those who converted to that religion, which is both national and proselytical (...); on the other hand, those who abandon said religion lose their belonging to the Jewish nation ipso facto". Despite both himself and his mother having converted to Catholicism, Pincherle did not manage to avoid dismissal. Moreover, despite having declared to the Ministry of Education that he was born from Jewish parents, he omitted to declare the same to the civil registry and was therefore to be reported to the concerning authority⁴¹. Following some inspections, Pincherle was therefore dismissed from service from 14 December 1938 and was replaced by Lorenzo Giusso, professor of *Filosofia teoretica*⁴².

Pincherle moved to Lima with his whole family and there he started teaching Latin Literature at the University of San Marcos. In April 1939, asking for his books and notes still stored in Cagliari to be sent to him, he wrote to the secretary of the university "I would be grateful if you could pass on

³⁶ For Alberto Pincherle refer to Marrocu (2003); Tognotti (2000); Vian (2015).

³⁷ For this matter, we refer to the introduction by F. Margiotta Broglio to *Lettere di Ernesto Buonaiuti ad Arturo Carlo Jemolo, 1921-1941*, curated by C. Fantappiè, (Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato. Fonti XXIV), Ministero per i Beni culturali e ambientali, Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, Roma 1997, pp. 7-43.

³⁸ Vian (2015). Pincherle, in one of his letters to *rettore* Brotzu about the census of professors of "Jewish race", wrote "I am a Catholic as is all my family - and I would have not taught *Storia del Cristianesimo* for many years if I had not felt at peace with my conscience", ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio 1901-1946*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 299, n. 3089, c. 58.

³⁹ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 293, n. 3036, *Congressi, commemorazioni conferenze inaugurazioni adesioni sottoscrizioni*.

⁴⁰ Roma, Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS). Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione generale istruzione superiore, Miscellanea di divisioni diverse (I-II-III), Congressi, incarichi, fascicoli personali 1929-1945, b. 109, *Professori di ruolo: ebrei per parte di entrambi i genitori*.

⁴¹ ASCa. Prefettura, IV Versamento, Gabinetto 6-6 epurazioni, c. 130, 1° dicembre 1939.

⁴² Lorenzo Giusso maintained this role until 1942-43: ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Lorenzo Giusso. For Giusso, who moved to Naples but still maintained some teaching duties at the University of Cagliari, refer to Intonti (2001).

my greetings to all my friends, from the Magnificus to the Royal Superintendent and to several colleagues, at least those who are still there". The fondness of Pincherle for his colleagues in Cagliari and for the city never changed with time. After the war, he was officially recalled in his duties in 1945 with effective date from 1 January 1944 and a backdated appointment to *professore ordinario* from the initial date of 29 October 1940. Alberto Pincherle was appointed to "partake specific studies on the subject, specifically on 'Moral Theology of the Counter-reformation in relation to the culture of that period'" and was excused from teaching *Storia delle religioni*, a course that was given to Professor Bachisio Raimondo Motzo⁴³. This exemption was prolonged in 1947-48 due to the task of reorganising the drafting of the *Enciclopedia Italiana*. On 1 November 1948, the professor was transferred to the University of Rome, where he would stay until his retirement in 1969, with a professorship in *Storia del cristianesimo*, a position for which he then obtained the title of emeritus professor. Between 1954 and 1959 he had also directed the Italian Cultural Institute in Brussels. The letters with Cagliari dating from the end of the 1940s demonstrate how much Pincherle loved the city and how much his colleagues appreciated him. On 15 January 1947, Pincherle wrote to the secretary of the University, Pietro Leo: "Please forward my greetings and my best wishes to the *rettore*, Professor Puxeddu, and to my other friends and colleagues, if they still remember me as I still remember them and Cagliari, where I would already be back if I could simply let my feelings guide me, so much I enjoyed my stay there". While in November 1948 *rettore* D'Angelo, wrote: "By losing Your Excellency, the University of Cagliari lost one of its most valuable professors and we would like to thank you for your work here". On the occasion of the official ceremony of apologies that took place in November 2018, the *rettore* of Cagliari invited Alberto Pincherle's children to share a memory of their father.

Camillo Viterbo, from Trieste as was Doro Levi, was born in 1900⁴⁴. After fighting in the Great War and having been a volunteer for the occupation of Fiume, he obtained a Degree in *Giurisprudenza* in Padua in 1922. His studies and his published work were soon added to the scientific debate about insurance law, which was in the process of being recognised as a subject of study. He was an eclectic student – he also took interest in criminal law and civil law – until he settled on economic law. After having been *assistente* in *Diritto commerciale* (1932-1935) and *incaricato* of *Diritto industriale* (1935-1936) at the University of Milan, in December 1936 he arrived in Cagliari as *professore straordinario* of *Diritto commerciale* and he swore his oath the following January. He was also appointed to teach *Storia e politica coloniale* for the first year of service, and *Diritto industriale* for the second year.

During the spring of 1938, Viterbo donated to the university a prize of 1.000 lire to be awarded to the best degree thesis in *Giurisprudenza*, but, in order not to favour his own students, he asked for the dissertations on *Diritto commerciale* to be excluded⁴⁵. Shortly after receiving the thanks from the *rettore* for this generous initiative, he received the request to fill in the personal form. On 5 September, Brotzu urged him to return the form filled in⁴⁶. On 23 September, the *rettore* asked the *preside* of the Faculty of *Giurisprudenza* to appoint another professor to teach *Diritto industriale*, despite having only recently appointed Viterbo⁴⁷. The filled in form was received at the beginning of October but Viterbo's affiliation to the Jewish community was already known⁴⁸.

⁴³ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Alberto Pincherle, 1946 ottobre 22. Motzo had already obtained the replacement role "for the past years", probably from 1943, while Giusso had that role in 1942-43. This detail is not currently verifiable.

⁴⁴ For Camillo Viterbo refer to Contu (2009); Marrocu (2003); Tognotti (2000).

⁴⁵ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 288, n. 2998, *Premio di lire 1000 del Prof. Camillo Viterbo per la migliore tesi di laurea (Facoltà di Giurisprudenza)*.

⁴⁶ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio 1901-1946*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 299, n. 3089, c. 56.

⁴⁷ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio 1901-1946*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 299, n. 3089, c. 2.

⁴⁸ ACS. Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione generale istruzione superiore, Miscellanea di divisioni diverse (I-II-III), Congressi, incarichi, fascicoli personali 1929-1945, b. 109, *Professori di ruolo: ebrei per parte di entrambi i genitori*.

After being notified that he had been excused from his work, Viterbo sent a petition to the minister including some attachments in order to demonstrate his own merit, his irredentism, that of his parents, and his love for the Homeland. As a war volunteer and as a volunteer in Fiume (*legionario fiumano*), he thought he could obtain non-applicability⁴⁹. On that same day, he wrote to his colleague in Cagliari who was helping him, Professor Groppali, to tell him the news about the commitment of the minister and of other *rettori* in protecting the position of some of the Jewish professors. On 7 November, Brotzu wrote to the minister supporting Viterbo's requests and, referring to similar suggestions from other universities, he recommended him as a secretary at the university or as a librarian of the *Istituto giuridico*⁵⁰. There were several attempts to keep him in Cagliari and, on 9 November, Camillo Viterbo thanked Brotzu and other colleagues for their support. In December of that year, though, he received a private letter from Brotzu informing him of the official suspension. Viterbo's reply is eloquent: "Magnificus Rettore, these lines want to express all my gratitude for the personal letter that preceded the official notice and for the tone of the letter itself. I will never forget those who, during this difficult time in my life, showed me some kindness"⁵¹. He was relieved on 14 December 1938 and his role in teaching *Diritto commerciale* was passed to Gino De Gennaro, while Mario Toscano took over for *Politica coloniale*⁵². Viterbo was reinstated and appointed *professore ordinario* after the end of the war starting retroactively on 1 January 1944.

Meanwhile, together with other exiled professors, he had moved to Brazil and then Argentina, where he worked in all major academies. In 1945, at the end of the war, he was working in Cordoba at the *Universidad Nacional*. In January 1947, while still away, he was appointed to the *Colegio libre de Estudios Superiores* in Buenos Aires but, following his request, he obtained a transfer to the University of Modena. He felt the need to apologise to *rettore* Puxeddu mentioning financial reasons to justify his petition to be transferred from Cagliari where he had not been back yet⁵³. Despite this, he did not resume his academic activities in Italy; he fell ill and died in Buenos Aires in October 1948.

Brotzu, in his first correspondence with the Prefect about Jewish professors, affirmed he suspected Jewish ancestry for Professor Carlo Maiorca on his mother's side. Maiorca, a *professore straordinario* of *Istituzioni di diritto privato* at the University of Cagliari, resided in Rome during the census. He did prove to be not Jewish and, having already applied to be transferred, on 23 November 1938, he was called to the University of Siena to replace Professor Guido Tedeschi, who had been suspended because he was Jewish, and started on 1 January⁵⁴. Maiorca, a pupil of Gino Segrè, dedicated an obituary to him in 1942 in the *Rivista di diritto privato*, despite the regime forbidding any remembrance for Jewish professors expelled from the academies⁵⁵.

From the personal forms, Professor Riccardo Orestano (1909-1988), from Palermo, *straordinario* of *Istituzioni di diritto romano*, was married to a Jewish woman, Rosanna Morpurgo⁵⁶. Orestano had won the competitive examination for the role in Cagliari in 1937 but in 1939 he had already moved to Siena, where he had been called in 1938 to replace Ugo Brasiello. He was the *preside* of the Faculty of *Giurisprudenza* in Siena and took part in the Second World War as an infantry lieutenant. He became a liaison officer with the South and, on 8 September, he was arrested and deported to Germany, where he was imprisoned in Wietendorf concentration camp until the end of the war. After the Liberation, he went back to university teaching and moved to the University of Rome for the rest of his career.

⁴⁹ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Camillo Viterbo, 1938 ottobre 31.

⁵⁰ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Camillo Viterbo, 1938 novembre 7.

⁵¹ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Camillo Viterbo, 1938 dicembre 25.

⁵² ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio 1901-1946*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 299, n. 3094, c. 1.

⁵³ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Camillo Viterbo, 1947 aprile 23.

⁵⁴ ASUCa. Fascicolo personale di Carlo Maiorca.

⁵⁵ Acerbi (2011), pp. 182-183.

⁵⁶ Roma, Archivio di Stato. Fondo Questura di Roma - Ebrei (1938-1945), b. 20, fasc. 7, Morpurgo Rosanna di Elio (1943-1944); refer to Montanini (2014).

Another instance regards a professor from Sassari, Luigi Falchi, who had been a *libero docente* of *Letteratura italiana* since 1929 and, thanks to this title, taught several courses in Cagliari. A literary critic, he was known for his connection to Grazia Deledda, with Lussu and the Sardinian nationalist movement, and especially for his own work as a freelance journalist and editor. He was born in 1873. From 1935 onwards, he had three texts published, *Gli ebrei nella storia e nella poesia popolare dei sardi*, *La dominazione ebraica in Sardegna* and *Il popolo sardo* (The Jews in the history and popular poetry of Sardinia, Jewish domination in Sardinia, and The Sardinian people), in which he expressed an openly pro-Jewish position that led him to formulate a stretched theory about the Semitism of the Sardinian people (a concept that Emilio Lussu treated ironically in an article dating from 12 October 1938 – on this subject we refer to Marianna Piras's studies). Due to these publications, after the proclamation of the racial laws, Falchi was relocated from Sardinia to Perugia. He was able to return to Sassari in 1940 but he passed away soon after arriving⁵⁷.

2.3. Reinstatements and purges

The war years had profoundly marked both the city and the University of Cagliari. The bombing, which intensified after 1943, killed dozens of people and destroyed most of the city's buildings. Professors, staff, books, and documents from the University of Cagliari had been relocated inland. The Faculties of *Lettere e Filosofia* and *Magistero*, for instance, had been moved to Oristano, where they tried to continue with lessons and exams. *Rettore* Brotzu had stayed in the city and welcomed with contained joy all the professors whom, despite the obvious difficulties, carried on with their duties and tried to stay as long as possible in Cagliari or to return to the city⁵⁸. The government of Sardinia had been assigned to a High Commissioner with full powers, supported by a council formed by the representatives of the parties that were members of the National Liberation Committee, and contact with the rest of the kingdom was almost non-existent.

Giuseppe Brotzu concluded his mandate as *rettore* in the academic year 1944-1945. From the yearbooks and from his teaching files, there are no records of him ceasing his university activities. In the corresponding literature, nonetheless, it is often mentioned, as it is in the biographical dictionary *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (1988), that Brotzu "had been temporary suspended from teaching in 1945 for having cooperated – as the *rettore* of the university – with the fascist regime even after 8 September 1943", but "he had been fully reinstated after this suspension had been withdrawn". Mattia Flamigni's recent study, which analysed, among others, the series *Professori ordinari epurati* of the ACS⁵⁹ and the folder regarding education in Sardinia of the *Allied Control Commission*⁶⁰, has not returned this result about Giuseppe Brotzu⁶¹.

The opening speech for the year 1945-1946, pronounced by the new *rettore*, Ernesto Puxeddu, despite the hope derived from the recently reconquered freedom ("A sick State cannot provide a healthy school"), painted a sad picture: Most of the buildings had been destroyed by the bombing, the construction sites for the new buildings had been abandoned at the beginning of the war, millions of lire were needed to face the educational needs of a university that, surprisingly, had at that point and for the first time, thousands of students enrolled. There were, nonetheless, the "premises for a return to normality": Laboratories and hospitals had been "restored according to the available means" and most of the professors had returned⁶². Puxeddu also took the chance to honour Professor Francesco Putzu, who was abandoning teaching due to health reasons, and to announce the preparation of a book as a tribute to him⁶³. On the same occasion, after the customary farewell dedicated to Professor Alberto Serra, who was retiring, and the remembrance of Professors Castaldi and Vignocchi who had

⁵⁷ <https://www.filologiasarda.eu/catalogo/autori/autore.php?sez=36&id=603>.

⁵⁸ Bullita (2005).

⁵⁹ ACS. Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione generale istruzione superiore. Divis. I, Professori ordinari epurati (1944-1946); refer to Flamigni (2019).

⁶⁰ College Park (Maryland, USA), National Archives and Records Administration. 10600 Region VI, Sardinia, *Education*. Copy available for consultation on the ACS website: http://90.147.68.248/ACC_user/index.html.

⁶¹ Flamigni (2019).

⁶² Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari. *Annuario per l'anno scolastico 1945-1946*, p. 8.

⁶³ Ivi, p. 12.

passed away, the *rettore* pronounced an emotional tribute to the students who had fallen during the war: Renzo Cherchi, Antonino Cadeddu, Gianfranco Desogus, Alfredo Gallistru, and Quintino Pitzalis⁶⁴.

In 1947-1948, Alberto Serra and Francesco Putzu (and with them Ernesto Puxeddu, who had been retired) returned to the University as *professori fuori ruolo*, under the Legislative Decree of the temporary Head of State from 26 October 1947, no. 1251, "with all academic privileges" until their seventy-fifth year of age⁶⁵. But Francesco Putzu's situation is more complex. Born in Tiana (near Nuoro) in 1875, Putzu dedicated himself immediately to university teaching, first in Sassari and then, from 1934, as a *professore straordinario* of *Clinica chirurgica generale e terapia chirurgica* at the University of Cagliari. A *professore ordinario* since 1937, he was a medical consul of the *Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale* and received the *sciarpa littorio*, a distinction awarded to those who had participated in the March on Rome. In 1944, the *Commissione unica per l'epurazione* suspended him from teaching duties and sent him to the ministerial *Commissione per l'epurazione del personale universitario*, but Brotzu asked them to reinstate his colleague pending trial, declaring that the professor had never undertaken fascist activities. The Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia* in Cagliari had then voted for his reinstatement. The Ministerial Committee found him guilty "without factionalism or misconduct" and issued an official reprimand. According to Mattia Flamigni's research, "there are not any other records about this event but we can speculate with certitude that, after the proclamation of the new laws, the reprimand was not imposed"⁶⁶. Under Legislative Decree 1251/1947, he retired in 1950 when he was 75 years old. His personal dossier within the Historical Archive at the University of Cagliari, at the moment, has been misplaced and it has not been possible to verify the details here mentioned⁶⁷.

3. University of Sassari

3.1. The racist policy

The impact of the racial laws in Sassari, apparently, was not significant. Or, at least, not as evident as in other Italian cities. The Police Commissioner in Sassari, in October 1939, wrote that "the Jewish element" was practically non-existent, which was the reason why public opinion did not pay too much attention to the racist policy (according to the census, there were only 11 Jews in the whole province of Sassari)⁶⁸.

It was in the field of education that, due to ministerial circulars no. 12.336 of 9 August, no. 12.495 of 18 August (prohibition of appointment of Jewish teachers for full or temporary mandates and enrolment of Jewish students), and no. 12.380 of 12 August 1938 (removal of all school books by Jewish authors), the racial laws produced some effects, especially as reported by Marcella Garroni in her doctoral thesis in which she talks about the revision of teaching programmes that included books by Jewish authors. An illustrative case was that of Vittoria Zaira Coen Righi, from Mantua, who had been working in Sassari for about twenty years, first at the female only secondary school Regia Scuola Normale Femminile, then at the technical secondary school Lamarmora, and then, from 1935, at the classical secondary school Liceo Ginnasio Azuni where she was teaching Natural Sciences and Chemistry. She was married to a medical doctor from Sassari, Italo Giuseppe Righi, and she was

⁶⁴ Ivi, p. 13.

⁶⁵ Ivi, pp. 7-8.

⁶⁶ Flamigni (2017), p. 410; Flamigni (2019), *ad vocem*.

⁶⁷ ACS. Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione generale istruzione superiore. Divis. I, Professori ordinari epurati (1944-1946), b. 28, fasc. Putzu Francesco; ACS. Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione generale istruzione superiore. Divis. I, Fascicoli personali professori ordinari (1940-1970), b. 389, fasc. Putzu Francesco; refer to Flamigni (2019).

⁶⁸ ACS. Ministero dell'Interno, P.S., Aa. Gg. Rr. (1920-1945), *relazione del questore di Sassari per gli anni 1938-1940* (b. 56); refer to Brigaglia (2002).

enrolled in the PNF. Due to the racial laws, she was exonerated from teaching, left the city, and joined her sister in Florence. They both fell victim to the Nazis in 1944⁶⁹.

The University of Sassari had several Jewish students, both Italian and foreigners, who had arrived to study medicine. Some of them left the city in 1939, as was the case of Fernando Segre, son of Abramo, originally from Siena, who was enrolled for the fourth year in 1937-1938 and abandoned his studies in 1938⁷⁰.

As had happened in Cagliari, the University of Sassari aligned itself with the other universities that has been celebrated by the Grand Council of Fascism: starting from the academic year 1937-38, as a matter of fact, as part of the course on *Istologia ed Embriologia generale*, taught in Sassari, a teaching on *Biologia e genetica delle razze* was added; a course on *Biologia delle razze umane* started in 1938-39⁷¹ and it was assigned first to Eugenio Maurizio, director of the *Clinica di Ostetricia e ginecologia*, and then, for 1940-41, to Ettore Debiassi⁷². There are no records, though, about any degree theses on the subject. The *preside* of the Faculty of *Veterinaria*, Dino Monari, had published in the magazine *Gerarchia* an article titled 'Il miglioramento della razza e il fascismo'⁷³.

Professor Carlo Gastaldi, *rettore* of the University of Sassari since 1935, as was to be expected, was zealous in complying with all the directives of the ministry. Once he had requested everyone to fill in the personal forms and had received the replies, he enquired what measures were to be adopted regarding the professors who would prove to be of Jewish race. At the same time, though, he had to intervene with a telegram to the minister in order to deny the rumours about Professors Antonio Segni and Sergio Costa belonging to the Jewish race and practicing the Jewish religion⁷⁴.

After reorganising the *Carteggio* (Correspondence) of the University of Cagliari, two draft letters by Brotzu, *rettore* of Cagliari, to the *rettore* of Sassari emerged⁷⁵. At the moment, the replies by *rettore* Gastaldi have not been located as they were missing from the dossier. By reading the two drafts, though, it is possible to speculate on what the reply by Carlo Gastaldi to the first letter by the *rettore* of Cagliari might have been.

Giuseppe Brotzu, at an unknown date – probably between the end of August and the beginning of September 1938 – wrote to *rettore* Gastaldi: "I would be glad if you could share your opinion about a matter that interests both universities. Most likely, the instructions about the Jewish professors will cause many relocations of *professori di ruolo* [i.e. *ordinari* and *straordinari*] and the teaching in our universities will be affected. Would it not be opportune to inform his Excellency the Minister about this and, potentially, request that, for instance, if too many *posti di ruolo* [i.e. *ordinari* and *straordinari* roles and positions] were uncovered, the relocations were suspended and the professors stayed comfortably in our locations until after having published and completed the competitive examinations for the vacant positions? We could potentially act together". The doubts of the *rettore* of Cagliari seem to focus merely on the teaching issue, that is the risk of not being able to offer the courses.

The following draft, dated 17 September 1938, allows us to guess the reply from *rettore* Gastaldi: "I am very glad to see that you agree: together, we could, maybe, obtain something more. It is obviously appropriate to wait to know the measures. I think we could profitably talk about it in Rome on the 7th. Do you agree?"

The result of this suggestion by Brotzu is unknown. What is known, as Eugenia Tognotti has already observed, is that when the time came to inform the *professore straordinario* Michelangelo

⁶⁹ Sassari, Archivio del Liceo Ginnasio D.A. Azuni. *Fascicoli personale insegnante*, Fascicolo personale della professoressa Vittoria Zaira Coen Righi; refer to Garroni (2010).

⁷⁰ Brigaglia (2002) pp. 132-133 e n. 12.

⁷¹ Tognotti (2000), p. 192.

⁷² Obinu (2010), p. 349.

⁷³ Capristo (2011), pp. 245-246; D. Monari. *Il miglioramento della razza e il Fascismo*, «Gerarchia», 10 (1922), pp. 592-596.

⁷⁴ Sassari, Archivio generale dell'Università (AGUS). 1939, Pos. 2°, 1938-1939, telegram from the *rettore* to the minister, 13 September 1938; refer to Fois (2010).

⁷⁵ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio 1901-1946*, s. 1.38 (1937), b. 286, n. 2976, *Trasferimenti di Professori*.

Ottolenghi about his suspension from duties, *rettore* Gastaldi omitted the "customary courtesy expressions"⁷⁶ and, on the occasion of his opening speech for the academic year 1938-1939, he briefly mentioned that Ottolenghi had interrupted his work at the Faculty of *Veterinaria* because he was Jewish, without adding anything else, neither as a farewell or as gratitude for the brief experience in his university; in the same way, nothing had been said by *rettore* Brotzu in Cagliari⁷⁷.

The subject of the behaviour of the Italian *rettori* has been widely debated elsewhere by researchers; as an example, we can quote the essay by Giulio Cianferotti (published in the magazine *Le Carte e la Storia* 2, 2004). By examining the opening speeches pronounced for the beginning of the academic year by the *rettori* immediately after implementing the racial policies, Cianferotti has highlighted how "the acknowledgement words publicly pronounced [by the] *rettori* were the only expressions of respect and sensitivity towards the Jewish colleagues expelled from the Universities"⁷⁸. Carlo Gastaldi and Giuseppe Brotzu were not among those who publicly declared their antisemitism, but they were among those who kept almost completely quiet, maybe only expressing in private their appreciation for the suspended colleagues – as we have seen in the case of the *rettore* of Cagliari.

Maybe, choosing to remain silent was exactly the attitude the regime preferred: In 1939, a *rettore* that has not been named had asked the Ministry if he had to indicate, in the yearbook, "details about the professors who belonged to the Jewish race and already retired". On 4 July, bluntly, the minister informed the *rettori* that Jewish emeriti professors and *professori onorari* should not be included in the list of names and that, in the case of Jewish professors passing away, no obituary should be published⁷⁹.

3.2. Suspensions

Staff	Jews from their father's side			Suspended
128		Members of the Israelite community and professing the Jewish religion	Pertaining to Catholic religion	1
	1 <i>professore straordinario</i>	Michelangelo Ottolenghi		
	1 <i>professore incaricato</i>		Emilio Morpurgo	
	1 <i>assistente incaricato</i>		Franco Ottolenghi	

Table 2: Census of Jewish professors at the University of Sassari, 1938

The census of the University of Sassari reported, among 128 members of staff, 3 Jews "on their father's side": one "member of the Israelitic community and professing the Jewish religion" and two "Catholic"⁸⁰: Michelangelo Ottolenghi, and Emilio Morpurgo and Franco Ottolenghi respectively. To them the case of a personal form wrongly filled in was added, a mistake made by Luigi Pinelli.

Michelangelo Ottolenghi was a *professore straordinario* of *Anatomia degli animali domestici, istologia ed embriologia*. He was born in Turin in 1904, where he also studied. He had taught in Messina and then he entered service at the Faculty of *Veterinaria* in Sassari for the academic year 1937-1938, only three years after its official opening. As the director of the *Istituto di Anatomia degli*

⁷⁶ Sassari, Archivio dell'Ufficio Personale docente dell'Università (APUS). *Cartelle personali*, n. 355, Ottolenghi Michelangelo; refer to Tognotti (2000).

⁷⁷ Università degli Studi di Sassari. *Annuario per l'anno accademico 1938-1939*; refer to Tognotti (2000), p. 191.

⁷⁸ Cianferotti (2004).

⁷⁹ ASUCa. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Sezione II, *Carteggio parte 2*, s. 1.39 (1938), b. 295, n. 3048, *Disposizioni di massima. Disposizioni di massima*, 1939 luglio 4. *Il ministro Bottai ai rettori. Oggetto: annuario dell'università – professori di razza ebraica. Riservata*.

⁸⁰ AGUS. 1939, Pos. 2a, 1938-1939, *Disposizioni per la razza ebraica*; refer to Fois (2010); Tognotti (2000).

animali domestici, he was one of the four *professori di ruolo* of the faculty in Sassari, which he represented at the permanent council for the *Biblioteca Universitaria*.

Ottolenghi was a member of the Israelitic community and professed the Jewish religion, as did his wife, Edma Lea Livia Levi (Turin 1908-Ottawa 1994). He had been suspended with effect from 16 October 1938. After the expulsion, he was replaced in his duties by *libero docente* Emilio Morpurgo, who had already held that position before Ottolenghi's arrival.

In 1939, together with other Italian Jews, he sought refuge in Ecuador, where he worked as a veterinarian – one of few in the nation – and put aside teaching. He was reinstated under Legislative Decree 29 January 1944, no. 25 and was officially authorized to stay abroad until August 1949, moving from Ecuador to Colombia; he went to Peru for some research and then arrived in the United States. He then moved with his wife and some of their children to Quebec, where he passed away in 1967 in Montreal⁸¹.

Emilio Morpurgo, from Trieste, graduated in *Veterinaria* in Bologna in 1919⁸²; from 1934-1935 he was *incaricato* of *Istologia, embriologia generale e anatomia descrittiva degli animali domestici* at the Faculty of *Veterinaria* in Sassari, and he had also been named Director of the *Istituto di Anatomia degli animali domestici*⁸³. He was replaced by *professore straordinario* Ottolenghi; for the academic year 1938-1939 he was *professore incaricato* of *Anatomia topografica e chirurgia operativa*.

Rettore Gastaldi, on 19 September 1938, informed the minister of the results of the census: Professor Morpurgo, despite professing the Catholic religion, was Jewish on his father's side. He asked for his situation to be assessed and awaited instructions⁸⁴. The result of the checks demonstrated that his father had already converted to Catholicism as early as 1870. Emilio Morpurgo was not expelled and, ironically, he obtained and kept the appointments that, from 1937-1938, had been assigned to *professore straordinario* Ottolenghi. He passed away in Trieste in 1959, and his obituary mentioned his brilliant career in Sassari⁸⁵.

In 1938, Franco Ottolenghi was the *assistente incaricato* of *Clinica dermosifilopatica*. He was born in Milan in 1908 and there he graduated in *Medicina e Chirurgia*; he had just moved to Sassari after working for several years at the hospital in Novara. He was appointed under the supervision of Professor Giuseppe Sannicandro.

For Franco Ottolenghi as well, a Catholic but from a Jewish father, the *rettore* requested instructions from the minister in 1938⁸⁶. It was highlighted that his paternal grandfather had already converted to Catholicism and the *assistente incaricato* was not removed. He continued his career in Sassari for several years obtaining a *libera docenza*. His young wife, Magda Szlezzynger, who in 1938 had graduated in *Medicina e Chirurgia* – one of the first ones in Sardinia - was Jewish. She had been counted in the census and was monitored weekly by the Carabinieri, while her family, still in Poland, did not escape deportation⁸⁷.

In 1943, Franco followed Enea Giuseppe Scolari, his mentor, who meanwhile had become the director of the *Clinica dermosifilopatica* in Catania. He had to replace him for a while as director of the institute in Catania and then followed him to Palermo and then Florence, until he established himself as a dermatologist. He opened a *Scuola di specializzazione* at the *Clinica dermosifilopatica* in Siena and directed it until he retired. He passed away in Milan in 2000⁸⁸.

⁸¹ The interview with his son Abramo for the Jewish community in Columbus (Ohio) talks about the *peregrinatio* of the family: http://columbusjewishhistory.org/oral_histories/abramo-ottolenghi. Refer to Contu (2009) p. 216 e n. 28, who collected the testimony of Luisella Mortara Ottolenghi, granddaughter of Michelangelo.

⁸² <https://archivistorico.unibo.it/it/patrimonio-documentario/fascicolo-studenti/?record=52278>.

⁸³ *Annuario del Ministero dell' Educazione nazionale*, 1935, p. 288.

⁸⁴ AGUS. 1939, Pos. 2a, 1938-1939, *Disposizioni per la razza ebraica*; refer to Fois (2010); Tognotti (2000).

⁸⁵ *Nuova Veterinaria* 35 (1959): 24.

⁸⁶ AGUS. 1939, Pos. 2a, 1938-1939, *Disposizioni per la razza ebraica*; refer to Fois (2010); Tognotti (2000).

⁸⁷ A testimony about Magda and her parents has recently been provided by her daughter Ines: <https://www.mosaico-cem.it/cultura-e-societa/personaggi-e-storie/tanti-saluti-da-varsavia-le-cartoline-di-mamma-tirza>.

⁸⁸ Franco Ottolenghi (1908-2000). In: C. Gelmetti, editor (2015). *Storia della Dermatologia e della Venereologia in Italia*. Milano: Springer-Verlag, pp. 135-136.

Singular and more well-known thanks to the studies by Giuseppina Fois is the case of Luigi Pinelli, who was born in Sassari in 1899. Pinelli was an *aiuto* of *Clinica medica* and a *libero docente* waiting to be confirmed. In September 1938, he made a mistake when filling in the personal form: He did not read the note instructing to delete if not applicable and marked all boxes with a no, declaring himself “Jewish on his father's side”, “member of the Israelitic community”, “professing the Jewish religion”, “Jewish on the mother's side”, and “married to a Jewish woman”.

In the notice sent by *rettore* Gastaldi to the minister on 19 September, Pinelli was not mentioned at all and therefore, shortly after, on 24 October, the Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia* requested unanimously for him to be confirmed as *libero docente*. On 7 November, the Ministry of National Education rejected the definitive confirmation "of Doctor Luigi Pinelli because he belonged to the Jewish race". On 10 December, the Ministry asked for Pinelli's removal and excused him with effect from the 14th of that same month. *Rettore* Gastaldi asked him to fill in another form and he sent it to the minister proving that "Professor Luigi Pinelli did not [have] any connections with the Jewish race" adding several attachments: baptism and marriage certificate; baptism certificates of his parents and of his maternal grandmother, death certificate of his maternal grandfather, marriage certificate of his paternal grandparents.

The confirmation did not arrive: Pinelli was not enrolled in the PNF and, therefore, was being monitored. In March 1939, the Prefecture in Sassari informed the minister that, when he was a student, the professor had belonged to the Sardinian Action Party and that, in 1927, he had been conditionally sentenced to three months in jail because he omitted to declare a weapon. Despite that, Luigi Pinelli was now observing a "regular behaviour". The minister did not think that those details were sufficient and asked for new and more recent pieces of information, but the Prefect did not reply⁸⁹. His non-enrolment to the PNF was considered sufficient to deny his confirmation as *libero docente*, a confirmation that he only received in 1944 but that he would carry out for only a short period as Pinelli tendered his voluntary resignation in March 1945.

Two more professors had been removed due to their political views: Gleb Wataghin and Vittorio Saba.

Gleb Wataghin, a Russian naturalised Italian, was born in Birzula in 1899 and was *professore ordinario* of *Fisica sperimentale*. Since 1939 he had been made available by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to teach at the University of São Paulo in Brazil. When he was invited to return to Italy, he refused and was compulsorily retired with effect from 22 August 1942. On 30 December 1944, by Ministerial Decree, he was reinstated as *professore ordinario* at the University of Sassari, "having considered that the measure that caused his compulsory retirement had been implemented purely for political reasons"⁹⁰, but in 1949 he moved to the University of Turin and in that same city he passed away in 1986.

Vittorio Saba was born in Ossi in 1897 and in 1938 he was *assistente* at the *Clinica oculistica*, where he had been working for 15 years, starting as a *assistente volontario*, then *assistente incaricato*, and then, since 1928, as *assistente di ruolo*. Vittorio came from a well-known family of anti-fascist republicans. His brother Michele, a correspondent for Sardinia for the newspaper *Giornale d'Italia*, had been arrested in 1939 along with their other brother Stefano. Vittorio Saba had sworn the compulsory university oath only in 1934 and had never enrolled to the PNF. He was removed because

⁸⁹ ACS. Pubblica Istruzione, div. I, Libere Docenze, Pinelli Luigi; ivi, *Miscellanea di divisioni diverse (I-II-III), Congressi, incarichi, fascicoli personali 1929-1945*, b. 109, pos. 23 B; refer to Fois (2001).

⁹⁰ The career of Gleb Wataghin among others was reconstituted on the occasion of the session of 13 May 1954 of the Senate of the Republic, 6th Commission (Public Education and Arts), dedicated to debating the government bill proposed by member of parliament Aldo Moro: "Proroga fino al 75° anno dei limiti di età per i professori universitari perseguitati per motivi politici e decorrenza dal 73° anno del quinquennio della posizione di fuori ruolo per i professori universitari perseguitati per ragioni razziali e politiche" (Postponement of the age limit for university professors until the 75th year of age for those persecuted for political reasons and effective date of the 73rd year for the five years for *fuori ruolo* position for those professors who had been persecuted for racial and political reasons): <http://www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/DF/260596.pdf>.

he was a republican⁹¹: The director of the Institute, Alfredo Santonastaso, did not renew his position for 1938-39⁹² and Saba was reinstated only in 1944.

To them we can add the non-confirmation of Michele Orrù from Sassari, *libero docente* of *Clinica ostetrica e ginecologica* who, in 1932, followed his mentor and former *rettore* of Sassari Carlo Vercesi (1887-1954) to the University of Palermo and, since 1935, had already been persecuted for his anti-fascist ideas⁹³.

3.3. Reinstatements and purges

During the war years, the University of Sassari – which back then had just over 500 students enrolled – had not suspended its activity at all and, as mentioned by Manlio Brigaglia, had welcomed students and professors from other universities. Among those professors were Pasquale Marginesu, professor of *Microbiologia* in Parma, and Luigi Piras, hygienist at the University of Genoa, stranded in Sardinia because of the war. After the downfall of fascism, Gastaldi was removed and the office of the *rettore* went into receivership. The role was entrusted to Antonio Segni, professor of *Diritto commerciale*, on 9 October 1943, and he fulfilled it until 10 April 1945, when he was appointed *rettore*.

On 9 March 1944, the Ministry asked Professor Segni to invite Luigi Pinelli and Vittorio Saba to present their papers in order to be reinstated under Royal Legislative Decree (R.D.L. for its acronym in Italian) 6 January 1944, no. 9, and they were both reinstated as *aiuti* at the Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia*, while on 10 June of that same year, under R.D.L. 29-B/1943, the *professore ordinario* of *Clinica oculistica* Giovanni Battista Bietti was expelled. Moreover, on the occasion of the opening session of the academic year 1946-47, in Sassari, two students who had fallen in the Liberation War were awarded honorary degrees – Pietro Borrotzu, first year of *Giurisprudenza*, a partisan captain killed by firing squad in Chiusola (La Spezia province), and Giovanni Lobina, in his fourth year of *Giurisprudenza*, who died in a German concentration camp⁹⁴.

As for Professor Bietti, who was born in Padua in 1907 and had graduated in Bologna in 1930⁹⁵, in 1939 he had taken part in the competitive examination at the University of Sassari, where he was appointed *professore straordinario* in 1940, and *ordinario* in 1942, when he was also named *preside* of the Faculty of *Medicina e Chirurgia*⁹⁶. He was recalled for duty as a medical major in the Italian Air Force, on 8 September 1943 he stayed in the territory of the Italian Social Republic (RSI for its acronym in Italian). He joined the University of Rome and for this reason he was accused by the Omodeo Commission of collaborating with the enemy. The Ministerial Committee, instead, charged him with actively taking part of the Fascist political life because of his role as federal deputy secretary of the PNF in Sassari.

As Mattia Flamigni has already mentioned, Bietti was soon reinstated also thanks to Antonio Segni's intervention declaring him an anti-fascist and suggesting that he had been automatically appointed as federal deputy secretary⁹⁷. He was called to the University of Pavia in 1946 but, in that same year, the *Commissione provinciale per le sanzioni contro il fascismo* deprived him of his electoral rights for five years. In 1950 he was called to Parma and, after five years, to Rome, where he worked as a director of the university *Clinica oculistica*, that he upgraded later with the Bioengineering Laboratory and the Department for Ocular Physio-Pharmacology. He died in Cairo, where he was attending a conference, in 1977.

⁹¹ Casellario Politico Centrale, b. 4506, fasc. 094939 (1931-1942): <http://dati.acs.beniculturali.it/oad/uodCPC/S00009>.

⁹² APUS. *Cartelle personali*, n. 226, Saba Vittorio; refer to Tognotti (2000).

⁹³ APUS. *Cartelle personali*, n. 265, Orrù Michele; refer to Tognotti (2000).

⁹⁴ Brigaglia (2010) p. 135 referring to Sechi (1986) p. 181.

⁹⁵ <https://archiviostorico.unibo.it/it/patrimonio-documentario/fascicolo-studenti/?record=44217>.

⁹⁶ AGUS. Fascicoli del personale, U.P. 55; refer to Flamigni (2017), p. 275 and Flamigni (2019), *ad vocem*.

⁹⁷ ACS. Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione generale istruzione superiore, Professori ordinari epurati (1944-46), b. 4, fasc. Bietti Gian Battista, lettera di deduzioni di G.B. Bietti, s.d.; ivi, sentenza della Commissione Ministeriale di epurazione, 1945 febbraio 23; refer to Flamigni (2017).

4. Documents

4.1. Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari

The Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari retains the documents deposited after the ‘reconstitution’ enacted in 1764 by Charles Emmanuel III of Savoy, King of Sardinia.

The oldest documents have undergone a preliminary process of restoration, conditioning, and partial description during the 2000s. After the changes in the scientific management of the Archive, new interventions have been undertaken since 2015: The documents dating up to 1900 – integrated by new findings – have been completely reorganised according to the functions and the rules of the body that produced them, and the related analytical inventories are currently being published.

Both the work of restoration of the documents that came from the storage facilities and the filing of the documents dated after 1900 are currently in progress⁹⁸. The correspondence up to 1946 has been reorganised; the incomplete series of enrolment forms for the courses and the exams, and the related lists of admissions, of lessons logs, of general journals, and of ledgers have been inventoried. The series of degree dissertations is currently being reorganised and it will be added to a database⁹⁹, while the staff dossiers that have been found in storage are in the first phase of the inventory process: They were previously organised in alphabetical order but they have then been interfered with and many folders are out of place. There has not been any intervention with the minutes of the *Senato Accademico* (Academic Senate), of the *Consiglio d'Amministrazione* (Governing Board), or of the faculty documents, which are scattered in several storage facilities and, in some cases, are still stored in the different faculties.

Regarding the reorganisation of the correspondence up to 1946, some dossiers about the application of the racial laws in the universities have been found. For the dossier *Difesa della razza nella scuola fascista. Divieto di ammissione di personale appartenente alla razza ebraica* (Defense of the race in the Fascist school. Prohibition of admitting staff belonging to the Jewish race) a documentary exhibition has been dedicated, which opened on 29 November 2018 during the public apology ceremony of the university to the families of the Jewish professors removed from the University of Cagliari in October and December 1938. After the first examination of the staff dossiers, those of Doro Levi, Alberto Pincherle, and Camillo Viterbo have been located immediately. As we have already mentioned, it is a series that has not been reorganised yet and therefore is not accessible. During our work, the dossiers have been examined by way of exemption with permission granted by Cecilia Tasca, who is in charge of the Archive. The dossier about Francesco Putzu, purged fascist professor, on the other hand, has not been located yet. The reason why the dossier is missing is not yet clear (and we cannot exclude that it will be found out of place). A different problem, on the other hand, has been observed about the correspondence, as it had already been highlighted by the cooperative of archivists who took part in the first restoration project: the dossiers regarding the twenty years of fascist regime have probably been tampered with immediately after the downfall of the regime¹⁰⁰. In some cases there have been misappropriations and it seems that part of the documents have been eliminated willingly (and, therefore, not discarded according to the rules of the archives, as no trace of this operation has yet been found).

The following table (Table 3) represents the parts of the dossiers located and studied for this article, and so do the tables that follow it (nos. 4 and 5).

⁹⁸ The institutional study helped in the creation of a general fond called *Università degli Studi di Cagliari*, and divided into several sub-fonds: *Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari* (1764-1946, which in turn is divided into *Sezione I* and *Sezione II*) and *Università degli Studi di Cagliari* (from 1946).

⁹⁹ The creation of the structure and of the contents is the focus of a research project by Valeria Zedda called, *Il portale dell'Archivio Storico dell'Università di Cagliari* (The portal of the Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari), included in the 23rd series (XXXIII ciclo) of the research doctorate in History, Cultural Heritage, and International Studies at the University of Cagliari.

¹⁰⁰ The archivists of the cooperative La Memoria Storica, who were in charge of the works in the storage facilities of the office of the *rettore* at the beginning of the 2000s, mentioned out that they had noticed some gaps in the consistency list *Carteggio (1900-1950)*.

Archivio Storico dell'Università di Cagliari (Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari)				
Università degli Studi di Cagliari (University of Cagliari)				
Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari (Royal University of Cagliari)				
Sezione II (Section II)				
Carteggio (Correspondence)				
Parte 2 (Part 2) (1901-1946)	1937-38	b. 286, n. 2976, pos. III	Trasferimenti di professori (Transfers of professors).	
	1938-39	b. 295, n. 3048, pos. I	Disposizioni di massima. Studenti di razza ebraica (General instructions. Students belonging to the Jewish race).	
		b. 299, n. 3089, pos. III	Difesa della razza nella scuola fascista. Divieto di ammissione di personale appartenente alla razza ebraica (Defence of the race in the Fascist school. Prohibition of admitting staff belonging to the Jewish race).	
		Serie omogenee (Homogeneous series)		
	Parte 2 (Part 2) (1901-1946)	Fascicoli personale docente (Teaching staff dossiers)	Levi Teodoro	
			Pincherle Alberto	
Viterbo Camillo				

**Table 3: Catalogue of the inventoried dossiers stored at the University of Cagliari.
Progress of the reorganisation: July 2019**

4.2. Historical Archive of the University of Sassari

Stored at the History Library¹⁰¹, the Historical Archive includes documents from the period 1765-1945¹⁰². As it is for the archive in Cagliari, therefore, it has deposited material starting from the restoration organised by the House of Savoy, which started one year later than in Cagliari.

The first recovery of the ancient documents was entrusted to Ginevra Zanetti in 1973 together with her assistants Giampiero Todini and Renato Pintus. The documents were gathered by type, in homogeneous, chronologically ordered series. Later, this first core was expanded with the addition of the documents from the faculties, causing the reorganisation of the staff and students dossiers up to 1945.

Considered as a unity despite the institutional breaks that marked the changes from one system of organisation to another, the archive presents itself in the following structure: University (which includes the documents produced in the offices of the *rettore*), Faculties, and Aggregated Fonds (private groups of documents with a particular historic relevance donated to the University of Sassari)¹⁰³.

The documentary material has some gaps due to loss of material caused by water leaks and by arson which happened a few years ago. The storage archive is divided among different locations, different administrative offices, and storage facilities, and its size is unknown.

¹⁰¹ <https://www.uniss.it/sistema-bibliotecario/biblioteche/biblioteca-di-storia/storia-e-collezioni>.

¹⁰² <http://suisa.archivi.beniculturali.it/cgi-bin/pagina.pl?TipoPag=comparc&Chiave=364701>.

¹⁰³ Ferrante (2010).

Archivio Storico dell'Università di Sassari (Historical Archive of the University of Sassari)				
Ateneo (University)				
Università di Sassari (University of Sassari)				
	1939			
		Pos. 2 A	1938-39	<i>Disposizioni per la razza ebraica</i> (Instructions about the Jewish race)
Ufficio Personale Docente (Teaching staff office)				
	<i>Cartelle personali</i> (Personal dossiers)			
		no. 228		Pinelli Luigi
		no. 355		Ottolenghi Michelangelo

Table 4: Catalogue of dossiers from the University of Sassari and mentioned in literature
(Source: Tognotti, 2000)

4.3. Academic yearbooks

Academic yearbooks are an important and essential resource about the history of universities. They act as an official source – as they include the organisational chart of the universities, the programmes of courses, the lists of graduated students – and, at the same time, thanks to the prolusions and the opening speeches pronounced by the *rettori*, they paint a more or less truthful picture of the academic situation. The case of suspensions from duty of Jewish professors following the 1938 instructions is emblematic from this point of view: as we have already mentioned, the Italian *rettori*, despite having followed orders from their superiors, behaved in different, often opposing ways during the public opening ceremonies. Some of them absolutely avoided mentioning the colleagues affected by the anti-Jew provisions. They did not lie but they omitted the truth.

“Annuari” of the University of Cagliari

The University of Cagliari published its first *Annuario* (Yearbook) in 1862 and then continued without interruption until 1946, with the title *Annuario della Regia Università degli Studi di Cagliari*¹⁰⁴ (Yearbook of the Royal University of Cagliari). Later, starting in 1948, the series started again and was titled *Annuario dell'Università degli Studi di Cagliari*¹⁰⁵ (Yearbook of the University of Cagliari). The *Biblioteca Universitaria* di Cagliari – which, as with the library in Sassari by the same name, keeps its historical name but is now a state conservation library that refers to the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities (MiBACT for its acronym in Italian) – does not own the whole series, however it keeps all the published issues for the period we analysed, those referring to the academic years 1937-38; 1938-39; 1939-40; 1940-41; 1941-42/1942-43; 1943-44/1944-45; 1945-46; 1946-47; 1947-48; 1948-49.

“Annuari” of the University of Sassari

The *Annuari* were published by the University of Sassari starting in 1850-1851. The title and the approach to the subjects changed several times during the years. Until 1875-1876 it is called *Calendario dell'anno scolastico per la R. Università degli Studi di Sassari e per le regie e pubbliche scuole del suo circondario* (Calendar of the academic year of the Royal University of Sassari and for the royal and public schools in its area); from 1877 it is published as *Annuario della Regia Università degli studi di Sassari per l'anno scolastico 1876-1877* (Yearbook of the Royal University of Sassari for the academic year 1876-1877); from 1879 to 1884 the *Discorso inaugurale e annuario accademico* (Opening speech and academic yearbook); from 1884-1885 to 1932-1933 the title is *Annuario per l'anno scolastico* (Yearbook for the school year) and, from 1933-34 to 1972-1973, *Annuario per l'anno accademico* (Yearbook for the academic year). After that, simply *Annuario*.

Regarding the academic years mentioned herein, the volumes available for consultation in the *Biblioteca Universitaria* di Sassari (and other Italian libraries¹⁰⁶) refer to academic years: 1937-38; 1938-39; 1939-40; 1940-41; 1941-42/1942-43; 1943-44/1945-46/1946-47; 1947-48/1948-49.

¹⁰⁴ http://acnp.unibo.it/cgi-ser/start/it/cnr/dc-p2.tcl?catno=2165248&language=ITALIANO&libr=&person=false&year_poss_from=&year_poss_to=

¹⁰⁵ <http://acnp.unibo.it/cgi-ser/start/it/cnr/dc-p2.tcl?catno=42140&person=false&language=ITALIANO&libr=>

¹⁰⁶ <http://acnp.unibo.it/cgi-ser/start/it/cnr/dc-p2.tcl?catno=13829&person=false&language=ITALIANO&libr=>

4.4. Archivio Centrale dello Stato

The ACS in Rome is dedicated to the conservation of the historical archives of the State government and administrative bodies. Among them are the ministries and, therefore, also the Ministry of Education (in Italian *Ministero della Pubblica istruzione* and, during the fascist years, *Ministero dell'Educazione nazionale*).

The documents referring to the years that were the subject of this study are stored in the fonds of the *Divisione generale istruzione superiore* (1900-1955), which consists of 2660 folders, subdivided into four *Divisioni* plus a fifth group of miscellanea from *Divisioni* I, II and III. In particular, the careers of professors (from when they obtained the *libera docenza* and until they reached the role of *professore ordinario* through the competitive examinations and their possible involvement into the *Epurazione* - purge of Fascist professors from the Italian universities) can be retraced thanks to the dossiers kept in the category called *Divisione I*. The census forms filled in after the notice 9 August 1938, no. 12336 are in *Miscellanea Divisioni I, II and III*, series *Congressi, concorsi, incarichi, fascicoli personali di professori ordinari e liberi docenti* (1929-1945), in a single folder (no. 109), ordered by university, category, and academic degree.

The following table only mentions the series that are pertinent to this investigation; for a more detailed study, we refer to the respective guide (cf. *permalink* among the quoted sources).

Archivio Centrale dello Stato (Central State Archive)		
<i>Archivi degli organi di governo e amministrativi dello Stato</i> (Archives of the State government and administrative bodies)		
<i>Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (Ministry of Education)</i>		
<i>Direzione generale istruzione superiore (Higher Education Directorate)</i>		
<i>Divisione I</i> (Category I)	<i>Concorsi a cattedre nelle università</i> (Competitive examinations for professorships in universities)	
	<i>Seconda serie (Second series), 1924-1954</i>	
	Commissioni libere docenze (Commissions for <i>libere docenze</i>)	1924-1953
	<i>Incarichi di insegnamento, commissioni etc.</i> (Teaching appointments, commissions, etc.)	1935-1949
	<i>Concorsi per assistenti</i> (Competitive examinations for <i>assistenti</i>)	1937-1949
	<i>Fascicoli personali dei liberi docenti</i> (Personal dossiers of <i>liberi docenti</i>)	
	<i>Seconda serie (Second series), 1930-1950</i>	
	<i>Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari</i> (Personal dossier of <i>professori ordinari</i>)	1900-1940
	<i>Professori universitari, epurazione</i> (University professors, purge)	1945-1947
	<i>Liberi docenti e incaricati, epurazione (purge)</i>	1945-1947
<i>Divisione II</i> (Category II)	<i>Legislazioni e statuti delle università</i> (Laws and statutes of the universities)	1923-1938
	<i>Leggi, regolamenti, statuti, esami, etc.</i> (Laws, regulations, statutes, exams, etc.)	1925-1945
<i>Miscellanea</i> <i>Divisioni I, II e III</i> (Miscellanea Categories I, II and III)		
	<i>Congressi, concorsi, incarichi fascicoli personali di professori ordinari e liberi docenti*</i> (Conferences, competitive examinations, appointments, personal files of <i>professori ordinari</i> and <i>liberi docenti</i>)	1929-1945
Folder 109 includes, divided by university, and by category and academic degree, all the personal forms filled in according to notice of 9 August 1938.		

Table 5: Series of ACS for the study of careers, census, and suspension Of Jewish professors and for the study of purges and reinstatements

Sources: <http://search.acs.beniculturali.it/OpacACS/guida/IT-ACS-AS0001-0002363>

(*permalink* to the related page *Guida ai fondi* of the ACS);

Ventura (1997); Tognotti (2000); Fois (2001); Rapetti, Scroccu & Todde (2018); Flamigni (2019)

A case study such as the one about the expulsions of Jewish professors in 1938, which affected, also with the *damnatio memoriae*, the whole Italian university network, shows the different ways in which the documents have been managed and stored in the university archives. To the issues of reorganisation and storage often we need to add those caused by possible interference and removal that happened immediately after the war, when the university archives were not subject to thorough checks¹⁰⁷. From the Sardinian academic sources we have not yet obtained a full picture due to the difficulty in accessing, for instance, the decisions of the academic Senate in both universities. The current organisation of the Historical Archive of the University of Cagliari has nonetheless allowed us to access the dossiers regarding the *Carteggio* and the staff, which were not accessible until now.

At a time when reflection about history and memory, and about the distance between the two, is still (or maybe again) current, the role of the archive as a custodian of historical sources is key.

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¹⁰⁷ Universities are independent institutions according to public law and they have a legal personality benefitting from educational, scientific, organisational, financial, and accounting independence. Universities, therefore, produce, receive, and store documents regarding their activities, and their archives, which are independent from the State Archives, have been subject to checks from the archival authority since 1966.

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1938 and the University of Palermo

Giovanna D'Amico*

Abstract. Antonino Blando recently dedicated a fascinating study to the question of the widespread anti-Semitism among Sicilian intellectuals and Fascists in the 1930s, observing that Sicily could boast of the “title of imperial Fascist island, because of its Aryan origin and bearer of a superior civilization.

Keywords: Antisemitism, Persecution, Reintegration

Anti-Semitism in Sicily and the state of research

Antonino Blando recently dedicated a fascinating study to the question of the widespread anti-Semitism among Sicilian intellectuals and Fascists in the 1930s, observing that Sicily could boast of the “title of imperial Fascist island, because of its Aryan origin and bearer of a superior civilization. The exaltation of the civilizing mission of Sicily and the Fascist empire was associated with extremely marked racist tensions”¹. The new imperial policy required the purity of blood, and the rescue of the “Aryan Christian unity”, as also stressed by Antonino Pagliaro, “Iranologist, glottologist, semiologist [and] philosopher of language”. Originally from Mistretta, he had enlisted as a volunteer in World War I and had taken part in the *Impresa di Fiume*. He was among the founders of the “Movimento Sociale Italiano” (MSI). In 1940 the *Dizionario di politica* of the National Fascist Party (henceforth PNF) was published, a work in four volumes, with contributions from 247 authors, under the direction of Pagliaro, who wrote the entries on *Anti-Semitism* and *Zoroastrianism*².

Giuseppe Cocchiara, an anthropologist and ethnologist, was his fellow townsman. He would profess “full adherence to the racism and anti-Semitism which would materialize in several articles published in ‘La Difesa della Razza’”³.

From 1933 to 1937, Cocchiara was assigned a course in the Literature of Popular Traditions at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of Palermo and only in October 1938 was he appointed in conjunction with the issuing of the racial laws, as an untenured lecturer. He would be given tenure a few years later⁴.

However, after World War II, as Enza Pelleriti made clear, he would not be a victim of the purge. He would moreover become dean of the Faculty of Letters and vice-chancellor⁵: “Cocchiara, however, did not utter a single word to at least symbolically remember the great Italianist Mario Fubini, his faculty colleague, removed in 1938 by the University of Palermo because he was a Jew, who escaped death by fleeing into exile. He was just a wandering Jew”⁶.

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¹ Cfr. his *Intellettuale siciliani fascisti e antifascisti*, in Tommaso Baris and Carlo Verri (eds.), *I siciliani nella Resistenza*, Sellerio, Palermo, 2019, p. 305.

² Ivi, pp. 306-307. On this topic, see also Alessia Pedio, *La cultura del totalitarismo imperfetto. Il Dizionario di politica del Partito nazionale fascista 1940*, Unicopli, Milano, 2000.

³ Ivi, A. Blando, *Intellettuale siciliani fascisti e antifascisti*, pp. 307-308.

⁴ Ivi, p. 309.

⁵ Ivi, p. 312.

⁶ Ivi, p. 313.

The last part of the essay focuses on Giuseppe Maggiore, chancellor in the 1938-1939 academic year known for his anti-Semitism, which several scholars have examined. In his inaugural speech at the beginning of the new year, he dedicated only a few sentences to the expulsion of five colleagues from university teaching posts under anti-Semitic laws⁷.

The story of the expelled teachers, at least in general terms, has been dealt with by Italian historians: they were the physicist Emilio Segrè, the literary scholar Mario Fubini, the clinician Maurizio Ascoli, the engineer Alberto Dina and the physiologist Camillo Artom⁸. What is missing is an in-depth reflection on their personal stories and, above all, on those of untenured teaching staff, non-teaching staff and university students, who likewise ended up under the axe of '38.

In fact, even though the deputy chancellor of the University of Palermo, Mario Varvaro, recently inaugurated the exhibition *Gli studenti ebrei e l'Università di Palermo al tempo del fascismo: in mostra i documenti dell'Archivio Storico*, which was held in Palermo between 26 and 28 February 2020, the fifteen stories of (mostly non-Italian) Jews presented there failed to provide an exhaustive account of either their lives, or those of the approximately 60 Jewish students who enrolled at the university between 1923 and 1938.⁹ Not only is too little still known about the latter, but only a few of the lives “put on show”, to which the press gave so much coverage, seem to have been affected, as far as I am aware, by the link between the anti-Semitic laws and expulsion from the University of Palermo. In fact, for the most part they were people whose persecution occurred above all outside the Palermo area. Meanwhile, other cases that probably have more to do with this connection remain largely unexplored, since documentation regarding them has not yet emerged from the historical archives of the University of Palermo. On the former point I will merely provide a few examples; on the latter, on the other hand, I have included in a note a list of Jewish students taken from a list of 113 registered in August 1938, which I will discuss below. I forwarded the list to Daniela Lo Brutto and Alessandro Crisafulli, whose support was fundamental to my research, in the hope that they would come across some documentary evidence¹⁰. Only the biographies of some of these people were included in the aforementioned exhibition. I will now give some examples of inconsistencies relating to the link between anti-Semitic legislation and expulsion from the University of Palermo. Josef Izaak Lewsztein, son of Boris, graduated on 22 November 1939, in Medicine and Surgery, from the University of Palermo, with a thesis on “the De Vito reaction in the early diagnosis of pregnancy”¹¹. And only later was he arrested and taken to the Ucciardone prison in Palermo prior to his internment

⁷ Ivi, pp. 314-317.

⁸ The five teachers are also referred to here, on p. 313. But above all, see the appendix to the text by Roberto Finzi, *L'università italiana e le leggi antiebraiche*, Editori Riuniti, Roma, 2003, which contains the list of all the temporary and tenured Jewish professors expelled from Italian universities in 1938.

⁹ With regard to the exhibition, cfr. the references on the portal of the University of Palermo and on the press articles mentioned there, which can be found at the following web address: <https://www.unipa.it/Gli-studenti-ebrei-e-l-Universita-di-Palermo-al-tempo-del-fascismo-in-mostra-i-documenti-dell'Archivio-Storico-27-31-gennaio-2020/> (link active as at 14 February 2020). The experiences mentioned regard Frumi Rubinstein, Jankiel Chasis, Cesare Lombroso, Ugo Ovazza, Józef Izaak Lewsztein, Nussen Goldberg, Moises I. Schächter, Schadel Mejer, Joachim Sklow, Bruno Edmund Meyerowitz, Mirjam Todesaite, Rafael Grinberg, Mignon Tscharny, Gertrud Bertha Leoni Lange, Walter Fabisch.

¹⁰ I sent the email with the list on 18 January 2019. As will be seen, some of them were no longer students, and yet their paths are relevant to the issue of the probable dismissal from work as a result of anti-Semitic laws. The following people account for only some of the 113 recorded Jews, whose names were searched for one by one in the historical archive of the University of Palermo. They are Arrigo Citone son of Crescenzo, doctor-student; Laura Citone daughter of Crescenzo, teacher at the Istituto elettrotecnico in Littoria; Ruth Adler, daughter of the late Carlo Adler, medicine graduate; Leib Cukierman, daughter of Chain Cukierman, Polish, student; Boris Milman, son of Aizing Milman, student; Josef Lewsztein, son of Boris Lewsztein, medical student; Elda Ovazza, daughter of the late Elia Ovazza, doctor; Menase Lucacer, son of the late Zusi Lucacer, doctor-untenured lecturer; Josef Schachter, son of Isaac Schachter, Romanian, law student; Massimiliano Seiden, son of Adolfo Seiden, Polish, medical student; Esther Gherrscfeld, daughter of Moses Gherrscfeld, schoolgirl; Giusto Hoffmann, son of Alessandro Hoffmann, student; Vera Jung, daughter of Ugo Jung, student; Mario Jung, son of Ugo Jung, student; Ugo Ovazza, son of the late Elia Ovazza, civil servant, student in Rome.

¹¹ Detailed information on the graduation date and the final dissertation discussed on that occasion was taken from Archivio storico dell'università degli studi di Palermo (henceforth ASUPA), Sezione Facoltà di Medicina e Chirurgia, Serie Medicina e Chirurgia, Sottoserie Registri degli esami. Regia Università degli Studi di Palermo. Verbale dell'esame di laurea in medicina e chirurgia. Signor Lewsztein Giuseppe Isac, figlio di Boris, nativo di Varsavia, Busta 498.

in Ferramonti di Tarsia in the Marche region, and finally in Forlì, at whose airport on 5 September 1944 he would be slaughtered together with 19 other Jews¹². A similar fate befell Moises Schächter, born on 27 August 1903 in Romania, who graduated in Palermo on 23 July 1934¹³. Frumi Rubinstein was born in Russia on 14 May 1897, and completed her studies in a girls' high school in Lida, and the first year in a boys' high school in Simferopol, in May 1919. Daughter of a Jew, she graduated in Palermo in 1930. In 1931 she was already in Rome and in 1939 in Florence¹⁴. And the list could go on.

Finally, there is no accurate, detailed reflection on the census of 22 August 1938.

As for the rest of Sicily, also for Palermo, priority has been given to the census data published by the newspapers in the autumn of 1938¹⁵: the impression is however that nobody has so far examined in depth the lists of Italian and foreign Jews present in the Palermo area, available at the State Archive of the Sicilian capital. Nor have there been discussions of the general census figures available at the local and national level.

The records of the Central State Archive report 126 Palermo citizens surveyed in August 1938, of whom 114 are present and 12 temporarily absent¹⁶, while among the available lists there is one without a date, which, as said, records the presence of 113 Italian and foreign Jews resident in Palermo¹⁷. According to Alexander Hoffmann, there were actually 155 people¹⁸.

Among the lesser-known cases of Jews expelled from the University of Palermo in 1938 are those of the untenured professor of Phthisiology Menase Lucacer, an Italian citizen of Romanian origin, and of Maurizio Ascoli's assistant, Walter Fabish, who was instead German¹⁹. Historians have always focused fleetingly on both, without going deeper into their personal stories. For both it is now possible to provide a little more information.

Menase Lucacer was born in Soroca, Romania, on 10 June 1899, and graduated in Medicine and Surgery at the University of Palermo on 21 July 1926. On 11 January 1932 he became an assistant professor of Clinical Medicine, following the qualification that year to hold an untenured post in Phthisiology. Then, as a result of the anti-Semitic laws, he would lose his post, as also emerges from an undated document bearing the signature of the then chancellor, in which it was written that Lucacer had "lapsed from the post of voluntary assistant with effect from 13/12/1938, pursuant to art. 13 of law no. 1728 17/11/1938, because he belongs to the Jewish race"²⁰.

Also in April 1938 Maurizio Ascoli had re-proposed Lucacer as a voluntary lecturer at the medical clinic in Palermo, for the 1937-1938 academic year²¹.

¹² Information presented in the pavilion dedicated to him.

¹³ ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà Medicina e Chirurgia, Fascicolo Moise Schächter, Busta 2632. On the story of the latter, partly narrated by Lucia Vincenti through indirect testimonies, cfr. her *Storie degli ebrei a Palermo durante il fascismo. Documenti e testimonianze*, Offset Studio, Palermo, 1998. These events have recently been discussed in Eadem, *Shoah. Storia degli ebrei in Sicilia durante il fascismo*, Bonanno, Acireale, 2019. Some of these interviews, potentially interesting, could have been better exploited by accompanying them with due documental research, which is however lacking.

¹⁴ ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà Medicina e Chirurgia, Fascicolo Frumi Rubinstein, Busta 4787.

¹⁵ For details on the question of the Sicilian census, see my essay on Messina, published in this same issue.

¹⁶ Cfr. Archivio centrale dello Stato (henceforth ACS), Ministero degli Interni, Direzione generale demografia e razza (1938-1943), Busta 4, *Fascicolo Situazione generale degli ebrei in Italia*, documento *Censimento ebrei italiani e stranieri (agosto 1938)*.

¹⁷ Cfr. Elenco nominativo degli ebrei (stranieri ed italiani) residenti a Palermo [list of names of foreign and Italian Jews resident in Palermo], in Archivio di Stato di Palermo (henceforth ASPA), Gabinetto Prefettura, Busta 736.

¹⁸ However, as I wrote in my aforementioned essay on Messina, Hoffmann's data are not clearly verifiable, since their origin is not specified in detail. Cfr. his *Storia di una famiglia di origine ebrea a Palermo*, Qanat, Palermo, 2017, p. 20.

¹⁹ Both are mentioned in the aforementioned text by Alessandro Hoffmann, on p. 30 and in Pietro Nastasi, *Le leggi razziali del fascismo e la loro applicazione a Palermo*, published in "Zo we zo", p. 17 and available online at: matematica-old.unibocconi.it/gionatamemoria2005/nastasi.pdf (consulted on 10 June 2019).

²⁰ Cfr. Fondo Archivio storico dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo (henceforth ASUPA), sezione Facoltà, Serie Medicina e Chirurgia, Sottosezione Docenti, Fascicolo Lucacer Menase (Tisiologia), Facoltà di Medicina, A.A. 1932/34 Serie Docenti 1932-1975, Busta 1651.

²¹ Cfr. the letter from Maurizio Ascoli of April 1938 to the chancellor of the University of Palermo; *ivi*.

The correspondence between the Palermo chief of police and the Prefect, who intervened in August 1938 following a request to confirm Lucacer as a lecturer in Phthisiology, shows how in the meantime the anti-Semitic laws had intervened to suddenly cut short his career. On 7 August the chief of police Lauricella wrote to the prefect:

Recalling my note of the same number of [...] July [...] and bearing in mind the final position now adopted by the Regime regarding the racial problem, I consider it appropriate to inform you that Prof. Lucarcer [sic] Menase, proposed for final confirmation in an untenured teaching post, is Jewish and an exponent of the group of Jews residing in Palermo²².

It was not until the post-war period, which on the island of course began earlier than in the rest of Italy, that the Ministerial Decree of 18 March 1939, under which Menase had been dismissed as a lecturer for racial reasons, would be revoked “and considered null and void”:

From that date [the Minister of Education wrote to him in February 1950], you should have taken steps to regularize your position as an untenured lecturer. We therefore ask you, in your own interest, to file the official confirmation of your qualification for an untenured teaching post in “Phthisiology” at a university, and at the same time, specify the reasons for your failure to carry out teaching activities, so that the competent Faculty can examine the possibility of regularizing your position²³.

However, on 15 February 1960 it was still recorded that “Menase Lucacer has been in the United States since 1938”²⁴.

With regard to Fabish, registered among the 113 Jews of 1938, I managed to find information on the period prior to 1938. He was born in Wrocław on 7 June 1904 and graduated in Medicine at the University of Palermo on 20 July 1934²⁵. He had already obtained an undergraduate degree in Medicine in Berlin on 13 December 1927²⁶ and had arrived in Palermo with his wife as a result of the “Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums” of 7 April 1933. This law had led to him being dismissed on 31 July 1933 from his post at the university paediatric clinic in Hamburg, where he worked as an assistant doctor²⁷. In Palermo he became a pupil of Maurizio Ascoli. More is known about the subsequent period of his life, although various versions exist. According to one indirect testimony:

In August 1939, Dr and Mrs Fabish left Palermo [...]. They went to what at the time was British India, now Pakistan, where they worked and were interned for a couple of months. Afterwards, for the rest of the war, he continued to work as an army doctor, in Anglo-Indian territory. Dr Fabish had fond memories of Palermo, and liked it here. I think he would have considered staying if it hadn't been for the problems that arose²⁸.

In the Palermo exhibition, it was instead stated that he was “arrested” in 1939.

²² The letter is in ASPA, Gabinetto Prefettura, Busta 581.

²³ Cfr. Fondo Archivio storico dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo (henceforth ASUPA), sezione Facoltà, Serie Medicina e Chirurgia, Sottosezione Docenti, Fascicolo Lucacer Menase (Tisiologia), Facoltà di Medicina, A.A. 1932/34 Serie Docenti 1932-1975, Busta 1651.

²⁴ It was thus stated in a letter from the chancellor Aiello to the Minister of Public Education dated 15 February 1960; *ivi*.

²⁵ Cfr. his degree certificate; in ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e Corsi, Serie Medicina, sottoserie carriera scolastica degli studenti, Fascicolo Walter Fabisch, Busta 473. The documentation available includes his final degree dissertation entitled *Tolleranza di Levulosio e Galattosio nel bambino immaturo*.

²⁶ Statement signed by Dr Von Eicken. Undated; in *ivi*.

²⁷ Cfr. letter written in German from the director of the Hamburg University Paediatric Clinic dated 14 February 1934; *ivi*.

²⁸ Interview with a person generically referred to as “Laura”. Cfr. Lucia Vincenti, *Shoah*, cit., p. 58.

Requests for limited application of the racial laws by expelled teachers

The archival documentation shows that the five professors expelled from the University of Palermo had filed a *richiesta di discriminazione*, an official request for the limited application of the racial laws in their specific case. Detailed and in some cases in-depth information is available on all of them, except for Alberto Dina, whose story remains the most incomplete. Winner of the selection procedure for professor of Electromechanical Constructions and Electrical Systems at the Regia Scuola Politecnica in Naples, on 23 November 1906 he accepted the post offered to him on 21 November. At the time he lived in Milan, at Vicolo S. Carlo 4²⁹. He would teach in Naples until 31 October 1907³⁰. On 12 January 1923 he was appointed professor of Electrotechnical Construction at the Regio Istituto Tecnico in Milan³¹, and on 16 October would be transferred to the chair of Electrical Technology at the Scuola Superiore in Palermo³².

We know that he had presented a *richiesta di discriminazione* from a letter dated 31 December 1938 from the Minister of National Education³³, who returned the required documents submitted to him by mistake by the interested party and explained to the chancellor of Palermo that he should instead forward them to the Ministry of the Interior³⁴. Even before he fell victim to the anti-Semitic measure that would remove him from his teaching position, on 7 November 1938, the Minister of Education wrote that:

This ministry, with regard to the recent provisions on race, has replaced Prof. Alberto Dina in the examination panel for the qualification for untenured teaching posts in Electrical Technology, Technical Physics, Electromagnetics, and Radio Technology. Please inform the interested party of this, and take the opportunity to ask him to send any publications submitted to him by the applicants to this Ministry³⁵.

On 3 October, the chancellor informed the dean of the Engineering Faculty that he did not think that Dina could participate in the faculty council meeting “of the 5th of this month, since he belonged [...] to the Jewish race”.³⁶ On 14 December 1938, Dina was finally dismissed³⁷.

Historiographical literature offers a documented episode concerning him. In the letter of reply to the teacher, who had asked the chancellor of the University of Palermo to document the courses he taught free of charge for the course on Electrical Measurements in 1936 -37 and 1937-38, the chancellor crossed out the sentence: “We would like to thank you for your interest in this Administration”³⁸. I reproduce here the entire letter:

At your request, we confirm that in the 1936-37 and 1937-38 academic years you were appointed to teach unpaid the course in Electrical Measurements, and that you had accepted the same course unpaid for the next academic year 1938-

²⁹ The letter is in ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari 2 versamento prima serie 1900-1940, Busta 54.

³⁰ Cfr. letter to the Ministry of Education from the Director of the Regio Istituto di Ingegneria in Palermo on 5 April (the year is illegible). In ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e corsi, Serie Scienze, Sottoserie Docenti, Fascicolo Prof. Dina Alberto, Serie Docenti: Fisica, Matematica, A.A. 1922-39, Fac. Di Scienze (Ingegneria), N. 2, Busta 1572.

³¹ Cfr. Meeting of the Council of the Istituto Tecnico di Milano of 29 January 1923; *ivi*.

³² Letter from the chancellor of the University of Palermo dated 29 May 1923 (the date is unclear) to the Director of the Scuola di Applicazione in Palermo; *ivi*.

³³ The minister had sent the same letter in reply to similar requests from Camillo Artom, Maurizio Ascoli and Mario Fubini; cfr. in this regard, Giorgio Israel and Pietro Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, cit., p. 338.

³⁴ The letter is in ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e corsi, Serie Scienze, Sottoserie Docenti, Fascicolo Prof. Dina Alberto, Serie Docenti: Fisica, Matematica, A.A. 1922-39, Fac. Di Scienze (Ingegneria), N. 2, Busta 1572.

³⁵ The letter to the chancellor of the University of Palermo is in *ivi*.

³⁶ *Ivi*.

³⁷ See his dismissal order, kept in ASUPA.

³⁸ See, for example, Giorgio Israel and Pietro Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1998, p. 260.

39. *I would like to thank you for your interest in this Administration* [The part in italics (my italics) was crossed out in pen]³⁹.

Mario Fubini, son of Simone Riccardo and of Perla Bice Colombo, was born in Turin on 18 March 1900⁴⁰. He had taught Literature and Latin in high schools “before being called to [*give lectures on*] Italian literature at the University of Palermo”, where he would be appointed to the chair in 1937⁴¹. On 29 October 1932 he became a member of the National Fascist Party⁴².

After his expulsion from the professorship, as a result of the anti-Semitic laws⁴³, he had escaped with his family to Switzerland, where he stayed from 29 April 1944 to 10 July 1945. At the end of June 1945 he had worked as a professor of Italian literature in university courses for Italian soldiers in Mürren, near Bern. He had previously stayed in various “internment camps”. In conjunction with courses designed for civil inmates, he was transferred to Pally, near Lausanne, before returning to Mürren and, finally, back to Pally, where he would remain until the end of his stay. He could only return to Italy upon the reopening of the border. On 9 July 1946 he left for Chiasso, and from Chiasso the next day for Milan, arriving in Turin on the 11th⁴⁴.

On 30 November 1938 Fubini, who still resided in Corso Re Umberto 71, in Turin, had filed a *richiesta di discriminazione* with the Ministry of the Interior⁴⁵. In his very long letter he explained that due to his young age he had not been able to take part in the Great War, while the husband of his sister Giorgina had, and that the latter had been left an invalid by the conflict and had been awarded the military cross for his bravery. He emphasized that he was a member of the Fascist party and that he deserved merit for his excellent academic credentials:

He became an untenured lecturer in 1929 and held a teaching post from the 1934-35 academic year onwards at the University of Florence. His work received official recognition in the assessment of the selection commission for the chair of Italian literature at the University of Palermo. The commission had been appointed by S.E. Bottai, at the time Minister of National Education, and was chaired by the late Prof. Rossi, chairman of the Regia Accademia dei Lincei. He does not refer here to the report of that selection procedure (published in the *Bollettino Ufficiale*, parte II, 24 febbraio 1938 XVI, n. 81 [...]). He notes only that the commissioners unanimously considered him, an infrequent occurrence, worthy of first place and designated him as the only candidate suitable [...]. He maintains that thanks to these and other studies he has fully deserved a place in national culture, and that his uninterrupted work of study and teaching over almost twenty years, with full awareness of his duties as an educator and an Italian, cannot fail to be taken into consideration by the commission. Trusting that his application may be accepted, he professes himself the most devoted Mario Fubini⁴⁶.

However, on 16 June 1941 the Prefect of Turin wrote to the Directorate General of Demography and Race of the Interior Ministry that Fubini had not accumulated merits such as to guarantee him the benefit of limited application of the racial laws, an opinion which in any case coincided with that of the Federal Secretary of the Fascist Party, which was enclosed.⁴⁷ He wrote:

³⁹ In ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e corsi, Serie Scienze, Sottoserie Docenti, Fascicolo Prof. Dina Alberto, Serie Docenti: Fisica, Matematica, A.A. 1922-39, Fac. Di Scienze (Ingegneria), N. 2, Busta 1572.

⁴⁰ For his personal details, see the note from the Ministry of the Interior dated 29 September 1942, in which the Prefect of Turin and other bodies were informed that Fubini's *richiesta di discriminazione* should be rejected; cfr. ACS, Fascicoli personali Ministero Interno, Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza, Busta 383.

⁴¹ See the statement by the head of the Regio Liceo Ginnasio Cavour in Turin of 20 October 1938; *ivi*.

⁴² Cfr. the letter from the Prefect of Turin of 16 June 1941 to the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate General for Demography and Race; *ivi*.

⁴³ Fubini was dismissed from his university teaching post on 14 December 1938; cfr. dismissal order in ASUPA.

⁴⁴ Cfr. Fubini's letter dated 30 January 1946 to the chancellor of the University of Palermo; in ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e Corsi, Serie Scienze, Sezione Facoltà di Lettere, Fascicolo: Anno 1937-1940. Prof. Fubini Mario (Lett. e filos.), Serie Docenti Lingue e Letteratura Italiana, Busta 1502.

⁴⁵ The letter is addressed to the Direzione della Demografia e della Razza; in ACS, Fascicoli personali Ministero Interno, Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza, Busta 383.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷ *Ivi*.

With reference to sheet no. 23509/Gab. dated 21st of this month, I propose to reject the application presented by the Jew Mario Fubini son of Riccardo, here resident in Corso Re Umberto no. 71, who has presented a *richiesta di discriminazione* pursuant to art. 14 of Royal Decree Law no. 1728 of D.L. 17-11 + 1938 [sic] on the defence of the Italian race, as it does not appear that he has achieved such merit as to render him worthy of being granted limited application of the racial laws⁴⁸.

On 22 April 1942, lastly, the Commission asked to evaluate the request of the interested party, confirmed the rejection⁴⁹.

Emilio Segrè, son of Giuseppe and of Amelia Treves, was born in Tivoli on 1 February 1905, where he had attended primary school. After attending school at the Ginnasio Liceo Mamiani in Rome, he enrolled at Rome's Faculty of Engineering in 1922. In 1927 he would "pass over to Physics", graduating in 1928 "with an experimental thesis on the anomalous dispersion of lithium". His education would take place primarily under the guidance of Enrico Fermi. In 1930 he won a prestigious scholarship from the Rockefeller Foundation, which would allow him to work with Otto Stern in Hamburg and Pieter Zoerman in Amsterdam. In 1932 he would return to Rome, where he would be promoted to the assistant of Prof. Corbino. In 1935 he would come first in the selection procedure for the chair of Experimental Physics at the University of Palermo, "where [*he taught*] until 1938. Dismissed following the Fascist racial laws, [he would emigrate to] the United States of America. In America he would become a "Research Associate" and "Lecturer" at the Radiation Laboratory and at the University of California at Berkeley. From 1943 to 1946 he would act as group leader at the Los Alamos laboratory in the Manhattan District, "where the first atomic bomb was built". In 1946 he would return to Berkeley as a physics professor at the University of California.

His long CV also mentioned that⁵⁰:

Prof. Segrè has worked mainly in atomic and nuclear physics, and in elementary particles [...]. In atomic physics [he had conducted] studies on forbidden lines, on the phenomena presented by orbits with large quantum numbers, and the quadratic Zeemann effect. In the field of molecular rays, one of his works [...] [was] at the basis of important methods invented by Rabi and his school. With Fermi he wrote an important work on hyperfine structures. Until 1934 Segrè was mainly concerned with atomic, molecular and theoretical problems. In 1934 he began his nuclear research, working with Fermi, Amaldi, Rasetti, D'Agostino and Pontecorvo in the study of artificial radioactivity produced by neutrons. In 1935 he was one of the discoverers of slow neutrons. In Palermo, with Professor C. Perrier he discovered the first artificial chemical element [...]. In Palermo he also began other nuclear studies and in particular with Prof. Artom, important physiological applications of the then still new method of radioactive tracers⁵¹.

The presentation of his CV continued with the further discoveries he made in America and in Italy and ended by mentioning that he had married Elfriede Spiro, who died in 1970, and with whom he had three children: Claudio, Amelia Terkel and Fausto⁵².

Pietro Nastasi wrote about his first impressions of Palermo:

The impact with the new work environment was hardly exciting. Accustomed to the great scientific dynamism of the group in Rome and by now part of the international circuit of the most advanced physical research, it must have dismayed him to find an Institute with an elderly assistant, only one technician and very few students. His first objective was therefore to provide the Institute with a minimum of adequate equipment for nuclear physics research. The second was to

⁴⁸ Ivi.

⁴⁹ Commission resolution of 22 April 1942; ivi.

⁵⁰ Cfr. His CV can be found in the Archivio storico dell'Università degli Studi La Sapienza (henceforth ASURS), Archivio Generale, Serie fascicoli personale docente, Fascicolo Emilio Segrè, AS10162. I thank Tommaso Dell'Era for having told me about the presence of the file at the Sapienza University in Rome.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² It should moreover be specified that in 1959 Segrè would be awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics. In an article in "Il Giornale" on 23 May 1975, it was announced that the following Sunday, the chancellor of the University of Pavia would award him the "matricola d'onore" and the "Minerva d'oro" in an honours ceremony in the Aula Fosciana. Ibidem.

increase the number of assistants: he found them in the Sicilian Mariano Santangelo (1908-1970), and in two researchers from Pisa, Bernardo Nestore Cacciapuoti (1913-1979) and Manlio Mandò [...]. At the same time, Segrè had the university advertise for a post in Theoretical Physics, and in 1937 Gian Carlo Wick (1909-1992) from Turin also arrived in Palermo. Ultimately, just two years after his arrival, Segrè had succeeded in taking the department in Palermo towards a less peripheral position, with a group of quality researchers [...]. The same year 1937 marks the discovery of *technetium*, made by Segrè and Perrier. [Then] Segrè turned to Camillo Artom to study together the possibility of using P32 obtained from Berkeley samples for the study of phospholipid metabolism, which we have already mentioned. With the expulsion of Segrè and Artom, this fruitful, intense period of interactive research was destined to end⁵³.

Segrè had requested and obtained limited application of the racial laws as a result of his Fascist merits. In a note without a date or signature, but with a stamp dated 6 July 1943, it was written that he had obtained the requested measure together with his son, by extension of the benefits already granted to his father, Abramo Giuseppe, who was a Fascist from before the March on Rome. Segrè had also been a Fascist since 1921⁵⁴. In reality, his father and son Claudio had already been granted limited application of the racial laws on 7 December 1939; later, his brother Marco, his attorney, would ask again for this treatment to be extended also to his wife⁵⁵. His first letter was in fact dated 25 March 1939⁵⁶. Enrolled in the PNF from 1 April 1921 to 14 February 1939, when he was expelled as a Jew, Emilio Segrè had been a reserve artillery lieutenant, as well as director of the Physics Institute at the University of Palermo and physics assistant at the University of Rome. He had lived in Palermo for about two years and later in Rome, at Corso Vittorio Emanuele 229⁵⁷. He emigrated to San Francisco, California, in November 1938⁵⁸.

Returning to Italy in 1974, he was assigned the chair of Nuclear Physics at the University of Rome⁵⁹.

Information regarding the *richieste di discriminazione* presented by Camillo Artom and Maurizio Ascoli is extremely limited. Artom's name appears in a list containing applications "rejected due to undeserving conduct". Next to it was written: "Contrary, for political faults, since he belonged to the Anti-fascist Association (Italia Libera)".⁶⁰

Camillo Artom was born in Asti in 1893⁶¹, the son of Vittorio and of Gemma Pugliese⁶². Enrolled in Medicine, at the University of Rome, he would later graduate in Padua on 5 April 1917 "with top marks and distinction". In 1921 he was awarded a scholarship that for some time allowed him to attend the University of Frankfurt. In 1923 he spent a period of study in Amsterdam and in the same year obtained a post as an untenured lecturer of Physiology in Messina⁶³. He would later become an assistant at the Chair of Physiology of the University of Messina from 1 January 1920 to 31 January

⁵³ Cfr. his *Le leggi razziali del fascismo e la loro applicazione a Palermo*, cit., pp. 30-31. In reality the author obtains this information from A. Russo, *L'affermazione della fisica palermitana nel panorama scientifico nazionale, 1935-1970*, in Pietro Nastasi (a cura di), *Le scienze chimiche, fisiche e matematiche nell'Ateneo di Palermo*, «Quaderni del Seminario di Storia della Scienza», n. 7, 1998, pp. 167-193 (particularly pp. 169-178).

⁵⁴ In ACS, Fascicoli personali Ministero Interno, Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza, Busta 251.

⁵⁵ See letter of 12 July 1940 of the prefecture of Rome to the Ministry of the Interior stating that Marco Segrè di Abramo sought limited application of the racial laws to his brother Emilio; *ivi*.

⁵⁶ *Ivi*. However, Emilio Segrè, in an earlier letter of 28 February 1939, had written to the Consulate of Italy in San Francisco, California, to file a *richiesta di discriminazione*, believing he possessed all the legal requirements for the purposes of being granted the benefit in question.

⁵⁷ Cfr. Letter of 12 July 1940, cit.

⁵⁸ The information is in a letter from the Prefect of Rome of 29 July 1939 to the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate General for Demography and Race; *ivi*.

⁵⁹ Cfr. Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, *ad vocem*. Furthermore, the fact of his residence in Palermo also emerges from the *Elenco nominativo degli ebrei (stranieri ed italiani) residenti a Palermo*, cit.

⁶⁰ Cfr. ACS, Ministero degli Interni, Direzione generale demografia e razza (1938-1943), Busta 6.

⁶¹ The year of his birth is in Pietro Nastasi, *Le leggi razziali del fascismo e la loro applicazione a Palermo*, cit., p. 27.

⁶² Cfr. Marriage certificate dated 14 March 1934; in ACS, Ministero della pubblica istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 21.

⁶³ Cfr. Pietro Nastasi, *Le leggi razziali del fascismo e la loro applicazione a Palermo*, cit., p. 27.

1925 and at the University of Palermo from 1925 to 1930⁶⁴. He would be professor of Biological Chemistry at the University of Palermo from 1927-1928, 1928-1929 and 1929-1930 and full professor of Physiology in Cagliari from 1 December 1930, where he would also teach Biological Chemistry. On 1 December 1933 he would be promoted to full professor⁶⁵. Here he would remain until 28 October 1935, while from the following day he would be employed at the University of Palermo, until 14 December 1938, when he was dismissed from service due to the racial laws⁶⁶. He was transferred to the chair of Physiology of Palermo after the decision of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Palermo on 27 May 1935 at the request of Artom on the 20th of that same month⁶⁷. Then:

Forced to leave the chair as a result of the 1938 racial laws, he moved to the United States the following year. His reputation as “the leading Italian biochemist of the time” earned him the position of professor of Biochemistry and head of the department, at the Wake Forest School of Medicine (N.C.). In 1941 Artom moved to Winston-Salem (N.C.) and the “Bowman Gray School of Medicine”, where he remained until his retirement in 1961. In 1963 he was made an “emeritus” and continued to work and study until his death. Artom’s research concerns lipid metabolism. In particular, he studied the absorption of fats in food, their metabolism in the liver and their presence in the artery walls, substantially helping to build a body of fundamental knowledge to prevent arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). In 1933, together with one of his students (Lorio Reale), he had demonstrated that monoglycerides and diglycerides are formed in the digestion of fats. But he is above all remembered, together with his assistants, as one of the first Italians to use radioactive isotopes in the study of intermediary metabolism⁶⁸.

Maurizio Paolo Ascoli, son of Annibale and of Ida Levi, born in Trieste on 14 July 1876, was baptized on 15 January 1920⁶⁹. He had won the selection procedure for the post in Medical Pathology in Catania in 1910, where he would be a temporary professor from 1910 to 1914, and a full professor from 1914 onwards⁷⁰. One of the three shortlisted for the post in Clinical Medicine at the University of Messina, he would refuse the professorship. Instead, by unanimous vote he was assigned the chair of Medical Pathology at the University of Palermo, where he was to teach in 1920 and 1921. He would later move back to Catania⁷¹, staying there until 1929, and then back to Palermo.⁷²

In the report that attested to his move from the chair of Special Medical Pathology to that of Clinical Medicine, on 16 October 1927⁷³, he wrote:

Prof. Maurizio Ascoli is a well-known and appreciated scholar who contributes effectively to enhancing Italian Science; he is a true driving force of scientific investigation; expert teacher, with in-depth knowledge of patients, he brings together the qualities of a clinician and a researcher. His widespread professional success, which is extremely positive for a clinician, has never compromised his passion for research [...]. Taken as a whole, his scientific production and that of his numerous pupils [...], contains original work, worthy of particular note; in the field of immunity, his research on

⁶⁴ Regarding his experience as an assistant in Palermo, cfr. the letter from the Minister of Education of 10 March 1939 to Camillo Artom; *ivi*.

⁶⁵ Cfr. the appointment order of the Minister of Education; *ivi*.

⁶⁶ Cfr. On his service in Messina, Cagliari and Palermo, cfr. certification from the Minister of Education of 7 March 1939. The documentation also includes Artom’s dismissal order; *ivi*.

⁶⁷ *Ivi*.

⁶⁸ Cfr. Pietro Nastasi, *Le leggi razziali del fascismo e la loro applicazione a Palermo*, cit., p. 28.

⁶⁹ Cfr. Archivio della Gran Corte Arcivescovile di Catania, 21 dicembre 1938; in ACS, Ministero della pubblica istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 22.

⁷⁰ With regard to the fact that he had become a full professor in 1914, see letter of the Minister of Education to the Rector of Palermo of 19 July 1949; *ivi*.

⁷¹ Cfr. Report by the Director of the Secretariat of the University of Catania on Ascoli’s move from the chair of Special Medical Pathology to that of Clinical Medicine; undated; *ivi*.

⁷² Giorgio Israel, Pietro Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell’Italia fascista*, cit., p. 259.

⁷³ Letter from the Minister of Education to the Chancellor of the University of Catania; in ACS, Ministero della pubblica istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 22.

precipitins, and on the meio-stagmic reaction, which have led to the development of extensive literature confirming his theories in Italy and abroad. Isoagglutinin research; his name is in particular associated with the meio-stagmic reaction.⁷⁴

It then continued by listing Ascoli's research in the field of Clinical Medicine⁷⁵.

He was a scholar “of great fame”, one of the leading experts on paludism, who around 1938 was considering setting up a study centre for the treatment of malaria⁷⁶.

But also for him, on 14 December 1938, his hopes of continuing an academic career were dashed⁷⁷:

According to the new laws, he could only treat Jewish patients, but in practical terms, in Palermo, this would have meant withdrawing from the profession. He therefore continued to work “clandestinely”. Of course, he had to resign from two prestigious city clubs, the “Vela”, and the “Lauria”. He was old, alone, and was not allowed to have “Aryan” domestic staff [...]. The violence suffered and experienced by Ascoli was – like that of Fubini and all Jewish intellectuals – of a psychological nature: being forced to abandon his research and teaching, seeing his name disappear from congresses and scientific publications and seeing himself ignored, for example by an obscure medical journalist in a Palermo newspaper who, writing about the use of adrenaline in the treatment of malaria, succeeded in attributing merit for the research to a long list of doctors, all students of Ascoli who, never mentioned in the article, had been the true discoverer of this method⁷⁸.

On the other hand, in the meeting of 9 March 1939, the commission set up to decide on the granting of Fascist merits, having considered also his *richiesta di discriminazione*, gave a favourable opinion, considering Ascoli a “distinguished scientist and distinguished chemist”⁷⁹.

The reinstatement of teachers expelled from the University of Palermo

While we do not know what happened to Alberto Dina after World War II, it is certain that the other four professors expelled from Palermo were invited by the Ministry of Education to take back the posts from which they had been dismissed in 1938. Maurizio Ascoli and Mario Fubini immediately accepted reinstatement, while Camillo Artom and Emilio Segrè, who, as we saw, had emigrated to America after their dismissal, at first refused, and then requested it later. For the former it would be too late, while the latter would join the staff of Rome's Sapienza University in 1974.

At the request of Mario Fubini, on 13 November 1945, the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Palermo unanimously decided to promote him to full professor⁸⁰:

In this capacity [*as a professor in Palermo*] he held an excellent course on ‘Literary criticism in the eighteenth century and Beretti’; a scholar of extensive culture and of fine sensitivity, he was followed with particular interest and profit by young people, who appreciated his sharp wit and evident passion. He was removed from his post by the unfavourable racial laws, to the chagrin of his colleagues and the disappointment of the young. The Faculty votes for his promotion to full professor⁸¹.

However, already on 5 February 1946, the Minister of Education informed the chancellor of the University of Palermo that the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy in Trieste on 3 December the

⁷⁴ Cfr. Report by the Director of the Secretariat of the University of Catania on Ascoli's move from the chair of Special Medical Pathology to that of Clinical Medicine, cit.

⁷⁵ Ibidem.

⁷⁶ Cfr. Giorgio Israel, Pietro Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, cit., p. 259.

⁷⁷ The dismissal order is in ACS, Ministero della pubblica istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 22.

⁷⁸ Giorgio Israel, Pietro Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, cit., p. 259.

⁷⁹ Cfr. ACS, Ministero degli Interni, Direzione generale demografia e razza (1938-1943), Busta 6.

⁸⁰ The request was communicated by the interested party to the then Minister of Education Arangio Ruiz, who on 1 September 1945 forwarded it to the chancellor of the University of Palermo, to ask him to forward it to the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy. In ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e Corsi, Serie Scienze, Sezione Facoltà di Lettere, Fascicolo: Anno 1937-1940. Prof. Fubini Mario (Lett. E filos.), Serie Docenti: Lingue e lett. Italiana, Busta 1502.

⁸¹ The resolution is in *ivi*.

previous year had decided to appoint him to the chair of Italian Literature at that University, a proposal which the Ministry approved⁸².

From 1948 onwards Fubini would teach in Milan⁸³. In 1965 he was appointed to the chair of the History of Criticism at the Scuola Normale di Pisa. Member of the Accademia dei Lincei since 1953, he was also editor of the *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* and contributor of *Il Ponte*, editor of the “Classici italiani” series of Utet and Chairman of the Committee for the National Edition of the works of Ugo Foscolo⁸⁴.

With a letter dated 18 September 1945, the Minister of Education Arangio Ruiz informed the chancellor of Palermo that under the regulations issued by the Italian government the ministry proposed Segrè’s reinstatement at the University of Palermo. He was then asked where he was living, if he would like to be reinstated and if he still had Italian citizenship. On 26 September Bavaria told him that Segrè was in California and that it was therefore impossible for him to answer the questions he had been asked⁸⁵. Segrè had not responded to this first request from the ministry, and consequently on 5 July 1946, with a new telegram forwarded to the Italian embassy in Washington and to the Ministry of Education, the Foreign Ministry urged him to express his opinion on the issue. After a new letter of 19 April 1948, on 23 August the Minister of Education thanked the Foreign Minister for finally finding out that Segrè had no intention of resuming his job in Italy⁸⁶.

Also Artom, as has been said, reacted negatively to the first invitation from the new democratic Italy to resume his post. In a telegram from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 17 February 1945 to the Ministry of Education, the former reported that the State Department had sent “the well-known invitation of the Government” to “the university professors residing in the United States” on 7 December 1944. As far as regarded Artom, he had sent a reply which was attached. The answer expressed a clear refusal⁸⁷:

May I acknowledge with thanks your letter of December 7, 1944 [...]. As I see the present situation in Italy, the essential problem there, is to meet the elementary needs of a destitute population in a country altogether ravaged by the war. I think that only persons who can directly contribute to that problem [...] should return to Italy today. On the other hand, for the resumption of a certain degree of activity in universities and professional schools, the staff there at the present time is probably sufficient. Accordingly, while I would be happy to have a part, to the best of my ability and qualification, in the relief and rehabilitation work in Italy, I have reached the conclusion that for the time being I should decline the offer of resuming my former work and position there [...]⁸⁸.

Maurizio Ascoli, meanwhile, the first to be reinstated, had already returned to the chair of General and Semiotic Clinical Medicine at the University of Palermo in accordance with an allied proclamation of 26 July 1943, with effect from that same day⁸⁹.

The stories of Artom and Segrè are linked by the decisive issue of the requirement of citizenship at the time of reinstatement, citizenship which both had lost following expatriation to America. However, as will be seen, various solutions would be proposed for the problem, and, indeed, in the case of Artom the decision was reached to reject the reinstatement request that he had made on 27

⁸² Ivi.

⁸³ Enciclopedia Treccani, *ad nomen*. The Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani does not provide precise details on the dates of his teaching appointment in Milan.

⁸⁴ Ivi.

⁸⁵ Arangio Ruiz’s letter is in ASUPA, Sezione Facoltà, Scuole e Corsi, Serie Scienze, Sottoserie Docenti, Fascicolo Anno 1935/45. Segrè Emilio, Serie Docenti. Facoltà Scienze, Materia: Fisica, Busta 1593; Baviera’s reply is in ASURS, Fascicolo Emilio Segrè, AS10162.

⁸⁶ The correspondence is in ASURS, Fascicolo Emilio Segrè, AS10162.

⁸⁷ In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 21.

⁸⁸ Ivi.

⁸⁹ In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 22.

July 1949. In the letter, Artom explained to the Minister of Education that he had been unable to resume service in Italy earlier due to his wife's poor health: "The undersigned Prof. Camillo Artom, full professor of Physiology at the University of Palermo [*he wrote*], removed from service in 1938 under the racial laws, respectfully asks to be reinstated in service in the Italian universities in accordance with Legislative Decree no. 1033 [...]"⁹⁰.

It was written that the reinstatement of the Jews residing in Italy was automatic, while that of Jews who had emigrated abroad was subordinated to the possession of citizenship and de facto to individuals' request to return to their previous jobs. In part, this statement must be denied, because while it is true that the requirement of citizenship played a significant role in the reactions of the Italian government, the reintegration of Jews living abroad was also called for by the competent institutions; of course, it was then up to those directly involved to accept or reject the request. It has already been pointed out that Artom was not reinstated due to a restrictive reading of the rules on the possession of Italian citizenship for the purposes of reinstatement, while it has not yet been underlined that it was precisely the Italian government that issued an ad hoc measure, which de facto definitively closed the doors on a university career for him in Italy⁹¹.

In the request for reinstatement Artom had appealed to article 1 of Law 1033/1948, which allowed reinstatement also to those who had lost Italian citizenship after the issue of the first regulations regarding resumption of work by the Italian government. On the other hand, the law of 5 January 1950, which amended this article, established that "the reinstatement of university professors who have lost Italian citizenship can take place only if they lost this requirement prior to the entry into force of Royal Decree Law no. 9 of 6 January 1944 [...]"⁹². All this was explained to Artom in a letter from the Minister of Education of 30 March 1950, namely that since it had emerged that he had lost his citizenship after the issue of the first reinstatement rules and had acquired US citizenship on 13 December 1946, he could no longer be given tenure at an Italian university⁹².

What is perplexing is that it was precisely the Minister of Education Guido Gonella, and precisely in reference to Artom's request for reinstatement, who asked the President of the Council of Ministers not to proceed with his reinstatement, since Decree Law 1948/1033 was still to be ratified in Parliament. The passing of this legislation would provide the opportunity to specify the real rationale of Law 1033/1948 and to eliminate any misunderstanding. The 1950 law would, in fact, only be introduced later⁹³.

Segrè, on the other hand, would benefit from a much simpler ploy: he had applied for reinstatement to the Ministry of Education on 5 January 1972:

The undersigned Prof. Emilio Segrè, born in Tivoli on 1 February 1905, applies to be reinstated as a university professor with effect from October 1972. Attached is a birth certificate, a curriculum vitae and a list of publications. The archives of this Ministry should contain the documents relating to the Italian part of his career⁹⁴.

On 16 April 1973, the Ministry of Justice submitted to the Ministry of Education its reflections on the question of whether Article 9 of Law no. 555 of 13 June 1912, "which provides [for] the

⁹⁰ In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 21.

⁹⁰ Ivi.

⁹¹ I refer to the essay by Francesca Pelini, *Appunti per una storia della reintegrazione dei professori universitari perseguitati per motivi razziali*, in Iliana Pavan, Guri Schwarz (ed.), *Gli ebrei in Italia tra persecuzione fascista e reintegrazione postbellica*, Giuntina, Firenze, pp. 120-121.

⁹² In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 21.

⁹² Ivi.

⁹³ Letter of 31 October 1949; *ivi*.

⁹⁴ The letter is in ASURS, Fascicolo Emilio Segrè, AS10162.

reacquisition of Italian citizenship by those who – having previously lost it – [*had accepted*] state employment” was applicable to the Segrè case⁹⁵:

More precisely, it asks if the reinstatement provision may be adopted as soon as a useful place is found (with the acquisition of citizenship as a consequence) or whether the most recent legislative provisions that require Italian citizenship as a preliminary condition for employment by the state make the preventive completion of procedures for obtaining citizenship indispensable⁹⁶.

In 1912, the ministry wrote, it was indeed controversial whether or not Italian citizenship was necessary to be employed by the state, since there was a lack of clear rules in this regard. The requirement of Italian citizenship for the purpose of becoming a state employee would in fact be introduced only after the rise to power of Fascism, through the enactment of specific laws, then resumed after World War II. “After all [*it concluded*], the general principle whereby Italian citizenship is required to be eligible for state employment is implicitly contained in Article 51 of the Constitution. [*And nevertheless*] it is not considered [...] that the general rules requiring the possession of Italian citizenship at a time prior to that of the appointment to state employment have weakened the aforementioned provision of art. 9 of law no. 55 of 1912”⁹⁷:

In fact, this provision – which considers a particular category of subjects, those who previously had Italian citizenship and then lost it – retains its force as a special rule, and therefore has effect as an exception to the aforementioned general regulations. On the other hand, we should highlight the limited scope of this derogation, which consists solely of shifting the need to satisfy the requirement of Italian citizenship from a time prior to appointment to the moment of appointment itself⁹⁸.

And also:

In essence, therefore, when a former Italian citizen is appointed by the state, given the intimate and indissoluble connection between the appointment and its acceptance by the interested party, and since acceptance of the post requires the possession of Italian citizenship, the general principle established by the Constitution and the law, whereby only those who are Italian citizens may become state employees, may be deemed to have been respected. With the same act, the Administration in fact on one hand expresses its will to allow a former Italian citizen to reacquire citizenship, and on the other hand gives him a state post with an appointment that becomes effective insofar as acceptance by the concerned party implies that it concerns a person who has reacquired Italian citizenship. In conclusion, this Ministry believes that this University Administration may, in application of the aforementioned provision of art. of the aforementioned law of 1912, proceed directly with providing for the reinstatement of Prof. Segrè. This provision, as stated above, becomes effective with its acceptance by the latter, which in turn allows him to reacquire Italian citizenship⁹⁹.

And so Segrè was reinstated.

The doubling-up of chairs

Among the cases analysed, only in one is it clear who replaced a professor expelled as a result of the anti-Semitic laws. The case in point is Sebastiano La Franca, born in Partinico, in the province of Palermo, on 24 May 1874, who died in April 1947, at the age of seventy-three. When Maurizio Ascoli’s tenure was revoked in 1938, La Franca had taken his place in the chair of Clinical Medicine, at the proposal of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁵ The date of the letter is not clearly legible and that specified in the text may therefore not be correct; *ivi*.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁰ Cfr. the note of 23 June 1946 from the Head Office of Higher Education to the Minister of Education; in ACS, Ministero della pubblica istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 256.

Even before the Italian government issued specific rules to regulate the status of teachers to be reinstated and the fate of those who had replaced them, the order of Charles Poletti of 26 July 1943, which – as has been said – reinstated Ascoli, provided for the return of the chair of Clinical Medicine to its original holder and the attribution to La Franca of the chair of Special Medical Pathology¹⁰¹. In other words, a practice began to emerge that only with the introduction of Legate-issued Legislative Decree 1945/238 would find a clear legislative form: those reinstated were reassigned their original chairs, while their substitutes were given either a chair in the same subject, but in another faculty, or a chair in a similar subject in the same faculty. In some cases it was possible to double-up the chair itself by establishing a supernumerary post¹⁰².

Despite the dictates of the law, La Franca would never cease to request the return of the chair of Clinical Medicine while preserving his assignment to Medical Pathology, appealing to the possibility of a supernumerary course. This solution would in any case have had merely “moral” significance, given that he had already completed the years of service necessary to retire and that he had been kept on as an exception for the 1946-1947 academic year¹⁰³. Also on 9 February 1946, he asked the Minister of Education to be assigned the chair of Clinical Medicine: “It is a desire [he specified], of a purely moral nature, expressed by a distinguished Professor, who honoured the Chair for many years. He is requesting a purely honorary title. And I believe that you, Minister, can grant it to him”¹⁰⁴.

He had been requesting this for some time, however; already on 2 August 1943 he had written to the chancellor of Palermo:

My move, in 1938, after the chair was left vacant, took place according to the procedures and with the guarantees of the laws of the Italian State, by unanimous vote of the Faculty [...] without any causal link with the racial laws [...]. It was a fundamentally and formally normal step in my career, nor can my rights now acquired due to my appointment as a general medical clinician be cancelled by relegating me to the post and teaching duties of a pathologist. I was the first to occupy the post of Clinical Medicine, and it benefited from my work and sacrifices. The reinstatement of Ascoli cannot take place to my detriment, but only independently of my situation¹⁰⁵.

This example shows in all its crudeness the conflicts that could emerge between the reinstated teachers previously expelled under the anti-Semitic laws and those who had replaced them. It however also shows that these conflicts did not necessarily have to be resolved to the detriment of the original holders of the returned chair. It has in fact been suggested that over the course of time, and increasingly, the practice took hold whereby the reinstated teacher was given a supernumerary post, leaving the old chair to his substitute¹⁰⁶. The cases analysed are too few to allow us to clearly establish the conduct of the Italian State, but it is certain that the story of Emilio Segrè, which happened *the other way round*, provides further food for thought.

The chair he was given was in fact supernumerary and would be reabsorbed at the first possible opportunity:

The supernumerary post established pursuant to the previous article will be used for the reinstatement, as a full professor, of Emilio Segrè, previously professor of experimental physics at the University of Palermo and dismissed from service for racial reasons as from 14 December 1938, who reacquires Italian citizenship pursuant to Article 9 of Law no. 335 of 13 June 1912. The post will be reabsorbed upon termination of service or appointment at another university or other

¹⁰¹ Ivi.

¹⁰² See in particular article 20 of the law, also available online at: www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1945/05/26/045U0238/sg (accessed on 13 June 2019).

¹⁰³ Cfr. Note for his Excellency the Minister from the Head of the Universities Department Bianchini, undated, in which it was stated that La Franca had asked to be kept in service beyond 70 years of age, in accordance with Royal Decree Law no. 114 of 16 March 1944, which allowed him to remain in service until the 75th year of age, limited to the duration of the war.

¹⁰⁴ Ivi.

¹⁰⁵ Ivi.

¹⁰⁶ See in this regard Francesca Pelini, *Appunti per una storia della reintegrazione dei professori universitari perseguitati per motivi razziali*, cit., p. 133.

higher education institution of the teacher of the subject relative to the aforementioned post. The service provided at foreign universities by Professor Emilio Segrè will be assessed according to the methods envisaged under article 18 of Law no. 311 of 18 March 1938¹⁰⁷.

In a letter dated 14 December 1974, the chancellor wrote to the Ministry of Education and to the Directorate General of University Education that Emilio Segrè, “appointed temporary professor at this University, took up regular service on 1 November 1974”¹⁰⁸.

Epilogue

Although I was able to consult the lists of Jews surveyed in 1938, it was not possible for me to document in detail the cases of students expelled under the anti-Semitic laws, given the fact that much of the material, albeit available at the Historical Archive of the University of Palermo, where I looked for it, has not been inventoried. For the same reason it was not at the time possible to reconstruct the biographies of the non-teaching staff who may have been recorded in the census¹⁰⁹.

The effects of anti-Semitic laws were felt not only by those directly involved, but also by non-Jewish pupils. A case in point is that of Francesco Serio, who “in 1938, was forced to leave the Clinical Medicine department of the University of Palermo and to abandon all scientific research, because of the racial measures taken against his teacher and mentor, Maurizio Ascoli”¹¹⁰.

As we have seen, after the war the Italian State had been willing, despite the many difficulties, to reinstate the teachers who had been dismissed, and with the Allies there began a concerted attempt to purge the University of Palermo of Fascism, although this lost much of its momentum in the following years, as indeed would happen in the rest of Italy. Under Fascism, also in Palermo courses had been introduced such as *Military Culture*, *Biology of Human Races*, *Comparative Racial Demography*, *Comparative Political Economics*, *Corporative Law and Employment Law*.¹¹¹ But already with a provision of 8 November 1943:

addressed to the chancellors of the Universities of Palermo, Catania, Messina and Naples [...] Gayre ordered those universities to abolish the courses in *The History and Doctrine of Fascism*, *Corporative Law* and *Military Culture*, and to amend those subjects most obviously influenced by the ideology of the regime. The metamorphosis caused by the Allied intervention clearly marked a before and after for those subjects, also in terms of their names [...]¹¹².

With regard to the complex issue of defascistization in Palermo and Sicily, I refer to the text “*Italy in Transition*” by Enza Pelleriti; I limit myself to mentioning here the famous story of Giuseppe Maggiore, which has attracted so much attention in Italian historiography.

Full professor of Criminal Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Palermo, he was accused of the apology of Fascism that transpired in his texts. In his book *La politica* there was also “a profoundly offensive judgment of American women”. Maggiore affirmed “that the way of life of the Anglo-Saxon women, in particular of American women, was based on the most absolute freedom in the various areas of private life, from the sexual sphere to the experience of sport, from the conception of divorce to the practice of abortion, and *exaggerated competition* with men in the world of work”. His condemnation of the United States was without appeal, because it was governed by a matriarchy. Even Franklin Delano Roosevelt attracted his criticism, as did his wife, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt,

¹⁰⁷ In ASURS, Fascicolo Emilio Segrè, AS10162.

¹⁰⁸ Ivi.

¹⁰⁹ I would in any case like to thank Alessandro Crisafulli and Daniela Lo Brutto for their helpfulness and professionalism, and for being enormously helpful in my research.

¹¹⁰ Cfr. Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in transition*”, cit., p. 159.

¹¹¹ Cfr. Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in transition*”, cit., p. 86.

¹¹² Ivi, p. 88.

whom he insultingly called a “slobbering monkey”. Here is how General Frank J. McSherry in the provision of 21 October 1943 motivated the removal of the Palermo criminal law scholar¹¹³:

He was undoubtedly a Fascist, doctrinaire and propaganda leader in university circles, and was the author of highly virulent books in support of Fascism and against the United States and Great Britain, and in general against democratic principles [...]; because of his extremely polemical intellectual activity he is not suited to hold a chair in any academic institution¹¹⁴.

For his part, on 16 December 1944, in his defence memoranda, Maggiore wrote that he had been appointed a university professor following two selection procedures at the University of Perugia, in 1921, and of Siena, in 1924, respectively being ranked first and the only candidate to be shortlisted. He had become a member of the PNF on 28 October 1925, but was never a member of a Fascist action squad, a militant in the *Fasci di combattimento*, or involved with the party either prior to or during the March on Rome. He had never held party positions; only in July 1943 would he be appointed, without his knowledge, chairman of the National Institute of Fascist Culture, a position that he had abandoned when the regime collapsed on 25 July. After 8 September, asked to take back his post, he would refuse to do so. He did not deny his past intellectual adherence to Fascism, but his apology for the regime had always taken place outside university: “I was an exegete of the Fascist doctrine as a thinker, not a professor,” he observed. He claimed that in his writings he had always expressed an independent judgment, opposing Fascism when he had deemed it necessary. For example, he had written: “There is a difference between Italian racism and German racism, which only the grossest intellectual myopia can pretend to ignore”¹¹⁵:

Race is not a myth for us, but a historical reality. I would never entertain the thought of creating a new sacrament, of dismantling the doctrine of the Church, of overthrowing the old God to sanctify a new religion. No sensible Italian would dream of resorting to the exaggerations and paradoxes of a Woltmann or a Chamberlain ... No Italian would dream of endorsing the signature of a Rosemberg [sic] when he offers the 20th century a new racist theology and even a new Olympus. Our racism, which is not at all subversive of the religious tradition of the Italian people, is only political [...] We only want to claim the originality, solidity, and historical destiny of the Italian race (*Razza e fascismo*, Palermo 1939, p. 195)¹¹⁶.

And with regard to the Jews he had observed:

What policy should be adopted? A defensive policy, which is a policy of separation. We should separate ourselves from the Jews and not persecute them, nor proclaim a crusade of hatred and revenge against them. As Christians, as Fascists, we will not fight hatred with hatred, but will only raise a barrier between them and our civilization. We will draw a straight line between our race and theirs. We may, in a moment of sentimentalism, call the Jew a brother, but we will never call him a compatriot¹¹⁷.

In 1947 the President of the Council of Ministers allowed the appeal filed by the criminal law scholar against the order for his retirement, and consequently Maggiore was fully reinstated in his teaching post¹¹⁸.

[Translated by Simon Michael Tanner]

¹¹³ Ivi, pp. 99-100.

¹¹⁴ Ivi, p. 100.

¹¹⁵ ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Professori universitari epurazione 1945-1947, Busta 19.

¹¹⁶ Ivi.

¹¹⁷ Ivi.

¹¹⁸ Cfr. Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in Transition*”, p. 101.

**List of the Italian and foreign Jews of Palermo
registered by the Palermo National Archive
(Cabinet of the Prefecture of Palermo, Envelope 736)**

*Tabella degli ebrei italiani e stranieri censiti e residenti a Palermo
(Archivio di Stato di Palermo [ASPA], Gabinetto, Prefettura, Busta 736)*

First and last name	Nationality	Profession	Address
1) Adler Josef fu Gerson	Tedesca	Commerciante	Via Nicolò Garzilli 26
2) Adler Rosa fu Gerson	Tedesca	Commerciante	Via Nicolò Garzilli 26
3) Adler Ruth fu Carlo	Tedesca	Dottoressa in medicina	Via Dante 310
4) Ancona Enrico di Giulio	Italiana	Impiegato	Via Salamone Marino 16
5) Artom Camillo di Vittorio	Italiana	Professore universitario	Via Ruggero Settimo 78
6) Ara Bianca di Marco	Italiana	Casalinga	Via Ruggero Settimo 78
7) Ascoli Maurizio fu Annibale	Italiana	Professore universitario	Via Regina Margherita 25
8) Bergmann Emanuele fu Girolamo	Italiana	Ingegnere	Via Emerico Amari 57
9) Norsa Pia fu Achille	Italiana	Civile	Via Emerico Amari 57
10) Bergmann Elsa di Emanuele	Italiana	Civile	Via Emerico Amari 57
11) Birubbaum Wolfgang fu Simone	Tedesca	Vive di rendita	Via Giacomo Leopardi 1
12) Castelnuovo Lucandro Elio fu Leone	Italiana	Commerciante	Via I. Federico 14
13) Senigaglia Anna fu Bruto	Italiana	Civile	Via I. Federico 14
14) Castelnuovo Lina di Lucandro Lelio	Italiana	Professoressa	Via I. Federico 14
15) Castelnuovo Leone Arrigo di Lucandro	Italiana	Ing. Impiegato	Via I. Federico 14
16) Citone Crescenzo fu Elia	Italiana	Commerciante	Via Roma 94
17) Perugia Leonina fu Angelo	Italiana	Commerciante	Via Roma 94
18) Citone Arrigo di Crescenzo	Italiana	Dottore medico chirurgo	Via Roma 94
19) Citone Laura di Crescenzo	Italiana	Professoressa	Via Roma 94
20) Chasis Iankiel di Piuchos	Polacca	Medico presso Ospedale Civico	Ignoto
21) Chasis Chaja Freida di Piuchos	Polacca	Ignoto	Via Cannela 24

22) Cohn Alberto fu Selig	Tedesca	Impiegato	Via Lincoln 104
23) Wurzinger Bella di Sigismondo	Tedesca	Casalinga	Via Lincoln 104
24) Cohn Anita di Alberto	Tedesca	Casalinga	Via Lincoln 104
25) Cukierman Leib di Chain	Polacca	Studente	Via Cannella 24
26) Di Nola Ettore Graziano	Italiana	Impiegato	Via Cavour 68
27) Resteghini Albina fu Luigi	Italiana	Casalinga	Via Cavour 68
28) Ellinger Roberto di Enrico	Tedesca	Agente viaggiatore	Piazza Giuseppe Verdi
29) Fener Nola di Jacob	Tedesca	Ignoto	Piazza Giuseppe Verdi
30) Ellinger Pietro di Roberto	Tedesca	Ignoto	Piazza Giuseppe Verdi
31) Fener Carlo di Jacob	Tedesca	Ignoto	Piazza Giuseppe Verdi
32) Enriquez Raffaele fu Daniele	Italiana	Rappresentante	Via P. Belmonte 58
33) Fabisch Walter di Hermann	Tedesca	Medico	Via 12 Gennaio 18
34) Ellinger Elisabetta fu Alessandro	Tedesca	Ignoto	Via 12 Gennaio 18
35) Finkestein Chaim Daurel fu Isidoro	Polacca	Rappresentante	Via Fond. Oreta 23
36) Fruchter Ignazia di Simone	Polacca	Medico	Via Villareale 54
37) Rabinovicinte Schura di Ilia	Polacca	Ignoto	Via Villareale 54
38) Fubini Mario di Riccardo	Italiana	Professore universitario	P. Cabodo Mondello Valdese
39) Milman Malca fu Moisè	Italiana	Medico Cefalù	Via Vittorio Emanuele 69 bis
40) Goichman Maria fu Boris	Rumena	Casalinga	Via Vittorio Emanuele 69 bis
41) Milman Brana fu Moisè	Rumena	Casalinga	Via Vittorio Emanuele 69 bis
42) Milman Boris di Aizing	Rumena	Studente	Via Vittorio Emanuele 69 bis
43) Ghersefeld Mosè di Gregorio	Italiana	Commerciante	Via G. Cusmano 44
44) Waintrand Mari fu Gregorio	Italiana	Casalinga	Via G. Cusmano 44

45) Ghersfeld Ester di Mosè	Italiana	Ignoto	Via G. Cusmano 44
46) Ghersfeld Leopoldo di Mosè	Italiana	Ignoto	Via G. Cusmano 44
47) Hirsh Paul di Siggrid	Tedesca	Chimico	Via Emerico Amari 146
48) Hoffmann Alessandro fu Enrico	Tedesca	Impiegato	Via Villafranca 54
49) Cuccagna Olga fu Giusto	Tedesca	Casalinga	Via Villafranca 54
50) Hoffmann Giusto di Alessandro	Italiana	Militare	Via Villafranca 54
51) Hoffmann Eva di Federico	Tedesca	Ignoto	Via Villafranca 54
52) Hoffmann Giulio fu Enrico	Tedesca	Impiegato	Via XII Gennaio 32
53) Richter Clara fu Noa (forse Noé)	Tedesca	Ignoto	Via XII Gennaio 32
54) Horn Salomone Giovanni di Oscar	Tedesca	Esportatore di agrumi	Viale Regina Margherita 19
55) Porges Ericha di Friedrich	Tedesca	Ignoto	Viale Regina Margherita 19
56) Horn Peter Michele di Salomone	Tedesca	Ignoto	Viale Regina Margherita 19
57) Horn Leone Tommaso di Salomone	Tedesca	Ignoto	Viale Regina Margherita 19
58) Porges Stella di Friedrich	Tedesca	Ignoto	Viale Regina Margherita 19
59) Jung Guido fu Mario	Italiana	Commerciante	Via Lincoln 73
60) Raudegger Natalia fu Benedetto	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Lincoln 73
61) Jung Rita fu Mario	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Lincoln 73
62) Jung Ugo fu Mario	Italiana	Commerciante	Via Lincoln 73
63) Weiller Gisella fu Arturo	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Lincoln 73
64) Jung Vera di Ugo	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Lincoln 73
65) Jung Mario di Ugo	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Lincoln 73
66) Lanes Joseph di Salò	Polacca	Commerciante	Via Napoli 50
67) Lewsztein Josef di Boris	Polacca	Studente medic.	Via S. Uffizio 10
68) Lombroso Elena fu Davide	Italiana	Casalinga	Corso Pisani 110
69) Ovazza Mario fu Elia	Italiana	Ingegnere	Corso Pisani 110
70) Ovazza Elda fu Elia	Italiana	Dottoressa	Corso Pisani 110
71) Ovazza Gino fu Elia	Italiana	Ingegnere	Corso Pisani 110

72) Ovazza Regina fu Emilio	Italiana	Casalinga	Corso Pisani 110
73) Ovazza Ugo fu Elia	Italiana	Impiegato Stato	Corso Pisani 110
74) Lucacer Menase fu Zusi	Italiana	Medico chirurgo	Via XX Settembre
75) Lipschutz Anna in Milazzo di Davide	Italiana	Medico chirurgo	Piazza Verdi 28
76) Lipschutz Paolo di Sioma	Svedese	Studente	Piazza Verdi 28
77) Lang Rosa fu Abramo	Tedesca	Casalinga	Via Lincoln 104
78) Wurzinger Marta fu Sigismondo	Tedesca	Impiegata	Via Lincoln 104
79) Landmann Auguste di Alverto	Tedesca	Pittrice	Via S. Uffizio 10
80) Mausner Federico di Adolfo	Tedesca	Impiegato	Via Fond. Oretea 23
81) Diamand Rosalia di Isidoro	Tedesca	Ignoto	Via Fond. Oretea 23
82) Mausner Aldo Rodolfo di Federico	Tedesca	Ignoto	Via Fond. Oretea 23
83) Menzel Regina di Abramo	Tedesca	Ignoto	Via Fond. Oretea 23
84) Mattersdorfer Felice fu Antonio	Italiana	Impiegato	Via Roma 299
85) Sachs Elsa di Carlo	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Roma 299
86) Mattersdorfer Ernesta di Felice	Italiana	Ignoto	Via Roma 299
87) Meyerhof Hans fu Gustavo	Tedesca	Esportatore	Via Alberigo Gentile n. 2
88) Neumann Roberto di Jacob	Tedesca	Medico	Via Emerico Amari 46
89) Penser Isidoro di Giuseppe	Polacca	Medico	Via Celso 79
90) Pkilippison Jennay di Wolff	Italiana	Casalinga	Via N. Garzilli 26
91) Pkilippison Giovanna di Wolff	Italiana	Casalinga	Via N. Garzilli 26
92) Karpeles Sofia fu Wolff	Francese	Casalinga	Via N. Garzilli 26
93) Rappeport Simone di Rubino	Polacca	Medico	Vicolo Castelnuovo 19
94) Rosemberg Otto fu Max	Tedesca	Antiquario	Via Beati Paoli 8

95) Rosenstingl Arnaldo di Carlo	Ungherese	Bibliotecario	Via Enrico Albanese 94
96) Bloch Rutta di Ermanno	Ungherese	Medico chirurgo	Via Enrico Albanese 94
97) Rosenstingl Emanuele di Arnaldo	Ungherese	Ignoto	Via Enrico Albanese 94
98) Rosenthal Julius fu Mortiz	Tedesca	Dentista	Via Messina 36
99) Rosenzwey Nona di Aron	Polacca	Casalinga	Viale delle Palme
100) Schwarz Egon di Alfredo	Tedesca	Rappresentante	Via Dante 33
101) Schachter Moisè di Isacco	Rumena	Guida Interprete	P. Ranchibile 6
102) Re Giovanna fu Pasquale	Rumena	Corrispondente	P. Ranchibile 6
103) Schachter Beniamino di Moisè	Rumena	Ignoto	P. Ranchibile 6
104) Schachter Sabina Vittoria di Moisè	Rumena	Ignoto	P. Ranchibile 6
105) Schachter Josef di Isacco	Rumena	Studente in legge	P. Ranchibile 6
106) Segrè Emilio di Giuseppe	Italiana	Professore universitario	Via A. Borrelli 50
107) Seiden Massimiliano di Adolfo	Polacca	Studente in medicina	Vicolo Castelnuovo n. 19
108) Szarefstein Sigfrid di Jacob	Polacca	Ignoto	Via S. Ufficio 10
109) Szarefstein Jacob Bev di Sigismond	Polacca	Commerciante	Via S. Ufficio 10
110) Soria Giorgio fu Roberto	Italiana	Ispettore Ass.	Via I Federico 18
111) Stossler Benno di Ermanno	Tedesca	Negoziante di agrumi	Via E. Amari 146
112) Wolff Else fu Giacobbe Giov.	Tedesca	Impiegato	Via XII Gennaio n. 3
113) Wolf Elisabetta fu Maurizio	Tedesca	Traduttrice	Via Marchese Ugo 4

The University of Messina Targeted by the Regime

Giovanna D'Amico*

Abstract. One text that more than any other is quoted when trying to get an idea of the impact of Fascist state anti-Semitism on Sicilian universities, *Repulisti ebraico* by Mario Genco, a journalist who precociously published an – albeit incomplete – critical and perceptive picture of the 1938 persecution in Sicily.

Keywords: University; Jews; Reintegration

Jews in the University of Messina?

One text that more than any other is quoted when trying to get an idea of the impact of Fascist state anti-Semitism on Sicilian universities, *Repulisti ebraico* by Mario Genco, a journalist who precociously published an – albeit incomplete – critical and perceptive picture of the 1938 persecution in Sicily¹. His study has in particular been used as the source of information regarding the census of the Jews of 22 August 1938, as reported by the Sicilian press in October 1938. The detail of the month of publication is relevant, as will be explained shortly.

The author wrote:

In Sicily, application of the racial laws enacted by the Fascist government in September and November 1938 had been quantitatively irrelevant: not so much due to a lack of will, but to a lack of people affected. The census published in October in the newspapers had revealed the presence of 202 citizens of Jewish origin on the island. A drop in the ocean, considering [Sicily's] almost four and a half million inhabitants, divided into small groups, living in only six provinces. In Palermo, 96 were recorded; 75 in Catania; 21 in Messina; 4 in Agrigento; and 3 in Siracusa and Enna. There was also a fluctuating group of refugees from other European nations where discrimination and persecution were already underway [...]².

Until today, with the sole exception of the observations made by Alessandro Hoffmann, which however in the absence of detailed explanations cannot be adopted wholesale³, the picture of the Sicilian census provided by Genco has been accepted by historians and broader public opinion almost unfiltered. Already Giorgio Israel and Pietro Nastasi, in their *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, referring to an article by the Sicilian journalist, back in 1998 observed⁴: “Across the island, the census published in the newspapers in October 1938 revealed the presence of only 202 citizens of Jewish

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¹ Cf. his *Repulisti ebraico. Le leggi razziali in Sicilia: 1938-1943*, Istituto Gramsci Siciliano, Palermo, 2000.

² Ivi, p. 35.

³ Hoffmann, on p. 20 of his *Storia di una famiglia di origine ebrea a Palermo*, Qanat, Palermo, 2017, in fact writes that according to the only census of Italian Jews of 1938, Sicilians numbered 330, of whom 202 were Italian and 128 foreign, “divided as follows: Palermo 96+59 = 155; Catania, 75+38 = 113; Messina, 21+21 = 42; Agrigento, 4+4 = 8; Siracusa, 3+3 = 6; Enna, 3+3 = 6; while there were none in Trapani, Ragusa or Caltanissetta”. However, the author failed to clarify where he had obtained this data.

⁴The article in question is *Ebrei, dalla Sicilia il primo passo per cancellare l'infamia antisemita*, in “Giornale di Sicilia”, 15 April 1997.

origin. ‘A drop in the ocean’, said Mario Genco, compared to the island’s four and a half million inhabitants, and divided into very small groups distributed in only six provinces”⁵.

They went on to report the data already quoted from the Sicilian census⁶.

More recently, the exhibition entitled *La persecuzione degli ebrei in Italia. “Documenti per una storia”*, inaugurated on 25 January 2016 and organized jointly by the Ministry of the Interior, the CDEC, the Prefecture and the University of Catania, in the panels recounting stories of Sicilian Jews, also presented the data already published by Genco on the census of the island⁷.

However, an analysis of the paper documentation kept at the Central State Archives and the State Archives in Messina and Palermo gives a more blurred picture. In particular, in the case of Messina we can observe that from August 1938 to the following October the number of Jews recorded had gone from the original 25 to 21⁸, a fact that cannot be ignored if we want to clarify the question of the expulsion of the Jews from the University of Messina, also because the four cancelled from the original list were, as we shall see, university teachers. Indeed, on 17 August 1938 the police chief of Messina, stressing that “there is no Israelite community in this provincial capital”, sent the local prefect “an initial list of names of those resident in this city, of Jewish race, divided by nationality (Italian and foreign)”. Among the five Jews of Italian nationality recorded, four were referred to as professors: “Dr. Prof. Stefano Puglisi Allegra, son of the late Francesco”, “Prof. Vittorio Siracusa, son of the late Giuseppe”, “Isaya Dr. Prof. Angelo Isaya, son of the late Francesco”, “Dr. Prof. Guido Izar, son of Antonio”⁹. And these were, as has been said, teachers engaged in various capacities at the University of Messina. However, in the following days the police chief of Messina rectified the personal details of three of the four professors previously designated as “Jews”, without explaining in detail the reason for this amendment. On 23 August, he wrote to the prefect that “With reference to my note of 17 August, I report that Prof. Guido Izar, son of the late Antonio, on the basis of information provided by the Milan Police Headquarters, is of Italian origin and consequently must be removed from the list submitted”. The next day he asked the *podestà* and the prefect to “return to this office the files of Prof. Siracusa Dr. Liborio [*recte* Vittorio] and Puglisi Stefano Allegra, since [*they*], following further checks, were found not to belong to the Jewish race”¹⁰.

Unfortunately, investigations carried out at the Messina registry office and at the national and local state archives did not provide further details on the reasons for this cancellation. The documentary

⁵ *Scienza e razza nell’Italia fascista*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1998, p. 241.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ The exhibition, which I took part in by producing panels on Sicilian deportees to the Nazi concentration and death camps, was coordinated by Giuseppe Speciale. For an account of this, see *Tullia Giardino, 1938-1945. La persecuzione degli Ebrei in Italia. Documenti per una storia*, in “Giornale di Storia Contemporanea”, 1/2016, pp. 199-201. The exhibition can be viewed online at: www.lex.unict.it/sites/default/files/allegati/.../files/pannelli_mostra.pdf (consulted on 3 June 2019).

⁸ Information on the numbers of Italian and foreign Jews distinguished by province is available at the Archivio centrale dello Stato (henceforth ACS), Ministero degli Interni, Direzione generale demografia e razza (1938-1943), Busta 4, *Fascicolo Situazione generale degli ebrei in Italia*, documento *Censimento ebrei italiani e stranieri (agosto 1938)*. For the province of Messina there are 25, of whom 21 are present and 4 temporarily absent; for the province of Palermo there are 126, of whom 114 present and 12 temporarily absent. The 25 Messinese Jews mentioned above coincide numerically with the list of names sent on 17 August 1938 by the police chief of Messina to the local prefect, regarding which I refer to the text.

⁹ Cf. Archivio di Stato di Messina (henceforth ASME), Prefettura, Gabinetto I versamento, Busta 80. The other Jew of Italian nationality registered was Massimiliano Morpurgo. Then there were foreign Jews: Gustavo Hochfeld, son of the late Isacco (head of the family), Geltrude Sinomohn Hochfeld, daughter of the late Ially (wife), Ursula Hochfeld, daughter of Gustavo (daughter), Kurt Walter Hochfeld, son of the late Giulio (head of the family), Ioplin Minden, daughter of the late Ivan (wife), Gerland Hochfeld, son of Kurt (son), Charlotte Meiurath, daughter of the late Leopoldo (guest), Ludwig Rotschhold, son of the late Alberto (head of the family), Oskar Benndorf, son of the late Walter (head of the family), Elly Benndorf, daughter of Richard (wife), Simone Wasserlanf, son of Isacco (alone), Egon Sürth, son of the late Adolfo (alone), Leon Weissenberg, son of the late Alessandro (head of the family), Fanny Iancovici, daughter of the late Sigmund (wife), Carolina Vexler, daughter of the late Lupu (mother-in-law), Better Iancovici, daughter of the late Sigmund (sister-in-law), Ernesto Godfinger, son of the late Ella (head of the family), Friedal Plier, daughter of Giuseppe (wife), Emilia Weissenberg, daughter of the late Sigismondo (alone), Gerd Hleinz Katz, son of the late Alberto (alone).

¹⁰ Missives in ivi.

disorder of the University of Messina Archives also currently make it not possible to obtain further information¹¹. However, a systematic examination of the Yearbooks of the University of Messina from the advent of Fascism to the immediate post-war period, shows that these people basically remained in the university¹².

Guido Izar, son of the late Antonio and of Adele Bellani, was born in Milan on 8 November 1883¹³. He qualified as an untenured lecturer in Special Medical Pathology by decree of the Minister of Public Education of 27 July 1911, at the University of Catania: his teacher, Maurizio Ascoli, was dismissed in Palermo in 1938 under the anti-Semitic laws¹⁴.

He had been a member of the National Fascist Party (henceforth, PNF) since 1925 and entered service at the university on 16 March 1926, as a teacher of General Medical Clinical Medicine and Medical Therapy. On 16 March 1929 he was promoted to full professor. In the 1939-1940 academic year he would be transferred to Siena, as professor of General Clinical Medicine and Medical Therapy at the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery. He would conclude his career there, retiring on 1 November 1959 after reaching the age limit¹⁵.

Stefano Allegra Puglisi, son of Giovanni and of Rosa Grioli, born in Messina on 19 January 1889¹⁶, however, already in the 1924-1925 academic year was recorded as an untenured lecturer in Special Surgical Pathology and was assigned teaching duties in Dentistry and Surgical Medicine at the University of Messina. After disappearing from the yearbooks between 1935 and 1941, which therefore does not seem to be for “racial” reasons, he reappears in the 1943-1944 academic year as an untenured lecturer in Special Medical Pathology, and then disappears for good after 1944-1945¹⁷.

In 1925-1926 Vittorio Siracusa, son of Giuseppe and of Grazia Pulejo, born in Messina on 10 November 1896¹⁸, was instead assistant professor of Forensic Medicine at the university. In the 1930-1931 academic year he would hold the position of untenured lecturer in Forensic Medicine, and on 1 December 1940 would become a full professor in the subject. He continued his career in Messina, where there is evidence of him until 1945-1946¹⁹.

¹¹ In fact, at the State Archives of Messina, no detailed material on the subject was found, and the papers filed at the ACS also appear to be inadequate: here, in fact, as will be explained in greater detail below, only material regarding Guido Izar and Angelo Isya was found, but in neither case in connection with the dramatic turn of events in 1938 linked to State anti-Semitism. As for the historical archive of the University of Messina, I requested access, and despite having received positive feedback from the vice-chancellor, Prof. Giovanni Moschella, have not yet been able to access it due to the state of disorder of the records and the unsafe conditions of the place where they are stored, as was explained to me by my colleague Luigi Chiara. Regarding the Messina registry office, I obtained the family status certificate of Massimiliano Morpurgo, the birth certificate of Vittorio Siracusa and the birth certificate of Allegra Stefano Puglisi, but no other information.

¹² On the University of Messina, see Andrea Romano, *L'Università degli Studi di Messina, negli anni Venti e Trenta del Novecento*, in Rosario Battaglia, Michela D'Angelo, Santi Fedele, Massimo Lo Curzio (eds.), *Messina negli anni Venti e Trenta, Una città meridionale tra stagnazione e fermenti culturali*, Atti del Convegno di Studi promosso dall'Istituto di Studi Storici Gaetano Salvemini (Messina 3-5 ottobre 1996), Messina, 1997.

¹³ Cf. birth certificate in ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima, *Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari*, III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 253.

¹⁴ ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Fascicoli personali dei liberi docenti, I versamento, 1 serie, Busta 215. In the 1925-1926 academic year his name appears in the yearbook of the University of Messina, where he appears, as a “temporary” teacher of Medical Pathology, assigned with the teaching post for Clinical Medicine: cf. *Annuario della R. Università di Messina 1925-1926 (Anno CCCLXXVI dalla Fondazione)*, Industrie Grafiche Meridionali, S. A., Messina, 1927, p. 47.

¹⁵ In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari, III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 253.

¹⁶Cf. his birth certificate, kept at the Messina registry office.

¹⁷ Cf. the *Annuari della R. Università di Messina* for the academic years 1924-1925 (pp. 72-73), 1925-1926 (pp. 47-48), 1926-1927 (pp. 69-70), 1928-1929 (p. 120), 1930-1931 (p. 123), 1931-1932 (pp. 105, 107), 1932-1933 (pp. 93, 95), 1933-1934 (p. 85), 1934-1935 (p. 85), 1943-1944.

¹⁸ See his birth certificate kept at the Messina registry office.

¹⁹ Cf. *Annuari della Regia Università di Messina* for the years 1925-1926, (p. 81), 1926-1927 (p. 73), 1928-1929 (p. 125), 1930-1931 (p. 125), 1931-1932 (p. 107), 1932-1933 (p. 96), 1933-1934 (p. 80), 1934-1935 (p. 88), 1935-1936 (p. 123), 1936-1937 (p. 117), 1937 -1938 (p. 95), 1938-1939, 1939-1940, 1940-1941.

The name of Angelo Isaia, son of Francesco and of Santa Interdonato, born in Nizza di Sicilia (province of Messina), appears in the 1925-1926 academic year as an unpaid lecturer in Traumatology at the University of Messina. From 1930-1931 he was a untenured lecturer in Surgical Pathology, and remained so almost continuously until 1945-1946²⁰. On 30 June 1909 the Minister of Education had in fact approved his qualification as a lecturer in Special Surgical Pathology, at the University of Rome, following his request on 29 January 1909. Subsequently, in 1917 Isaia requested a transfer to the University of Messina, which was granted.²¹ On 14 December 1945, by decree of the headquarters of the Allied military government, he would be one of the members expelled from the Accademia Peloritana “for political reasons and for his activity in favour of the previous Fascist regime”²².

Anti-Semitism in Messina

The absence of expulsions of Jews from the University, according to the documentation examined so far, should not lead us to believe that the Fascist regime and the rampant anti-Semitism of 1938 had not taken root in Messina. On the contrary, research shows both the inclusion of anti-Semitic rhetoric in the speeches and conduct of some of the local university chancellors, and an attitude that is no less accommodating towards political opponents, so much so that as emerges from the capillary research of Enza Pelleriti, also Messina university staff were subjected to a purge in the post-war period.

In the inaugural speech of the 1938-1939 academic year, the chancellor of the University of Messina, Gaetano Vinci, observed:

This University of ours – which has the privilege of being among the purest [*my emphasis*] in Italy – is therefore right to be proud of its Students, and it is for this reason that the brief report which, as is my duty, I am about to give you on the progress of the studies and the accomplishments implemented during year XVI, albeit based on arid figures and the schematic exposition of the facts, cannot but be pervaded by the palpitating breath of poetry that arises from the perennial flow of young sap, every year infused into its old, yet flourishing trunk²³.

On 29 October 1939 Salvatore Maggiore took over from Vinci, and in his inaugural speech in the 1939-1940 academic year, showed his strong attachment to the Fascist regime and a sympathetic attitude to the racial question:

The Fascist regime – of which I would almost say students represent the vanguard, through a continuous process of selection, under vigilant, rigorous monitoring, with the formation of the Militia, which gathers in its ranks and educates our university students in the virtues of discipline and sacrifice through the multiple organizations that are part of the University Fascist Groups – has so changed the moral structure of the universities, has so transformed the mindset of the young, with regard to their position and responsibility in the various social sectors, that it is no exaggeration to say that little is left of the ancient university tradition, a legacy of times past (Toga included). This selection process, which began with the rise of Fascism to power, developed with its evolution, and culminated with the removal from the School of those of undesirable race who believed they could turn the Italian universities into nothing short of a personal fiefdom. With this wise and timely provision, the Italian universities have been reconquered for the Nation and their fascistization may be considered complete²⁴.

²⁰ Cf. the *Annuari della Regia Università di Messina* for the academic years 1925-1926 (p. 47), 1930-1931 (p. 124), 1931-1932 (p. 106), 1932-1933 (p. 95), 1933-1934 (p. 87), 1934-1935 (p. 86), 1935-1936 (p. 122), 1936-1937 (p. 116), 1937-1938 (p. 103), 1938-1939 (p. 85), 1939-1940 (p. 88), 1940-1941 (p. 72), 1943-1944 (p. 79), 1944-1945 (p. 94), 1945-1946 (p. 136).

²¹ ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione- Direzione generale istruzione superiore- Divisione prima- Fascicoli personali dei liberi docenti, 1° versamento 1910-1950. Prima serie 1910-1930, Busta 215.

²² Cf. Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in Transition*”. *La vicenda degli Allied Military Professors negli Atenei siciliani fra emergenza e defascistizzazione*, Bonanno, Acireale-Roma, 2013, pp. 96-337. In the text he is referred to as Angelo Isaia.

²³ *Annuario della Regia Università degli Studi di Messina*, Anno accademico 1938-1939, cit., p. 8.

²⁴ *Annuario della Regia Università degli Studi di Messina*, Anno accademico 1939-1940, cit., pp. 9-10.

An indicator of the pervasive climate of hostility towards the Jews and political opponents inherent in the Fascist regime can be seen in the university at the time of the assignment of courses to teachers. For example, in the 1939-1940 academic year at least two people appeared to be under scrutiny: one was Nicola Putorì, whose assignment to the course in Legal Papyrology was not confirmed by decision of the chancellor, since his membership of the PNF had been cancelled. The previous year it had been the turn of Girolamo Penso, an untenured lecturer in Criminal Law and Procedure, subject of a negative report from the provincial party secretary in Messina, who had moreover observed that he was “unpleasant”, not least due to the rumoured Jewish ancestry of his family²⁵.

On 8 August 1939 the chancellor Gaetano Vinci informed the Minister of Education that the PNF Federation of the province of Messina, in a letter dated 4 August 1939, had written to the chancellor that the secretary of the PNF considered the inclusion of Professor Nicola Putorì to be null and void, due to “political precedents which have emerged”:

As a result of this, since the aforementioned professor had failed to enrol in the PNF, I kindly ask this Honourable Ministry to deem the proposal of entrusting the course on Legal Papyrology to Prof. Nicola Putorti (no. 14 in the summary list of proposals for the assignment of teaching posts for the Faculty of Law, submitted with the above-mentioned chancellor’s letter) to have never been made²⁶.

Regarding Girolamo Penso, on 11 October of that same year, the minister Bottai had written to the chancellor of Messina, asking him not to accept the proposal to assign to Penso the course in Italian and Comparative Constitutional Law for the 1939-1940 academic year. On 22 August 1938 the Messina provincial party secretary had in fact informed the Minister of Education that Girolamo Penso, born in 1906, and a member of the PNF since 29 July 1925, was still a member of the provincial rectorate, but would not be reconfirmed in this post:

“He has distinct faults from a Fascist point of view. With a constancy worthy of a better cause, he has continually importuned all the organs of the Party, Ministry, etc., exploiting casual acquaintances with well-known figures, firmly intent on obtaining any position which can give him the two advantages of financial profit and the dignity of “authority”. He tries to make it clear at any cost that he is not destined to remain in the background. He has turned hierarchies and authorities upside down in order to have honours conferred on him, and a few years ago the Ministry of the Interior, in order to be appointed dean of the provincial administration. Locally, this led to ironic comments and heartfelt hilarity. Of poor intelligence, he possesses a mediocre level of learning that he has tried to pass off as genuine and brilliant using the method of unbridled self propaganda, charlatanism, and conduct that clearly shows a self-aggrandizing intent. He is widely disliked, perhaps also due to the rumours regarding the Jewish ancestry of his family, which for some generations has been in business in Messina [...]. I express a negative opinion on his suitability to hold the position he asked and certainly pressed you for”²⁷.

Nevertheless, in the 1940-1941 academic year both Penso and Putorì would be assigned teaching duties for the respective subjects attributed to them²⁸. However, in the immediate post-war period, Girolamo Penso would be among those expelled from the Accademia Peloritana “for activities carried out in favour of the former Fascist regime”²⁹.

²⁵ Cf. the document *Incarichi di insegnamento* dated 6 October 1939; in ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione Generale Istruzione Superiore (1908-1961). *Incarichi di insegnamento, commissioni, libere docenze, corsi di cultura, Messina 1939-1940*, Busta 19. Moreover, on 14 July 1939 the chancellor of the University of Messina, Gaetano Vinci, had written to the Minister of Education, enclosing copies of the minutes of the meetings of the various faculties of the University of Messina, for the assignment of the teaching posts for the 1939-1940 academic year. The proposals had been made by the Academic Senate at the 26 June meeting, and were accompanied by a request to the minister to approve them. “I am pleased to assure you that all the persons designated for the assignment of teaching posts belong to the Italian race,” he wrote.

²⁶ Cf. Ivi.

²⁷ Ivi.

²⁸ Ivi, Buste 23 and 25.

²⁹ Cf. in this regard Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in Transition*”, cit., pp. 96, 337. Quotation on p. 337.

Persecutions of anti-fascists

To complete the picture of the persecutory activities also involving the University of Messina, it is worth mentioning two important examples of people not called to take up their posts by the Minister of Education Fedele because they diverged from the *Weltanschauung* of the Fascist regime: These were Arturo Labriola and Gustavo Ingresso³⁰.

Arturo Labriola was born in Naples on 21 January 1873. In 1926 he would be first in the shortlist of three possible candidates for the chair of Political Economics in Messina. On 9 December that same year, the Minister of Education, Fedele, approved the documents regarding the selection procedure. The members of the Messina Law Faculty would meet on 30 December, proposing his appointment for the chair he had been selected for: if he failed to accept, it would go to Roberto Michels. However, on 15 February 1927 Fedele suddenly refused the appointment of Labriola, since he was “morally and politically unworthy” and designated Giuseppe Ugo Papi in his place, since Michels had turned the job down³¹.

Gustavo Ingresso, for his part, was born in Gallipoli (province of Lecce) on 2 May 1877. In 1926 he would be one of the three shortlisted candidates for the chair of Administrative Law and Administrative Science at the University of Messina, but would not be appointed by the Minister of Education for political reasons. In fact, a note from the Directorate-General for Education stated that Ingresso had not been appointed because according to the High Commissioner he had belonged to the Freemasons, had been associated with Nitti in his professional practice and in 1925 had published an anti-fascist book, entitled *La crisi dello Stato*. In order to re-examine the question of his failure to be appointed, his moral and political conduct would need to be thoroughly assessed. On 16 February 1927, in a penned note, Ingresso wrote: “I hope that this time at least my prayers will be answered. A further refusal would definitively close for me the doors of an academic career, *because the two years since the selection procedure are almost up*”. On the 22nd, in a letter to the Minister of Education, he observed that since he had been shortlisted in the selection procedure for Messina by the law faculty of that same university, he could have been appointed professor of the chair, but the minister had not followed up on that possibility for political reasons. Now he was presented with a new opportunity: on 15 February the Faculty of Law of the University of Bari, since the holder of the chair of Messina had been appointed, would appoint Ingresso for the chair of Administrative Law. The interested party thus requested a new decision from the minister.

On 15 December 1927 he would send him another letter, summarizing his story once again and reminding him that he had not actually been appointed even after being designated by the University of Bari. Now, at the beginning of the academic year, the chair of Administrative Law still remained empty in Bari, and had also become vacant in Messina. Ingresso in fact wrote: “I humbly ask Your Excellency to review my position”.

Consequently, on 9 November 1928, the minister, Belluzzo, asked the High Commissioner for the Province of Naples to re-examine Ingresso’s situation and assess whether or not he could be given tenure. In his reply of 27 November, the High Commissioner underlined that he had previously informed the Ministry of Education of Ingresso’s moral and political conduct, on 23 April 1927 and 4 December. He added that “even recently” an article had appeared in the “*Mezzogiorno*” on the 14th day “of this month”, in which the name of the scholar appeared among those who in 1924 had signed “the famous manifesto of anti-fascist intellectuals”. However, he believed that in the last few years Ingresso seemed to have behaved in a politically and morally correct manner.

³⁰ On Arturo Labriola, see at least the entry in the *Dizionario bibliografico degli italiani*, Vol. 62, by Fulvio Conti, also available online at: www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/arturo-labriola_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/.

³¹ ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 256.

In the previous report of 23 April 1927, the High Commissioner for the province of Naples had instead written to the Minister of Education that Ingresso was an anti-fascist, quoting in his letter passages from the latter's *La crisi dello Stato*, such as³²:

They are traces of writings I published in the daily press over the course of two years, in which, as best I could, or rather as far as the external circumstances allowed me, I criticized a regime that in my conscience as an Italian, since its first advent, indeed, in its warning signs, I have always judged a terrible parenthesis in our people's political and moral history³³.

He then concluded: "Now a single anxiety presses and pursues us: liberation from the dictatorship and the rehabilitation of the Italian name before the judgment of civilized peoples and history". Ingresso had been a councillor on Naples city council during the administration of the demo-social-Masonic coalition, and was one of the most faithful followers of Nitti and a candidate, albeit unsuccessful, in the general elections.

On 10 December 1928 Belluzzo wrote to Frignani, who having re-examined the position of Gustavo Ingresso, considered that he should not proceed with his appointment as a professor³⁴.

Then there is the case of Salvatore Barbieri, a tenured assistant at the paediatric clinic of the University of Messina, who came first in the selection procedure for that chair, "illegally" cancelled by the Fascist government. After World War II he was appointed by the AMGOT as a temporary professor, in a provision dated 1 December 1943. Only in 1947, however, would the selection procedure documents be accepted and approved by the Higher Council of Education. It does not however seem possible to view this as a case of anti-Fascism, since on the contrary, his Fascist past was subjected to the scrutiny of the Italian Government after the Second World War³⁵.

The post-war period and the reinstatement of Labriola and Ingresso

The first paragraph of Article 19 of Legislative Decree no. 238 of 5 April 1945 established that:

University professors who have been or will be re-admitted to service in the cases provided for under Royal Decree-Laws no. 9 of 6 January 1944, and no. 25 of 20 January 1944, and by Lieutenant Legislative Decrees no. 255, and no. 264 (art. 5) of 7 September 1944, will retire at the end of the academic year during which they reach the age of 75 years. To this end, they may be re-employed even if they have reached the age of 70. This paragraph also applies in the case of professors appointed according to art. 6 of Lieutenant Legislative Decree no. 264 of 7 September 1944³⁶.

If this rule had not been issued, Arturo Labriola, born in Naples on 21 January 1873, would probably never have been reinstated. In 1944 he in fact could not be appointed, having passed his 70th birthday. Reinstated as a temporary professor of Political Economics at the University of Messina from 1 November 1945³⁷, after regulation 1945/238 had raised the limits of continuance and reinstatement in service of the persecuted, he would retire on 1 November 1948, at the age of 75, with

³² ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 249.

³³ Ivi.

³⁴ Ivi.

³⁵ On his story cf. Enza Pelleriti, «*Italy in transition*», cit., pp. 184-185 and p. 195.

³⁶ The text of the law, which I consulted on 6 June 2019, is available at <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1945/05/26/045U0238/sg>. On the rules of reinstatement, see my *Quando l'eccezione diventa norma. La reintegrazione degli ebrei nell'Italia post-fascista*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2006. See also Mario Toscano, *L'abrogazione delle leggi razziali in Italia 1943-1987. Reintegrazione dei diritti dei cittadini e ritorno ai valori del Risorgimento*, G. Bardi, Roma, 1988.

³⁷ The news of his reinstatement is also to be found in the *Relazione del Magnifico Rettore Prof. Gaetano Martino per l'inaugurazione dell'Anno Accademico 1945-1946*, in "Annuario della Università degli Studi di Messina", Anno Accademico 1945-1946, cit., p. 8.

only three years of service in the post, and therefore without the right to a pension³⁸. For over a decade, he would continue to ask the Italian state to acknowledge his years of service retroactively, running from 1 November 1926, the date when he should have taken service.

In a letter to the Minister of Education of 14 December 1944, Labriola reminded him of his “university case” and of the letter from De Ruggiero dated 17 November, which stated that the order for his appointment was ready to be sent to Naples. In order for his appointment to be finalized, a call was required from the university’s Faculty of Law, which he had personally requested. In another undated, but surely earlier letter, the Minister of Education had written that he had been examining his case for some time, and that finding a solution would be a lengthy matter, since he had reached the age limit for reinstatement; the only way round it was an ad hoc regulation.

The question of “reconstructing” his career would arise once the problem of reinstatement and choice of place of work had been resolved, since Labriola had initially asked to remain in Naples. On 6 April 1944 he had in fact written that “at my age I no longer have a ‘career’ to pursue, and for me returning to teaching merely satisfies a feeling of nostalgia”: being far from Naples would have been “simply impossible” for him. Then he reconsidered³⁹.

The battle to reconstruct his career would turn out to be a tough one, fought above all between the Ministry of Education and the Court of Auditors, with the latter maintaining it could not be done. The matter would not be resolved until the mid-fifties, coinciding with the issue of the so-called “Terracini law” (Law no. 96 of 1955). This law in fact provided for the granting of a minimum pension to those who had come first in a selection procedure but were then not appointed for political or racial reasons, where current legislation did not offer more advantageous conditions. This brought an end to the conundrum of how to reconcile Legislative Decree 301/1944, which introduced career reconstruction for the politically and racially persecuted who had been reinstated, with article 6 of Legislative Decree no. 264 of 7 September 1944⁴⁰, which provided for the reinstatement of those like Arturo Labriola and Gustavo Ingrosso who had not been appointed on account of their political opposition to Fascism, but did not envisage such reconstruction. The Court of Auditors emphasized the discrepancy between the two regulations, while the Ministry of Education tended to mitigate it, arguing that all laws in favour of the politically and racially persecuted pursued the spirit of career reconstruction, even if controversial, for the purposes of retirement, and that moreover a failure to take this approach would result in a deep disparity of treatment between Arturo Labriola and Gustavo Ingrosso⁴¹. Ingrosso, the younger of the two, as said, was born in Gallipoli on 2 May 1877 and therefore could have been reinstated, as an supernumerary member of staff, under the Allied ordinance of 18 February 1944, with effect from 1 November 1943. His career had therefore been acknowledged until the 3rd grade⁴².

On 17 May 1955 Labriola wrote to the Ministry of Education again for information about his pension, “which the Ministry should have assigned to me some time ago. I think you know that I am 82 years old, unwell and have a very limited capacity for work,” he wrote, judging the fact that he had not yet been given a pension as “cruel” and “irregular”. Only with the Ministerial Decree of 10 August 1954, registered at the Court of Auditors on 25 August 1955, would he finally acquire the right to a pension, with the recognition of twenty-two years of service⁴³.

³⁸ See the retirement order signed by the Minister of Education Guido Gonella dated 10 January 1949; in ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 256.

³⁹ All the documentation can be found in *ivi*.

⁴⁰ A copy of the order is in *ivi*.

⁴¹ By way of example, see the response of the Ministry of Education to the observations of the Court of Auditors: *Rilievo della Corte dei Conti. Ufficio di controllo per le Pensioni Civili n. 1005 del 7 dicembre 1954*; in *ivi*.

⁴² In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 249.

⁴³ Cf. his request for retirement benefits addressed to the Ente nazionale di previdenza e assistenza per i dipendenti statali (National Social Security and Assistance Agency for State Employees), undated. In ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell’istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 256.

The purge

Enza Pelleriti dedicated a detailed study to the event of the purge of teachers in the three Sicilian universities in the post-war period. Once Sicily was freed from the Fascist and Nazi presence in October 1943, the newly-formed AMGOT would implement its “intention to reform” the island⁴⁴: “The defascistization of the Universities would be carried out with the removal of the chancellors of the three universities and the appointment of new ones, with the replacement of most of the faculty deans, with the removal of some teachers, and the abolition of ‘Fascist’ courses with the introduction of new subjects”⁴⁵.

For example, at the University of Messina, in the Faculty of Law, the subject *General Demographics and Comparative Racial Demographics* had been taught during the years of the regime. At the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, meanwhile, *Racial Genetics and Biology* was introduced under Fascism⁴⁶. It seems that within the national scenario the University of Messina also distinguished itself for the assignment of degree dissertations largely in keeping with the racist and anti-Semitic climate of the times: “In the 1938-1939 academic year Giovanni Battista Minicucci entitled his work *The Politics of Race in the Fascist Regime*, which was supervised by Gennaro Vilelli, “teacher of the History and Doctrine of Fascism”. The following year two further graduation dissertations of a racist nature were produced: *Race and Legal Personality* by Alberto Buggé, supervised by the private law scholar Francesco Degni, and the *Crossing of Human Races According to the Doctrine of Fascism* by Felice Siracusano, supervised by Gennaro Vilelli⁴⁷.

The latter would be among those expelled from the Accademia Peloritana with an Allied proclamation of 14 December 1945⁴⁸.

Pelleriti’s attention focuses particularly on two chancellors of the University of Messina, both victims of the purge: Salvatore Maggiore, chancellor in the 1939-1940 academic year, and Salvatore Sgroso, from 1940 to 1943.

Maggiore, accused of being the *longa manus* of provincial party secretary Saro Scaglione, had been removed from his university teaching post by the Allied military government on 14 December 1943. However, in a resolution dated 9 January 1944, the *commissione per l’epurazione del personale universitario* cleared him of the charge of actively participating in the political life of Fascism as a member of the federal directorate of Messina. It was in fact noted that he only remained in the post for a short time and did not play a significant role there. Maggiore’s reinstatement involved splitting the chair of Paediatric Clinical Medicine into two, with one of the two courses remaining assigned to Michele Gerbasi, who had replaced him at the time of his removal. In a measure dated 7 September 1945 the Minister of Education, Arangio Ruiz, provided for this duplication of the course.

However, the High Commissioner appealed against the *commissione di I grado*’s decision, since new documentation had arrived from Palermo, including a report from the *Centro Antifascista Italiano*.

On 23 May 1945, the *commissione centrale* rejected the appeal, which was fundamentally based on a report by the chancellor of the University of Messina and on the fact that Maggiore’s links to Fascism had significant consequences. In a report dated 31 January of the same year, the chancellor

⁴⁴ Cf. Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in transition*”, cit., p. 19. On the allied occupation in Sicily, cf. Rosario Mangiameli, *La regione in guerra (1943-1945)*, in Maurice Aymard and Giuseppe Giarrizzo (ed.), *La Sicilia*, Einaudi, Torino, 1987, pp. 486-600. See also the recent volume by Manoela Patti, *La Sicilia e gli alleati. Tra occupazione e liberazione*, Donzelli, Roma, 2013.

⁴⁵ Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in transition*”, cit., p. 85.

⁴⁶ Ivi, p. 58.

⁴⁷ Cf. in this regard Saverio Gentile, *La legalità del male. L’offensiva mussoliniana contro gli ebrei nella prospettiva storico-giuridica (1938-1945)*, Giappichelli, Torino, 2013, p., 27.

⁴⁸ Enza Pelleriti, “*Italy in transition*”, cit., pp. 96, 337.

noted that Maggiore had shown his attachment to the regime “*and complete dedication to the local hierarchies of the party*”. Being thus unable to rule out Maggiore’s “active participation and apology”, he asked the central commission to rule for his dismissal⁴⁹.

The commission objected that the chancellor of Palermo, Giovanni Baviera, on the other hand, had praised the work of Maggiore, noting that the only apology of Fascism he was guilty of was his inaugural speech for the 1939-1940 academic year, at the University of Messina.⁵⁰

On 31 March the following year, Maggiore himself submitted his defence memorandum to the central purge commission, emphasizing that within the federal executive of Messina he had only worked as a paediatrician, with the task of carrying out health checks at summer camps, an appointment he had received on the basis of his professional skills. Moreover, he claimed that during the period when he was chancellor he never wrote anything in favour of Fascism, nor had he used his position to advance friends or relatives.

As for the accusations made against him by the Centro Antifascista Italiano in Palermo, he was accused of having been appointed chancellor at the request of the provincial party secretary Scaglione, and that he had used his position to impose appointments and decisions on the teaching staff that they would otherwise never have made. For example, he allegedly forced the University to appoint Professor Vito Catania, who was disliked by his colleagues because he often failed to turn up for lessons. Likewise, the reports mentioned pressure exercised on the faculties to impose appointments of new staff.

In Palermo, where he moved in 1940, he allegedly engaged in similar conduct, as can be seen in his speech of 23 November 1940⁵¹.

However, having rejected any charges by the competent bodies, Maggiore remained firmly in place.

The connection between Maggiore and Palermo was not only geographical, but also familial and physical, since he was the brother of Giuseppe Maggiore, who was chancellor of the University of Palermo when the anti-Semitic laws were passed, in the 1938-1939 academic year. It is no coincidence that he too would be subject to the purge, and was retired, although later reinstated⁵².

Salvatore Sgroso, for his part, a full professor of Ophthalmology, would be removed from his teaching post, with a reduction in salary, by order of the Allied Government, with effect from 1 February 1944. Subsequently, he was also subject to the purge by the commissione ministeriale di primo grado, which did not consider as particularly serious his comments praising the Duce and Fascism, and merely proposed that he had to be suspended just for three months. Following his appeal, the purge commission decided to reinstate him⁵³.

[Translated by Simon Michael Tanner]

⁴⁹ With regard to Gaetano Martino, the chancellor referred to, important works have been written; cf. Andrea Romano, *L'Università di Messina al tempo di Gaetano Martino*, presented at the conference *Gaetano Martino, scienziato, Rettore, Statista (1900-1967)*, Messina, 24-26 novembre 2000 (unpublished). See also Marcello Saija (ed.), *Gaetano Martino, scienziato, Rettore, Statista (1900-1967)*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Messina 24-26 novembre 2000), Trisform, Messina, 2003, and Marcello Saija, Angela Villani, *Gaetano Martino 1900-1967*, Rubettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2011.

⁵⁰ ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 282.

⁵¹ His transfer was approved unanimously by the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the local University, in the meeting of 25 January 1940. Cf. ACS, ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Professori universitari epurazione 1945-1947, Busta 19. See also, *ivi*, ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria. Divisione prima. Fascicoli personali dei professori ordinari. III versamento 1940 – 1970, Busta 282.

⁵² On the subject of Salvatore Maggiore, a brief discussion can also be found in Enza Pelleriti, *«Italy in transition»*, cit., pp. 205-208.

⁵³ Cf. Enza Pelleriti, *“Italy in transition”*, cit., p. 209.

Census of the Jews of Messina
(Palermo National Archive, Cabinet of the Prefecture of Messina,
“*I versamento*”, Envelope 80)
Communication of the Superintendent of Messina to the Prefect, August 17, 1938

Censimento degli ebrei di Messina
(ASME, Gabinetto di Prefettura di Messina, *I versamento*, Busta 80)
Comunicazione del questore di Messina al prefetto del 17 agosto 1938

Italians:

- 1) Puglisi Dr. Prof. Allegra Stefano fu Francesco
- 2) Siracusa Prof. Vittorio fu Giuseppe
- 3) Isaya Dr. Prof. Angelo fu Francesco
- 4) Izar Dr. Prof. Guido di Antonio, in atto in gita per il Continente con la famiglia
- 5) Morpurgo Massimiliano di Michele

Foreigners

- 1) Gustavo Hochfeld fu Isacco- Capo famiglia
- 2) Simomohn Hochfeld Geltrude fu Ially, moglie
- 3) Hochfeld Ursula di Gustavo, figlia
- 4) Hochfeld Kurt Walter fu Giulio, Capo famiglia
- 5) Minden Ioplin fu Ivan, moglie
- 6) Hochfeld Gerland di Kurt, figlio
- 7) Meiurath Charlotte fu Leopoldo, ospite
- 8) Rothschild Ludwig fu Alberto, Capo famiglia
- 9) Benndorf Oskar fu Walter, Capo famiglia
- 10) Benndorf Elly di Richard, moglie
- 11) Wasserlanf Simone di Isacco, solo
- 12) Sürth Egon fu Adolfo, solo
- 13) Weissenberg Leon fu Alessandro, Capo famiglia
- 14) Iancovici Fanny fu Sigmond, moglie
- 15) Vexler Carolina fu Lupu, suocera
- 16) Iancovici Betty fu Sigmond, cognata
- 17) Godfinger Ernesto fu Elia, Capo famiglia
- 18) Plier Friedal di Giuseppe, moglie
- 19) Weissenberg Emilia fu Sigismondo, sola
- 20) Katz Gerd Eleinz fu Alberto, solo

The University of Catania on the Way to “Racial Purity”

Ernesto De Cristofaro*

Abstract: At the time of the enactment of racial laws, at the University of Catania there are no Jewish teachers. However, the current Rector Orazio Condorelli, in his opening speech of the 1938-39 academic year, recalls that investigations are underway with reference to a single dubious position. But, in fact, another scholar from the university, although not a professor, is expelled. He is the director of the Astrophysical Observatory of Catania Azeglio Bemporad, esteemed scholar, who, as a Jew, is expelled according to the dictates of R.D.L. 1728/1938. In addition, the Rector announces that from the current year the teachings of "General demography and comparative demography of races" and "Biology of races" will be introduced. Their purpose is to strengthen the racial consciousness of the students of the University as well as citizens of a nation that on the racial hierarchy and the fight against crossbreeding and racial degeneration intends to build its future of political hegemony. These teachings will be held respectively by Gaetano Zingali, Professor of Statistics and already federal of the PNF in Catania at the end of the twenties and Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1932-33 and 1936-37 and by Bruno Monterosso, Professor of Zoology. Both will devote a manual to teaching. Available since 1939 that of Demography of races, since 1942 that of Biology of races, both published by the G.U.F. of Catania. After the war, Zingali will be subjected to a process of purging, Monterosso will continue for some years to teach Biology of races, Condorelli will be deputy at the Constituent Assembly.

Keywords: Racism, antisemitism, racial laws, university, science.

1. Anti-Semitism in Catania: politics, society, academy

According to the data of the census carried out in August 1938, the results of which appear in the newspapers in October, there are 202 citizens of Jewish origin living in Sicily out of about four and a half million: ninety-six in Palermo, seventy-five in Catania, twenty-one in Messina, seven in total between Agrigento, Syracuse, Enna. The «scarcity of recipients» (M. Genco, 2000, 33) of the racial laws that are passed in those same months, is, however, compensated by a zealous application which witnesses a willingness to adhere to the directives of the regime that confirms the firm alignment of local hierarchies, and society in general, to national policy. The composition of the ruling class in Catania during the years of the regime supports the idea of a strongly harmonious relationship between center and periphery. In the early 1920s, the Minister of Public Works of the first Mussolini Government (1922-24), the lawyer and professor of Roman Law Gabriello Carnazza comes from Catania (L. Agnello, 1977, 443-447). In the following decade, other notables of the city are placed at the highest levels of the party and the State: Vincenzo Zangara, federal secretary of the Fascist Party in Catania between 1933 and 1937 and professor in charge of Public Law between 1933 and 1935 in the local university (from 1937 to 1940 he holds the chair of Italian and comparative Constitutional Law in the University “Sapienza” of Rome), is national vice-secretary of the Party from 1937 to 1940 (A. Barbera, 2013, 2082-2083); Filippo Anfuso, career diplomat, becomes head of cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Galeazzo Ciano in 1937 and is, later, ambassador in Berlin of the Italian Social Republic (S. Setta, 1988, 125-128). At the height of the time of the racial measures (and until the end of 1939), the federal secretary of the Fascist Party in Catania is Pietrangelo Mammano, a rich landowner, born in Centuripe, who stands out for his violent and prevaricating nature which is source of interferences in the public administration, frictions within the Party, intemperance and abuses against ordinary citizens (F. Pezzino, 1983, 15). But even if Catania's Fascism accepts the laws of 1938, showing its most brutal face, Emanuele Macaluso recalls that in Catania, for many years, even a refined writer such as Vitaliano Brancati - who, from the second half of the 1930s onwards, will not

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fail to address his most corrosive sarcasm to the regime - plays like many others a part in the Fascist chorus, until disappointment, anger and disenchantment come to pass (E. Macaluso, 1983, VIII). This brief overview describes the transversal capacity of attraction of the regime and the involvement, in the city of Catania, of figures and subjects coming from the ranks of the landowners, from the academic world, from the intellectual middle class. The picture would not change much if we move a few kilometers further south. From the village of Chiaramonte Gulfi, located in the province of Ragusa, comes, in fact, one of the leading figures of fascist racism: Telesio Interlandi, founder in 1924 and until 1943 director of the newspaper "Il Tevere" and since 1938 director of "La difesa della razza" (M. Canali, 2004, 519-521). But, in general, also the Sicilian press, historically attested on more moderate positions than those that animate the publications ascribable to figures such as Interlandi, - the "Giornale di Sicilia" and "L'Ora" in Palermo, the "Popolo di Sicilia" in Catania, "La Gazzetta" in Messina - quickly becomes «the field of shooting on which racists practice» (M. Genco, 2000, 41). In the "Giornale di Sicilia", for example, the anti-Jewish campaign already starts at the beginning of 1938, while, within the framework of the same propaganda, "Il Popolo di Sicilia" affirms that the Jews were responsible for numerous economically motivated crimes committed in Catania - fraud, extortion, falsification of goods, fraudulent bankruptcies (P. Nicolosi, 1988, 108). The position of the top management of the University of Catania at the time of the laws against the Jews of the autumn of 1938 is a little less direct than that of the militant racist Giuseppe Maggiore who, as Rector of Palermo, is pleased to communicate that of the ninety-nine Jewish teachers expelled from the roles of the Italian University, five had been in service in the sicilian capital (Genco M., 2000, 88). The words of the Rector Orazio Condorelli have a different stamp, but betray a state of mind no less adhesive to the racial politics just inaugurated. In giving his opening speech for the 1938-39 academic year, the Rector Condorelli - born in 1897 and full professor of Philosophy of Law since 1933 - takes care to «note with great satisfaction that, except for the results of the investigations that are underway in relation to a doubtful case, no elimination is expected in the teaching and assistant staff of this University, albeit very Italian, as a result of the recent measures taken by Italy in defense of its race» (O. Condorelli, 1940, 16). This passage from Condorelli's speech has already been reported in the historiography by authoritative scholars (S. Gentile., 2010, 13; R. Calimani, 2015, 747), but it is still possible to spend some more time on it. First of all, it must be said that only for a fortuitous combination of time the University of Catania is in 1938 "very Italian". At least three eminent Jewish scholars have taught and conducted research there until a few years earlier. From 1911 to the early 1920s, Maurizio Ascoli, author of important studies on the treatment of tuberculosis, who later moves to Palermo and is expelled from there in 1938, has taught there in the Faculty of Medicine. Angelo Segrè is Professor of Economic History at the Higher Institute of Economics and Commerce (the future Faculty of Economics and Commerce) from 1929 to 1935. Finally, Tullio Ascarelli, a distinguished scholar of commercial law, has taught in Catania from 1929 to 1932, in the same Faculty of Law from which the Rector Condorelli came (P. Nicolosi, 1988, 114-115). But in the academic biography of Orazio Condorelli enters fully a figure of Jewish teacher, who plays a decisive role in it. He is Alessandro Levi, a Venetian professor of Philosophy of Law, who holds the chair from 1921 to 1924 (A. Cavaglione, 2005, 747-749) and under whose guidance Condorelli takes the first steps of his academic career (V. Frosini, 1982, 756-758). Between 1921 and 1924 Condorelli publishes his first five scientific works, one of which, moreover, is devoted to the thought of the Jewish philosopher of law Hans Kelsen (O. Condorelli, 1923, 307-315). These works enable him to achieve the "libera docenza" (the first step of academic teaching qualification) in Philosophy of Law on February 9, 1925 - even though the whole procedure begins on November 20th, 1922. Alessandro Levi is a member of the jury that gives Condorelli the "libera docenza" (together with professors Pietro Delogu, Biondo Biondi, Michele Barillari and, until 8 December 1924, Giuseppe Maggiore, later replaced by Eugenio Di Carlo) and - by unanimous designation of the other members, starting from 8 December 1924 - also the speaker¹. Therefore, the drawing up of the judgment with which the "libera docenza" of

¹ Archivio storico dell'Università degli Studi di Catania (from now on ASUCT), fascicoli del personale docente, f. Condorelli Orazio, Minutes of the work of the Commission for the "libera docenza" in Philosophy of Law.

Condorelli has been conferred is owed directly to Levi and, on the other hand, he is at the University of Catania at that time the dean of the teaching within which the scientific life of the future Rector would be carried out from then on. The historical archive of the University of Catania does not show any traces of subsequent contacts or collaboration between disciple and teacher, which probably could have been there. Certainly, during the tragic parenthesis of the racial laws, Condorelli would not have had any interest in looking for his first mentor. In any case, at the end of the war, Levi is reinstated in his teaching and is elected to the "Accademia dei Lincei". In his inaugural speech, Condorelli mentions that "investigations" are underway into the position of a person whose identity and role are not better described. This is Professor Cesare Grassetti, originally from Milan and at that time "professore straordinario" of Institutions of private law at the Catania legal faculty. Grassetti is suspended from service with effect from 16 October 1938² and from the payment of his salary by a telegram, signed by the Minister Bottai and addressed to the Rector Condorelli, the following December 14th³. In October, he receives a communication from the Rector in which he is informed that, where interested, he could produce to the Ministry of National Education all the documents proving that he and/or the closest members of his family (parents, children, sisters, brothers) belong to the category of families who had relatives fallen in Libyan, first world, Ethiopian or Spanish war; that they have had volunteers in the same wars; that they have had fighters in these wars decorated with merit; that they have had mutilated, disabled, wounded having fought for the fascist cause; that they have had party members in the years from 1919 to 1922 and in the second half of 1924. The letter, which bears the heading "Professors of the Jewish race", anticipates the provisions that will be contained in Article 14 of R.d.l. 1728 of 17 November 1938, according to which some categories of Jewish citizens could have asked for the disapplication of racial measures against them if they had particular merit. However, that rule could only have applied to the restrictions of a patrimonial nature (ownership of houses and buildings, ownership or management of undertakings) or to the possibility of exercising the office of guardian or administrator of minors or incapacitated persons not belonging to the Jewish race or of serving in the army provided for by Article 10 and to participation in insurance companies provided for by letter h of Article 13 of the same decree. If Grassetti had ever turned out to be Jewish, in essence, he would have had to leave his post at the University, as happened to each of his colleagues for whom this condition was met. On the contrary, in a long letter addressed to the Ministry of National Education on 12 May 1939, Grassetti describes his family situation, affirms that he and his father belong to the Catholic religion and complains that the suspicion that is on his account is motivated solely by the unavailability of the baptism certificate of his paternal grandfather⁴. Once the investigations have been completed, the suspension is lifted on November 9, 1939 and Grassetti resumes his teaching⁵. Curiously, in 1935, only two years before taking up the position of Rector and three years before the racial laws, Condorelli had asked to move from the teaching of Philosophy of Law to that, technically more relevant, of Institutions of private law, a chair at that time without a titular teacher⁶.

2. The Bemporad «case»

Azeglio Bemporad, in 1938 director of the astrophysical observatory, is one of the scholars who, although he does not come under strictly formal terms into the roles of the teaching or assistant staff of the University of Catania, is struck by the anti-Semitic measures. So, he cannot be considered the primary object of the Rector's opening speech, but his story recalls the story of all those people

² ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Grassetti Cesare, Ministerial letter of suspension from service.

³ ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Grassetti Cesare, telegram from the Minister of National Education to the Rector of the University of Catania.

⁴ ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Grassetti Cesare, letter from Cesare Grassetti to the Ministry of National Education.

⁵ ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Grassetti Cesare, telegram from the Ministry of National Education to the University of Catania.

⁶ ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Condorelli Orazio, letter from the Rector to the Minister of National Education.

working in any role at the University and expelled as a result of the racial legislation (P. Nastasi, 1994, 103-155). His story, which has been briefly mentioned in historiography on previous occasions (R. Finzi, 2003², 100; A. Ventura, 2013, 82), has been the subject of greater attention only in recent years. Azeglio Bemporad was born in Siena in 1875 and graduated in Mathematics at the "Normale" in Pisa in 1898 with honors. In 1899 he is an assistant at the Observatory of Turin and from 1900 to 1904 he followed a three-year specialization course at the University of Berlin. Returning to Italy in 1904, he is appointed assistant at the Observatory of Catania, the only Italian station that takes part in the European project, promoted by the Academy of France, for the realization of a photographic "Carte du ciel". Bemporad devotes himself intensely to this activity. In 1912 he becomes Director of the Specola di Capodimonte. Despite his formal membership of the Fascist Party, here Bemporad enters into strong friction, for professional reasons, with his colleague Salvatore Aurino, who is also secretary of the Fascist Party in Naples. For these reasons, in 1928 he is not confirmed as "libero docente" in theoretical astronomy, a qualification that he had achieved in Catania and between 1929 and 1930 he is subjected to supervision and filed as an anti-fascist in the central political register. He returns to Catania in 1933 and is entrusted with the teaching of Geodesy and Astronomy, which he combines with the work of composing the astrographic catalogue at the Observatory. Between 1933 and 1934 various contrasting pronouncements accumulate with reference to his loyalty to the regime by different bodies of the Fascist Party. Bemporad goes from being an "ex-antifascist" to being obliged to return his card and badge in 1935. He is removed from the teachings entrusted to him and, finally, in December 1938 is also relieved by the management of the Observatory because of racial laws. The application for 'discriminazione' (differentiation) which he submits to the General Directorate for Demography and Race is rejected on the grounds of 'political demerits'. The same decision is taken towards the members of his family. In 1943 his wife dies and in the same year his house is destroyed by bombing. Between August and September 1944, Bemporad learns of the revocation of the measures that had led to his expulsion and manifests to the Rector Mario Petrocelli (full Professor of ecclesiastical law who takes over from Condorelli in 1943 arrested by allied troops of occupation and interned in the prison camp of Padula) his willingness to resume his research and teaching activities. He dies on February 11, 1945, before this wish could be realized (A. Mangano, 2015, 16-24).

3. Academic teaching and racist propaganda

Although in 1938 the University of Catania does not have much work to do to "reclaim" its staff from the presence of "not very Italian" employees, it must be noted as one of the first in activating new teachings inspired by the doctrines and policies recently undertaken. It is, once again, Condorelli who reminds the professors of the University that the institution, at the degree courses in Political Science and Law, of the teaching of General demography and comparative demography of races «[...] as well as being a useful complement to the culture of young people destined to form the ruling class of an imperial nation that has the responsibility of governing populations of different races, will be worth to strengthen the racial conscience, that must be always vigilant in a great race like the Italian one, that must, for itself and for the world, fulfill its historical mission necessarily connected to its own genius, whose peculiarities has therefore the duty to preserve from bastardization» (O. Condorelli, 1940, 8). The contemporary institution of the teaching of Biology of races in the Faculties of Medicine and Surgery and of Humanities and Philosophy obeys the same requirements. These new teaching paths follow, with zealous timeliness, an indication contained in the Declaration on race of the Grand Council of Fascism dated October 6, 1938, which notes the establishment by the Minister of National Education of chairs of studies on the race in major universities (M. Sarfatti, 2017², 65, 201) and, in more prosaically administrative terms, followed by a circular of the same Minister Bottai, dated 22 October 1938 and addressed to the Rectors and Directors of the Higher Institutes, which emphasizes that the main task of the University is to contribute to the formation of a firm and deep racial conscience (S. Gentile, 2010, 18-19). The University of Catania, together with the universities of Bologna, Turin, Bari, Urbino, Florence and the Catholic University of Milan, is one of the sites that most readily transfer these indications in as many training courses as possible. Gaetano Zingali

has been in charge of teaching General demography and comparative demography of races since the 1938-39 academic year. Professor of Statistics since 1925 and Professor of Public Finance at the Faculty of Law since 1935, Zingali is a fascist of proven faith: member of the Fascist Provincial Directory of Syracuse from 1922 to 1924, federal secretary of the Fascist Party in Catania from 1927 to 1929, Member of Parliament from 1929 to 1939 and member of the Superior Council of Statistics from 1929 to 1943. Between 1932 and 1937 he is the Dean of the Faculty of Law of Catania, in which he holds many lectureships (Economic Policy, Tax Law, and Financial Law). He devotes himself to teaching General demography and comparative demography of the race between 1938 and 1943, the year in which he is suspended from the role of teacher until 1947 (E. De Cristofaro, 2013, 2091-2092). His course of lessons of the academic year 1938-39 is published in 1939 by the Group of University Fascists of Catania and the Rector Condorelli sends a copy of it to Sabato Visco, Director of the Institute of Physiology of the University of Rome and head of the Office "Studies and propaganda on the race" at the Ministry of Popular Culture. Visco replies to Condorelli on June 30th 1940, thanking him warmly for the volume and informing him that the book would be exhibited at the First National Exhibition on the Race. The book has a first part dedicated to the policies of the regime in favour of the quantitative and qualitative strengthening of the nation (support for motherhood and childhood, fight against contraceptive practices, tax on celibacy, hypothesis of taxation of infectious marriages) and a second part that concerns the risks of crossbreeding, contamination and degradation of racial positive characteristics for excessive mixing with foreign elements. Attention is paid not only generically to the «races biologically dissimilar from ours» (G. Zingali, 1939, 234) that are possible vehicles of genetic pollution, but primarily to the "Jewish race", which among all appears the most dangerous. From a numerical point of view, Zingali recalls that, according to the 1931 census, there were no more than 48,000 Jews resident in Italy. But it continues by crediting a false belief (M. Sarfatti, 2017², 143-188) which tended to inflate this number to make the impending sense of danger more palpable: «[...] one is generally willing to admit that the Jews were going up to Italy, at the time when the government measures against them began, to no less than 100,000» (G. Zingali, 1939, 237). There are many reasons of character and morality why Jews represent a foreign body in the body of the nation: first of all, they try to undermine and overwhelm all the peoples who host them by virtue of a particular mentality that puts them against everything that surrounds them; moreover, the fact of not having a territory and a country leads them to spread the ranks of an internationalist organization that brings them closer to the international networks of freemasonry and communism in their disruptive action and in the common contempt for national values; finally, they represent a people eager for earnings and particularly trained, from a millenary tradition, to all forms of open and hidden activities, licit and illicit «that serve to make their own fortune on the ruin of others» (G. Zingali, 1939, 238). To do this, they climb the ladder of power in the most subtle ways and without any scruples use manipulation, blackmail and choking. In short, «the Jews constitute - within each State and particularly within the unitary and totalitarian States - an element of disintegration of homogeneity and national strength; and they represent, within each nation, the advanced patrol of atheistic, masonic, communist internationalism and destroyer of the elements of civilization, conservation and well-being of peoples» (G. Zingali, 1939, 242). For such political reasons, which are associated with the strictly biological ones, Fascism defends the Italians from the Jewish race which constitutes for them «the number one public danger» (G. Zingali, 1939, 243). Equally peremptory, although apparently presented within a more objective and scientific framework, are the conclusions of Bruno Monterosso, Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy since 1930 and appointed from 1938-39 to teach Biology of races at the University of his hometown, where he continues his career (F. Barbagli, 2012, 1515-153) and where he is among the first lecturers to deliver a lecture inspired by the new theme generated by national policies entitled "The races as they arise and as they set", on December 12th, 1938⁷. The case of Monterosso as a zoologist dealing with "human races" is not, on the other hand, isolated since on the national scene,

⁷ ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Monterosso Bruno, invitation card to the proslusion of the zoology course of Prof. Bruno Monterosso signed by the Rector Orazio Condorelli.

the zoologists Edoardo Zavattari and his assistant Marcello Ricci of the University of Rome are among the ten signatories of the so-called "Manifesto of the race" (or "Manifesto of racist scientists") appeared on the "Giornale d'Italia" on July 14th, 1938 and Alessandro Ghigi, Professor of Zoology in Bologna, sits, with thirteen illustrious colleagues of various disciplinary backgrounds, in the Higher Council of Demography and Race established on September 5th 1938 (P. Greco, 2016, 85-95). Towards the end of 1938, Monterosso also appears among the signatories of an appeal from the Zoology and Anatomy Section of the Italian Society for the Advancement of Science (Sips) so that, given the new requirements dictated by the political agenda, competitions could soon be held to strengthen the teaching of Biology of races in universities (G. Israel, 2010, 286). From a numerical point of view, the Monterosso survey does not validate Zingali's alarmism about the increase in the number of Jews in Italy, which according to his estimate represent about 0.12% of the population. Even on the somatic level, Monterosso concedes that it is not always easy to distinguish between "Aryans" and Jews and that the characters of both are often interchangeable. Although, in effect, some peculiarities of the external appearance can contribute to visually isolate the "Jewish race": stocky nose, falling lips, small stature, poorly developed limbs (B. Monterosso, 1942, 156-157). Monterosso also admits that among the Jews there have been appreciable wits - Spinoza, Freud, Einstein - although more often than not they have been more demolishers than system builders. But, more generally, Jews have worked tirelessly for the disintegration and corruption of the moral and cultural heritage of humanity. They have shown solidarity only with their co-religionists, with whom they have always conspired to gain positions of leadership and responsibility for the vital nerve centres of politics, administration and the economy (B. Monterosso, 1942, 161-163). But, above all, they are directed into everything they do by an insatiable greed: « [...] money represents everything for the Jew because it constitutes the most mobile, most easily concealed and convertible property» (B. Monterosso, 1942, 163). Finally, the Jews are bearers of a pride of race for which they alone are men, «all others are beasts» (B. Monterosso, 1942, 448). From this it follows that fascist racism is a racism of enhancement of the quality of life and a practical means of defense (B. Monterosso, 1942, 455). In conclusion, it can be observed that within a treatment that extends over four hundred pages, the Jews are the only ethno-anthropological unit to which Monterosso dedicates a widespread analysis of a socio-moral character, as well as historical and bio-somatic. Even towards Africans, the object of racist sentiments in Italy and as well recipients of a strict racial legislation, the judgment of Monterosso is much more nuanced. The African races are «all in decay» (B. Monterosso, 1942, 172), they are not able to assimilate the superior civilization of the whites, of which they have assimilated only the defects, «aggravating them in their primitive and wild nature» (B. Monterosso, 1942, 174). No hope can be placed in their ransom, but neither must anything be feared from such retrograde and weak peoples.

4. Final statements

Despite such a proud and explicitly racist intellectual militancy, the fate of Catania's post-war scientists, like that of their most renowned colleagues, is, for the most part, mild and benevolent, if not illustrious and gratifying. This confirms the impression, already expressed in the historiography, on the capacity of public institutions, and of academic ones in particular, «to absorb, even if to different degrees and at different levels [...], men who had participated in the racist and anti-Semitic policies of Fascism» (T. Dell'Era, 2010, 236). Orazio Condorelli, after a few months of internment in the camp of Padula, resumes the teaching of Philosophy of Law. In 1946 he is elected deputy of the "Blocco delle libertà" at the Constituent Assembly. Subsequently, he serves in the Monarchical Party for which he sits in the city council of Catania in the legislatures of 1952 and 1956. From 1953 to 1958 he is also a senator of the Republic (V. Frosini, 1982, 757). Bruno Monterosso continues to teach Biology of races until the mid-fifties. Between 1956 and 1959 he is the Dean of the Faculty of Science of the University of Catania and, having completed his teaching, he is awarded the title of Professor Emeritus. When he dies, in January 1965, the Rector of Catania receives, among others, a message of condolence from the Rector "*facente funzioni*" of the University of Pavia Giorgio Renato

Levi⁸. In all likelihood, Levi, who dies in April of the same year, is not aware of Monterosso's racist past. As a professor of chemistry at the University of Pavia, he had been forced to flee Italy, finding shelter in Brazil and teaching there from 1938 to 1946 (L. Cerruti, 2005, 763-766). Gaetano Zingali, initially, suffers the heavier consequences caused by the procedures of purge and until 1947 is deprived of personal freedom. Subsequently, he is reinstated in the teaching and from 1958 to 1963 he serves as lay member of the Superior Council of the Magistracy (E. De Cristofaro, 2013, 2091-92).

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⁸ ASUCT, fascicoli del personale docente, f. Monterosso Bruno, note of condolence from the temporary acting Rector (“facente funzioni”) of the University of Pavia to the Rector of the University of Catania.

The Enforcement of the Racial Laws in the University “Benito Mussolini” of Bari

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Abstract. The article analyses the enforcement of the fascist racial laws in the University of Bari between 1938 and 1943. After a reflection on Jewish presence in the city and in the university of Bari during the first half of the 20th century, it relates the stories of four scholars: three of them were expelled in autumn 1938, the fourth one were wrongly involved in that process. In this way, the article shows the attitude and the behaviors of academic authorities and of the other scholars during these years; the reactions of the involved professors and the silence on this event after the end of the Second World War.

Keywords: University of Bari; Racial laws; Fascism.

Introduction: Jewish presence in Puglia and the University of Bari

The presence of Jews in Southern Italy in the first half of the 20th century was less prominent than in many other cities such as Rome and the Northern part of the country. Puglia, where the city of Bari is located, was no exception. Jewish communities had been an exception and were primarily settled in just a few areas and for short periods of time. It is worth mentioning that at the end of the Second World War, a remarkable group of foreign Jews travelled through the South-East of Italy mainly to sail especially for Palestine [Terzulli, 2002: 179-182]. In this regard, a remarkable case was the community of Sannicandro Garganico (FG) where a group of local inhabitants became Jews during the 30s and emigrated to Palestine at the end of the 40s [Terzulli, 2002: 171-172]. The census launched by fascist regime during the Summer 1938 to identify the Jews on Italian soil assessed the presence of a small number of Jews in Puglia, that is around 150 people (Italian and foreign) in the whole region, half of them in Bari. In comparison to the 1931 census, this document shows that the number of Jews had slowly increased. [Pansini, 2009: 2-3; Terzulli, 2002: 174].

In this particular context was enclosed the University of Bari, established in 1925 and promptly dedicated to Benito Mussolini. The link between the university and the regime was strong and close since the foundation of the higher education institution, because fascism and Gentile's reform managed to support Bari academic ambition, which had been remained frustrated since the national unification in 1861. The first Chancellor, Nicola Pende, was also well integrated in the hierarchy of the regime [Dell'Era, 2013]. It is no wonder that during the opening ceremony of the academic year 1937-38, the Chancellor Biagio Petrocelli (1937-40) talked about «a lively and deep interpenetration» between the State and the education system, which he considered an «achievement» of the fascist regime.¹ According to the Chancellor, the university was not at the service of students, scholars, or families, rather of the (fascist) State.² Since the beginning of the 30s in Bari (as in other Italian

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¹ Archivio generale dell'Università di Bari (General Archive of the University of Bari, AgUniBa), *Annuario accademico della R. Università degli Studi “Benito Mussolini” di Bari*, AY 1937-38, Opening Ceremony (November 22nd 1937 – XVI), Report of the Chancellor Biagio Petrocelli on the academic year 1936-37, p. 5. In this way he referred to the GUF and the “Milizia” as «essential parts of the academic fascist system, whose events and development need to be our concern and our constant pride», *ivi*, p. 9.

² See *ivi*, p. 16.

universities) there was the chair of History and Doctrine of Fascism, entrusted to the future Chancellor Raffaele Resta, which was devoted to the students in Law, Political science and Economy.³

From a quantitative point of view, at the end of the 30s the University of Bari was still a small institution, with less than 3.000 students, that would increase dramatically after the war.⁴ As pertains foreign students, their number was about 40, predominantly Albanian. Given its geographical position, it is no wonder that the University of Bari did not have a tradition of Jewish scholars among its ranked. In 1931 Enrico Emilio Franco was offered the lectureship in Pathological Anatomy. Franco was a Jew from Trieste who, together with his Jewish student, Luigi Bugliolo, moved to Pisa in 1937. [Leuzzi, 2009: 117]. The scarce number of Jews in Puglia is also proved by the fact that none of the three scholars, who were expelled by the University, was originally from that region, rather had moved to Bari in the years prior to the promulgation of the racial laws. Such a factor had also an impact on scholarly research, which was, on one side, made easier by the small number of cases to explore this process. On the other side, however, scholars have struggled to find information given the scarce number of Jews scholars in Bari.

Without delving into the well established historical literature on national and local cases, it is worth pointing out that scholarly research on the enactment of racial laws in Puglia is particularly scarce and mostly relies on the work by Vito Antonio Leuzzi. He, with Mariolina Pansini and Giulio Esposito, edited a collection of essays *Leggi razziali in Puglia: con testimonianze e documenti* (Bari, Progedit), which expands a research project that was conducted 10 years before [Leuzzi, Pansini & Esposito, 1999]. Finally, such a topic has been at the heart of Francesco Terzulli's work, which, however, was intended to serve as material for high school teachers [Terzulli, 2002]. For this reason I have focused primarily on archival research, both in the General Archive of the University of Bari and in National Archive in Rome. In the former, I have perused a wide array of documents such as the "Annuari accademici" (Academic yearbooks), the "Fascicoli personali dei docenti" (Scholars personal files), the "Carteggio dei rettori" (Chancellor correspondence), the "Verbali del Senato accademico" (Minutes of Academic Senate), the "Verbali del Consiglio di amministrazione" (Minutes of Board of Directors) and the "Verbali dei Consigli di facoltà" (Minutes of Faculty Boards). In particular, in my work I highlighted the authorities' zeal in carrying out ministerial orders and, simultaneously, I have illustrated the scarce Jewish presence at the University of Bari. In the State Central Archive, I have collected files regarding Bari scholars, specifically the folders "Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza" (General Directorate for Demography and Race) in the Ministry of Interior; "Direzione Generale Istruzione Superiore" (General Directorate for Higher Education) in the Ministry of Public Education; "Carteggio ordinario" (Ordinary Correspondence) e "Carteggio riservato" (Private Correspondence) in the "Segreteria particolare del duce" (Secretariat of the Duce). All these sources have been useful to explore the stories of expelled scholars from Bari institution, but they have not provided information on the number of Jewish students. From the analysis of such documents only a few information emerged, specifically concerning four foreign students expelled in 1938 (three from Medicine School and one from faculty of Pharmacy),⁵ which is the only quantitative data useful for my study.

Teaching and spreading racism

Before analysing the enforcement of the racial laws at the University of Bari, it is also worth reflecting on the influence of racism in such an institution before 1938. In the opening ceremony of the academic year 1933-34, professor Giuseppe Sangiorgi read a *lectio magistralis* entitled: "Malattie

³ See *ivi*, *ad annum*; Archivio centrale dello Stato (State Central Archive [ACS]), *Ministero della Pubblica istruzione*, Divisione II, *Leggi, regolamenti, statuti, esami, corsi, statistiche, tasse, studenti, ecc. (1925-1945)*, b. 13, f. Insegnamento della storia e dottrina del fascismo.

⁴ 2302 (1936-37); 2389 (1938-39); 2843 (1939-40); 13033 in 1949-50. This data was found in a statistic chapter of AgUniBa, *Annuario accademico della R. Università degli Studi "Benito Mussolini" di Bari, ad annum*.

⁵ Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica istruzione*, Divisione II, *Leggi, regolamenti, statuti, esami, corsi, statistiche, tasse, studenti, ecc. (1925-1945)*, b. 192, f. Studenti ebrei, undated, List of foreign Jewish students enrolled in Italian universities in the academic year 1937-38; *ivi*, January 22nd 1938, Chancellor's communication to the Ministry of National Education concerning foreign Jewish students.

sociali e difesa della razza” (Social Diseases and Race Protection). In this occasion Sangiorgi argued that «in 1923 the “mussolinian” idea of race protection was introduced [...] promoting the struggle against the germs of physical and mental corruption». The topic of the *lectio* was not racism itself, Sangiorgi discussed about “social diseases” as so-called «intersexual» diseases, cancer, malaria, tuberculosis and diabetes. However, it is worth noting that his reference to a «race protection» mirrors the fascist regime statement.⁶ The concept of “race protection” already existed before 1938, it was used to support actions for the “Italian race’s improvement”. Above all, fascism was recognised as one of the main actors of this process.

Lectureships devoted to questions of race were introduced exactly in the academic year 1938-39 in all Italian universities as part of a ministerial scheme. The Chancellor Biagio Petrocelli, during the opening ceremony in November 1938 stated «that it [the University of Bari] had immediately arranged for [...] adding two important lectureships on race to the course programme: the Biology of Human Races and General Demography and Comparative Demography of Races», assuring that these subjects would be taught in the most rigorous and scientific way.⁷ The teaching of Demography of Races (in the Faculties of Law, Political science and Economy) was entrusted to professor Beniamino Mazzilli, while for the course of the Biology of Human Races the University of Bari chose an expert on this subject: professor Augusto Stefanelli, who in 1942 published a book entitled *Biologia delle razze umane, con cenni sulla razza italiana* [Stefanelli, 1942] (The Biology of Human Races, with mentions on Italian race).⁸ Such lectureships survived the fall of the Fascist regime, which had established them, even if in the new faculty of *Magistero* (teacher training).⁹

In the same opening ceremony in which Petrocelli announced the start of new lectureships on race, the Chancellor mentioned scholars’ initiatives outside the university to support some traditional fascist themes such as colonialism, autarchy and race protection. Petrocelli stated that he had taken part in these events with great pleasure «because [he] felt [...] the need to put into practice [...], that principle of forceful collaboration among all branches of the Regime [...]; a principle which confirmed [...] that the University [...] [opened] today all its doors to the spirit of this time».¹⁰ It is worth noticing that the academic authorities considered absolutely normal to support and give their contribution to the regime propaganda, even with regard to its race policy. Academic authorities were not alarmed for the idea of race protection, which they considered quite normal in this moment; so they simply acknowledged and followed the new ministerial orders. Hence, the Guf initiative in Bari, aimed to create in the academic year 1938-39 a “Race and Demography Department”, did not come as a surprise.¹¹

Enforcement of the racial laws at the University of Bari: developments and actors

Measures against the Jews were enacted in Bari, as in many other universities, before the official passing of the racial laws, in August 1938, specifically through a census of Jewish scholars, students and employees. The Ministry of National education, Giuseppe Bottai, requested these actions even before the racial laws were approved. On August 26th the Chancellor wrote a note to Bari *podestà* (mayor) communicating the presence of three Jewish scholars, one professor and two *incaricati*.¹²

⁶ AgUniBa, *Annuario accademico della R. Università degli Studi “Benito Mussolini” di Bari*, AY 1933-34, Prof. Giuseppe Sangiorgi, *Malattie sociali e difesa della razza*, p. 23.

⁷ Ivi, AY 1938-1939, p. 16. In the following years appeared in the *Annuario* some publications and dissertations on the topic of race: Toschi Umberto, *Razza-Ambiente-Economia*, “Geopolitica”, an. I, n. 6, Milano, 1939, ivi, AY 1938-39, p. 113; Sibilano Adalberto, *Razze umane estinte e viventi: Gruppo europeoide con particolare riguardo alla razza italiana*, ivi, AY 1939-40-41, p. 100.

⁸ AgUniBa, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 129 (1942-43), f. 2411 – Insegnamenti razziali, February 17th 1943, Letter from Chancellor Toschi to the Ministry of National Education. See also ivi, *Verbali del Consiglio di facoltà di Giurisprudenza*, Vol. I, October 15th 1938, p. 281; ivi, *Verbali del Consiglio di facoltà di Medicina*, Vol. III, October 15th 1938, p. 67. The Academic Senate ratified these decisions some days later, see ivi, *Verbali del Senato accademico*, October 17th 1938.

⁹ See the University’s Statute approved in 1955, <www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1955/10/31/055U0958/sg>.

¹⁰ AgUniBa, *Annuario accademico della R. Università degli Studi “Benito Mussolini” di Bari*, AY 1938-1939, p. 17.

¹¹ Ivi, p. 28. The *Gruppi universitari fascisti* (Fascist University Groups, Guf) were the fascist party’s organizations in the Universities, see for example La Rovere, 2003 and Duranti, 2008.

¹² AgUniBa, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 104 (1938-1939), f. 1990 – Censimento del Personale di razza ebraica (pos. 47), August 26th 1938, Petrocelli’s note to the *podestà* of Bari.

One month later, Petrocelli sent an official letter to the Ministry reporting the census' results. The Jews at the University of Bari were four: Bruno Foà, full professor; Ladislao Brull, *assistente*; Giorgio Tesoro, *incaricato*; Francesco Duranti, *libero docente*, who had made a mistake in filling out his form.¹³ Both Tesoro and, all the more, Foà were late at answering the census request and the Chancellor had to push for it, although as pertains Foà there were no doubts: he was notoriously a Jew.¹⁴ Foà and Ladislao Brull – full professor and *assistente* – were expelled by means of a ministerial provision, while the University of Bari revoked Tesoro's temporary post for the academic year 1938-39 and he lost his job at the University.¹⁵

In order to explore in detail the enforcement of the racial law, I will look at the cases of these four scholars, three of them expelled from the University and a fourth one, accidentally involved in such a process. Bruno Foà was born in Naples on December 8th 1905 and he graduated in Law in the same city in the academic year 1925-26, before becoming a *libero docente* in Political Economy in 1929. In 1933 – when he was 28 – Foà was granted the teaching post in *Economia politica corporativa* at the University of Messina, after resolving a long controversy with the University of Catania.¹⁶ He remained in Sicily for three years and later he requested to the Minister to move to Bari, where he arrived in October 1936. In this city, Foà was given a full professorship in March 1937, teaching *Economia politica corporativa* in the Faculty of Economy and Colonial History and Politics (*Storia e politica coloniale*) in the Faculty of Political science. Bruno Foà was close to the Zionist movement, but he had also been a fascist since the beginning of 20s. In the 1938 census report, he has declared to be Jew from his father bloodline, and he alleged that he was part of the Jewish community in Naples as well as that he professed Judaism.¹⁷ Foà had married Lisa Haimann, who was also a Jew. After the expulsion from the university they emigrated to London where they remained until 1940 working for the Bbc, and later to the United States, where Foà lived until his death. Formally, Bruno Foà was given back his position at the University of Bari from 1944 to April 1st 1946, but he never came back to Italy. When he has become citizen of the United States he has resigned before losing his job that request Italian citizenship.¹⁸

Ladislao Brull was born in Gyongyos (Hungary) on August 8th 1906 and he arrived in Italy in 1924, soon becoming an Italian citizen. Brull graduated in Chemistry in Bologna in November 26th 1928 with first class honours and in 1934 he became an *assistente* in Camerino teaching Physics-Chemistry. Brull joined the Guf in October 28th 1926 and the Fascist national party in May 16th 1934; his oath of office statement was scheduled for February 14th 1935. Ladislao arrived in Bari in the academic year 1934-35 where he taught Physics-Chemistry in the Faculty of Pharmacy and General and Inorganic Chemistry in the Faculty of Science.¹⁹ After his expulsion, Brull ran away from Italy to go to Argentina at the beginning of 1939, travelling through Belgium and Netherlands, supported by his antifascist friends in Bari. He died in Latin America in 1942.

¹³ Ivi, September 29th 1938, Petrocelli's communication to the Ministry of National Education on Jewish scholars census results; ivi, October 1st 1938, Personal forms sending from Bari to the Ministry and recap of census' results.

¹⁴ Ivi, September 19th 1938, Reminder of Chancellor to the scholars who did not return yet their form; ivi, September 24th 1938, Letter from Petrocelli to Bruno Foà to speed up his form return.

¹⁵ See ivi, October 14th 1938, Communication from the Ministry of National Education to the Chancellor of Bari on Jewish scholars.

¹⁶ See the long correspondence between Catania, Messina and the Ministry in autumn 1933 on Foà's chair. First he was chosen in Catania, but then this choose was revoked and he went to Messina. Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Universitaria (1961-89), *Divisione I*, Fascicoli personali professori ordinari, *III versamento*, b. 204, f. Foà Bruno.

¹⁷ AgUniBa, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 104 (1938-1939), f. 1990 – Censimento del Personale di razza ebraica (pos. 47), September 19th 1938, Bruno Foà's personal form.

¹⁸ For biographic and career, see AgUniBa, *Fascicoli personali docenti*, f. 638 – Foà Bruno; Acs, *Ministero dell'Interno*, Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza, *Fascicoli personali*, b. 238, f. BEN/16385 – Foà Bruno; ivi, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Superiore (1908-1961), *Divisione I*, Liberi docenti, *II serie (1930-1950)*, b. 211, f. Foà Bruno; ivi, Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Universitaria (1961-89), *Divisione I*, Fascicoli personali professori ordinari, *III versamento*, b. 204, f. Foà Bruno.

¹⁹ For biographic and career, see AgUniBa, *Fascicoli personali docenti*, f. 191 – Prof. Brull Ladislao; Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Superiore (1908-1961), *Divisione I*, Liberi docenti, *II serie (1930-1950)*, b. 77, f. Brull Ladislao.

Giorgio Tesoro was born on February 6th 1904 in Rome where he graduated in Law and he became a lawyer and *libero docente* in Fiscal Law. He joined the Fascist National Party (PNF) in January 1927 and he married Gilda De Mauro, who was also a Jew. They were part of the Jewish community in Rome and they professed Judaism. Tesoro was a professor at the University of Rome, but he also taught Administrative Law in the faculty of Law and Financial Law in the faculty of Economy at the University of Bari.²⁰ When the racial laws were introduced, he lost his temporary teaching post in Puglia and he was also expelled from the University of Rome.²¹ In June 1939 his teacher certification (*libera docenza*) was revoked and Giorgio Tesoro emigrated to the United States where he later became an American citizen.²²

The story of Francesco Duranti was of a different kind, although extremely significant. He was born in Monopoli (Bari) on January 22nd 1870 and he graduated in Medicine in Bologna. During the First World War, Duranti was the head of the ophthalmological department of the Red Cross military hospital in Bari. He became a *libero docente* at the University of Sassari in 1920 and later he came back to Bari to teach Clinical Ophthalmology. In 1926 he was granted the important honorary title of “Grande Ufficiale nell’Ordine della Corona d’Italia”. What is more, he was among the founding members of fascist trade union of university professors in Bari but there was no further information about his participation in the PNF in the collected archival material, even if he had to be registered to participate to party’s life. However, in March 1929 Duranti asked Mussolini an autographed picture, but his request was not satisfied.²³ His story is relevant because even if he was not known as a Jew, on September 22nd 1938 Duranti sent to the Chancellor of the University of Bari, where he was teaching at the time, a personal form in which he declared himself to be of “Jewish race”.²⁴ For this reason, Petrocelli had to add Duranti’s name to the list of the Jewish scholars he sent to the Ministry at the end of September 1938. Nevertheless, on October 5th, Francesco Duranti wrote to the Chancellor a heartfelt letter. He said that during the form compilation «my brain [...] must have fallen prey, undoubtedly, to a moment of total lapse; because it seems that I answered [...] to all the questions in open contradiction with my feelings and with my life experiences, public and private ones!».²⁵ Attached to that same letter he provided a second form filled with completely different answers.²⁶ Petrocelli was not convinced about Duranti statement and he asked police officers in Bari to check scholar’s position. On October 22 the police confirmed that Duranti was not known as a Jew. Hence, Duranti kept on teaching in Bari for almost another two years.²⁷ In September 1941 Francesco Duranti died but the cause of his death was not related to the developments of the conflict.²⁸

These were the scholars involved and expelled from Bari in consequence of the University enactment of the racial laws. All their colleagues did not openly challenged such decisions, rather they accepted the regime turning point without any public protests. Their only aim was – at least as shown by the analysis of the documents – to ensure a continuity of didactic work regardless the vacant teaching posts.²⁹ In the opening ceremony of the academic year 1938-39, Petrocelli announced that

²⁰ See AgUniBa, *Fascicoli personali docenti*, f. 1041 – Tesoro Giorgio.

²¹ Ivi, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 104 (1938-1939), f. 1990 – Censimento del Personale di razza ebraica (pos. 47), September 10th 1938, Giorgio Tesoro’s personal form.

²² For biographic and career, see AgUniBa, *Fascicoli personali docenti*, f. 1041 – Tesoro Giorgio; Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale dell’Istruzione Superiore (1908-1961), *Divisione I, Liberi docenti, II serie (1930-1950)*, b. 484, f. Tesoro Giorgio.

²³ See Acs, *Segreteria Particolare del Duce*, Carteggio Ordinario, b. 1739, f. 523681 – Duranti Gr. Uff. Prof. Francesco, March 4th 1929, Letter from Duranti to Mussolini to ask an autographed picture; ivi, April 13th 1929, Negative answer to the previous request.

²⁴ AgUniBa, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 104 (1938-1939), f. 1990 – Censimento del Personale di razza ebraica (pos. 47), September 22nd 1938, Francesco Duranti’s personal form.

²⁵ Ivi, October 5th 1938, Letter from Francesco Duranti to Chancellor Petrocelli.

²⁶ Ivi, October 4th 1938, Francesco Duranti’s second personal form.

²⁷ Ivi, October 22nd 1938, Police of Bari answer to Petrocelli’s information request on Francesco Duranti.

²⁸ For biographic and career, see AgUniBa, *Fascicoli personali docenti*, f. 585 – Duranti Francesco; Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale dell’Istruzione Superiore (1908-1961), *Divisione I, Liberi docenti, I° versamento*, I serie, b. 125, f. Duranti Francesco.

²⁹ Since September 9th 1938, the Chancellor wrote to Deans of Faculties to work on new temporary posts for the starting academic year, after the expulsions. See AgUniBa, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 104 (1938-1939), f. 1990 – Censimento

the Faculty of Economy opened positions to replace Bruno Foà and Giorgio Tesoro. *Economia politica corporativa* and Corporate and Labour Law were considered very relevant subjects under the Fascist regime and, therefore, the Chancellor's purpose was to give assurances regarding the university willingness and promptness to maintain such courses, as the law provided.³⁰ This was the only moment of the opening ceremony in November 1938 when Petrocelli indirectly referred to the racial laws, only referring to it briefly and without even mentioning the scholars, who had been expelled. In this regard, the Chancellor's behaviour conformed to the attitude of many other Chancellors in Italy at that time [Cianferotti, 2004; 15-28]. None of the scholars of the University of Bari protested against the enactment of the racial laws, nor were they shocked by the university directive concerning their colleagues. Additionally, some professors also assured the Chancellor that they had filled in their forms with «proper care».³¹

In the files concerning the Board of the Faculty, however, there is no mention of the racial laws. Such documents reveal that the main concern of the Board was to find a solution of the vacant posts.³² In the meeting of the faculty of Economy on October 13th 1938, professor Foà was absent and his colleagues discussed the need to find a new professor for Administrative Law, previously taught by Giorgio Tesoro. At the end of the meeting, Pasquale Del Prete, who would become Chancellor in Bari for ten years after the war (1960-1969), was chosen for such a position. Moreover, during the meeting on November 12th, the members of the Board of Faculty talked about the possibility to open a vacancy for the lectureship of *Economia politica corporativa*, which had remained vacant after Professor Foà's expulsion. In the whole of the meeting Foà's name was never pronounced.³³ Finally, as pertains the case of Ladislao Brull, the Faculty of Pharmacy simply revoked his temporary post of Physics-Chemistry on October 13th 1938.³⁴

Jewish scholars' reactions

The three expelled decided on the same option after their expulsion: they emigrated, although in different periods of time, in different ways and to different countries. None of them would ever come back to his previous position at the University of Bari. In February 1939, Bruno Foà asked for a *discriminazione* (differentiation) for him, his wife and his daughter, born in April 1938. In support of his request, the professor presented certificates of merit. In the first place, Foà claimed that he could demonstrate the Italian ascendance of his family since 17th century. In the second place, he proved that an ancestor of his fought with Lamarmora's unit in 1848. What is more, Bruno Foà was able to provide documents to prove his early involvement in and support to fascism: he had collaborated with the magazine *Azione fascista* (Fascist Action) since 1922; he had been a member of the Fascist party since January 1st 1923 and, above all, he had taken part in the march on Rome (October 1922). Attached to his letter, Foà also provided some postcards he had sent to his family while taking part in the march on Rome in 1922, even if he had a secondary role in that event. Moreover, Foà stated that in the 30s he had taken part in the political training courses organised by local Fascist federations in Messina and Bari as well as in the Committee for the *Prelittorali*, and, finally, that he taught a course on colonial culture organised by the Fascist Institute for Italian Africa in 1938. By means of

del Personale di razza ebraica (pos. 47), September 9th 1938, Letter from Chancellor Petrocelli to Deans of Faculties on new temporary posts after Jews expulsion. In the opening ceremony of the academic year 1939-40, Petrocelli welcomed professor Valentino Dominedò, who won the *Economia politica corporativa* lectureship after Foa's expulsion, see AgUniBa, *Annuario accademico della R. Università degli Studi "Benito Mussolini" di Bari*, AY 1939-40-41, Opening ceremony, Report of Chancellor Biagio Petrocelli on the academic year 1939-40, p. 8.

³⁰ AgUniBa, *Annuario accademico della R. Università degli Studi "Benito Mussolini" di Bari*, AY 1938-1939, p.10. See also the Academic Senate discussing on substitutions: *ivi*, *Verballi del Senato accademico*, October 14th 1938.

³¹ AgUniBa, *Carteggio rettori*, b. 104 (1938-39), f. 1990 – Censimento del Personale di razza ebraica (pos. 47), Letters and personal forms from different scholars of the University of Bari to the Chancellor.

³² AgUniBa, *Verballi del Consiglio di facoltà di Giurisprudenza*, vol. I, October 13th 1938, p. 279; *ivi*, November 14th 1938, p. 283.

³³ See AgUniBa, *Verballi del Consiglio di Facoltà di Economia e commercio*, October 13th 1938, pp. 139-142; *ivi*, November 12th 1938, pp. 143-144.

³⁴ See AgUniBa, *Verballi del Consiglio di Facoltà di Farmacia*, October 13th 1938, p. 25.

his patriotic and fascist ventures, Foà wished «only to be equal to all the other Italians in serving his country».³⁵ Nevertheless, his request was rejected and he was forced to emigrate.

Although I could not find Brull's request concerning his *discriminazione*, his documents show that a peculiar "coincidence" occurred. Precisely in October 1938, when he was expelled from the university, Ladislao Brull sent a letter to Mussolini, in which he stated that he had created a device that could be used to develop underwater bombs. In particular, he asked that his device would be tested.³⁶ His attempt, however, failed and he was forced to leave the country. In regard to Giorgio Tesoro's case, the archival material did not provide any information about his *discriminazione*. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that he was an employee of the University of Rome and, as such, he could allow to formally submit such a request to that University.³⁷

The reinstatement: a difficult path

After the Liberation, the University of Bari completely ignored the cases of expelled scholars due to the racial laws, even if (or, especially, because) they were only a few. Simultaneously, scholars, who had supported and propagandised fascist racial laws, could pursue their careers and keep on teaching even after the war with the establishment of Italian republic. In the opening ceremonies of the post-war academic years, the new Chancellor of the University of Bari, Raffaele Resta (1947-1950), never mentioned the racial laws nor their consequences.³⁸ As a matter of fact, two of three scholars expelled from the University of Bari – Ladislao Brull and Giorgio Tesoro – were not reinstated after the conflict: Brull died during the war and Giorgio Tesoro – who preferred to stay in the Usa – was offered a position at the University of Rome, and not in Bari.³⁹ Among the case studies explored by this chapter, Foà's instance represents the most interesting and complex one. He never came back to Bari, but he had been formally reinstated since January 1st 1944. Foà decided not to return to Italy because he was completing his consecutive stay in the United States to obtain the American citizenship. Thus, he asked a study permit abroad for one year and then he requested a leave period. His aspiration to be reinstated in an Italian university stemmed, most of all, from a "moral" interest.⁴⁰ As such, according to the laws of that time, in order to be able to teach in an Italian university, scholars needed to be Italian citizens: when Foà chose to become an American citizen (since April 1st 1946),⁴¹ he automatically lost his teaching position, regardless his resignation.⁴² Between 40s and 50s Foà, through his brother, who worked as a lawyer, took a legal action against Italian provident institutions with regard to economic issues dating back to his post-1944 reinstatement.⁴³

³⁵ Acs, *Ministero dell'Interno*, Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza, *Fascicoli personali*, b. 238, f. BEN/16385 – Foà Bruno, February 15th 1939, Bruno Foà *discriminazione* request; see also *ivi*, June 22nd 1939, Prefecture of Naples on *discriminazione* request.

³⁶ Acs, *Segreteria Particolare del Duce*, Carteggio Riservato, b. 141, f. 480/R-46-Brull Ladislao, October 19th 1938, Prefecture of Bari on Brull's request to Mussolini.

³⁷ See Tommaso Dell'Era's contribution on University of Rome in the conference held in Rome in December 2018, to be published.

³⁸ See AgUniBa, *Annuario accademico dell'Università degli Studi di Bari*, AY 1949-50, Opening ceremony of the academic year 1947-48, Report of Chancellor Prof. Raffaele Resta, pp. 7-11; *ivi*, Opening ceremony of the academic year 1948-49, Report of Chancellor Prof. Raffaele Resta, pp. 33-41; *ivi*, Opening ceremony of the academic year 1949-50, Report of Chancellor Prof. Raffaele Resta, pp. 65-73.

³⁹ AgUniBa, *Fascicoli personali docenti*, f. 1041-Tesoro Giorgio, June 2nd 1948, District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia, Committee on Admissions and Grievances, information request to the University of Bari on Giorgio Tesoro.

⁴⁰ Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Universitaria (1961-89), *Divisione I*, Fascicoli personali professori ordinari, *III versamento*, b. 204, f. Foà Bruno, May 16th 1945, Letter from Foà to the Italian Ambassador in the Usa.

⁴¹ *Ivi*, June 21st 1948, Italian Consulate in New York, Bruno Foà's certificate of American citizenship from April 1st 1946.

⁴² *Ivi*, May 15th 1947, Resignation letter from Bruno Foà to the Ministry of Public Education; see also *ivi*, undated, Note to the Minister to communicate that Bruno Foà had opted for the American citizenship and that he had lost his position at the Italian university.

⁴³ See the letters between the Ministry of Public Education, the Ministry of the Treasury and Foà's lawyer on fiscal and welfare themes in the period from 1948 to 1953: Acs, *Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Direzione Generale

Bruno Foà had a brilliant career in the United States: first, he worked in Princeton (1940-42), and later in Washington, D.C., as a member of the Rockefeller Foundation and of the Federal Reserve Board. In this way, he could also participate in the implementation of post-war reconstruction plans for Italy. In Spring 1959 Foà sent a request to get employed by the US Embassy in Rome. However, the archival material collected shows no proof of any reply from the American institution.⁴⁴ Bruno Foà died in Philadelphia in 1999 at the age of 94. In the period between 1944 and 1946, the Faculty of Economy of the University of Bari decided to ignore the Foà's case, assuming that his transfer in Puglia had been decided by the Ministry, and that the Ministry should be in charge for it.⁴⁵ Foà's colleagues were upset because he had not come back to Bari after his reinstatement, and he had not communicated his intentions. Thus, in 1945 the teaching position for Political Economy was already considered vacant and an open competition announced.⁴⁶ The other faculties involved in the banishment did not even consider reinstatements a possibility, showing, once again, very little interest in the cases of scholars expelled due to the racial laws.

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dell'Istruzione Universitaria (1961-89), *Divisione I*, Fascicoli personali professori ordinari, *III versamento*, b. 204, f. Foà Bruno.

⁴⁴ See AgUniBa, *Fascicolo personale prof. Bruno Foà*, May 26th 1959, Letter from the Embassy of the United States in Rome to the Chancellor of the University of Bari with an information request on Bruno Foà, after Foà's submission of a job application; ivi, June 15th 1959, Note from the University of Bari on Foà's academic career, answering the previous request from the American Embassy in Rome.

⁴⁵ AgUniBa, *Verballi del Consiglio di Facoltà di Economia e commercio*, May 14th 1946, p. 235.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*; see also ivi, July 16th 1946, p. 238.

Lectio Magistralis

**Roma Tre University, Department of Philosophy, Communication and Performing Arts
November 21, 2018**

*Edith Bruck**

Abstract. On November 21, 2018, Edith Bruck received at *Roma Tre University* the *Laurea honoris causa* in “Information, publishing and journalism”, and here the *Lectio Magistralis* she gave on that occasion is published. The *Laudatio* was delivered by prof. Paolo D’Angelo, Chair of the Department of Philosophy, Communication and Performing Arts. The Commission was composed by prof. Lorenzo Cantatore, prof. Lucia Chiappetta Caiola, prof. Paolo D’Angelo, prof. Massimiliano Fiorucci, prof. David Meghnagi, prof. Roberto Morozzo della Rocca, prof. Susanna Pallini, prof. Paola Perrucchini, prof. Veronica Pravadelli, and prof. Anna Lisa Tota.

Keywords: Auschwitz, Anti-Semitism, Holocaust, Literature, Shoah, Witness.

Editorial note by David Meghnagi**

Edith Steinschreiber Bruck was born in Hungary in 1932. She was deported with her parents, two brothers and a sister to the concentration camps of Auschwitz, Kaufering, Dachau, Christianstadt, Landberg and Bergen Belsen, where she lost her parents and a brother. After the war she traveled widely until 1954 when she settled in Rome. Through literary works and public appearances, Bruck has devoted her life to bearing witness to what she experienced in the Nazi concentration camps. She is the author of several novels, collections of short stories and volumes of poetry. She translated works by Hungarian poets in Italian. She wrote for radio, television and theater, worked as a journalist, as a screenwriter and directed three films. Today she is on the most prolific writer of Holocaust narrative in Italian. On November 21, 2018, Edith Bruck received at *Roma Tre University* the *Laurea honoris causa* in “Information, publishing and journalism”.



Ceremony at Roma Tre University, November 21, 2018

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**Prof. Luca Pietromarchi (Dean of *Roma Tre University*) and Dr. Edith Bruck (writer)
Roma Tre University, November 21, 2018**



**Prof. David Meghnagi e Dr.ssa Edith Bruck
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I never would have been able to pursue an education, regardless of anti-Semitism and racial laws, because of poverty among the poor. My university is called Auschwitz. A place that has become the epitome of Evil, among the 1635 concentration camps in uber-civilized Germany and in countries occupied and allied with Hitler. A university where you can learn everything for good, including all about yourself: Anthropology, Philosophy, History, Psychology, Faith and Religiousness, the value of life and of bread.

The pain when a beautiful, blond child spits on you. How enslaved men are more helpless and incapable of looking after themselves. How women are stronger, more resilient, more cunning and able to come up with tricks to avoid being selected for the crematorium, and so live another day.

Invisibility. The language of blasphemy. The behavioral differences between social classes. The shame and pity felt towards those who torture, not for oneself. And how cold, hunger and terror impair reasoning, and impair feelings.

One sees how deportees who have long become *Kapò* have been fully dehumanized, and how our fellow female internees can be ready and available for miserable deeds that give them the chance to steal a few bits of turnip from the bottom of our slop. But light can break through the dark too, when a soldier hands you a warm potato, a glove with holes in it, traces of jam in the mess tin he throws you to be washed, and the question “What is your name?”, that sounds like a voice coming from the skies, you’re no longer just number 11152.

You exist! And so you hope, and you leave that Hell a better person:

“You can never be a racist, a fascist”.

“You will never discriminate anyone”.

“You will never be like your persecutors”.

I, who graduated from the University of Evil with honors, I learnt Good, I extracted gold from dung. I am struck twice today, when I hear a woman from Padua coming out of church and telling a journalist how she wishes all emigrants would just drown. And a man from Lodi, referring to children who can’t access the school canteen as “dog ticks”.

I am afraid of blind terrorism, of Islamic fanaticism, or the black wind blowing once again over Europe and beyond.

I wonder why humanity will never learn anything from its crimes, and will continue to perpetrate them: it is easily seduced by nationalism, racism, hate, selfishness. It builds walls, barbed-wire fences; it shows no mercy for those fleeing war, hunger, violence and torture.

Rather than confronting its past, it will deny its complicity and responsibility for what happened yesterday, what is happening today and what could happen tomorrow. What were Gulags and death camps for?

You can’t heal from Auschwitz neither by writing nor by talking about it, but it’s a past that must be told, especially for the young, for their present and for their future, because everything affects everyone.

Communication isn’t just pressing a button, it’s knowing and respecting any human being of any religion and color, if we still want to be called human.

History is riddled with lies, mystifications, interests, wars, ambitions, power and exploitation of the weakest.

The role of a witness is draining, awkward, talking about the past and re-living it is a burden, but it’s always worthwhile because there is someone who listens.

In my case, young people (few or many, it doesn’t matter) read and graduate on my books.

The language I adopted since I arrived in Italy in 1954, has been my salvation, my freedom, the armor that has protected me from the pain my mother tongue induces in me.

If I write *BREAD* in Hungarian, I instantly see the image of my mother next to the oven, in her forever floury apron. Her face, red from strain, and her happiness for the five buns, one for each of her five children. Italian bread is simply one that comes from the bakery.

The Italian language is my home, my country. I have loved this language I adopted in my adult years; I loved it and nurtured it like a child and it has nurtured me and allowed me to speak the unspeakable.

When my spirits are low, I wonder if there's still any use in writing, screaming, testifying and awakening consciences. Then I tell myself: "Go ahead, act, walk, believe, love for as long as there is even just one more reader, one more person who will understand every individual's right to dignity; there are no sub-humans only sub-ideologies that lead to barbarity.



Dr. Edith Bruck at home
(Copyright Europa Ricerca ONLUS)

Excerpts from letters I received from Italian students:

"...This letter is a cry for help. I ask you to help my young conscience remember, and help keep the spirit awake that rebels against such an ugly world and that I can't ignore (as it is mine too). I ask you, if you have time, to correspond with me, and help me mature by sharing your pain. A pain that, if I may say so, with all due respect, I almost envy as it has gifted you with a degree of strength, sensitivity and dignity that I will never know. I understand your desire to keep your pain to yourself, and I apologize if my request may come across as violent, but I ask you, please, to teach me how to talk about deportation. We kids of today, so stupid and ignorant in the face of war survivors, can continue denouncing the atrocities that took place in the heart of Europe just half a century ago, and keep honoring the promise you made to all the people who, dying in the camps, have begged you to TALK ABOUT IT. I, a Christian, ask you, a self-professed secularist who has proven to be a person of profound religiosity (as your husband rightly told you), to help me carry out the commitment I assumed embracing my faith. This request might sound odd, but please believe me when I say I am sure that no support will be greater than your example..."

Laura

"...you are walking away at a slow pace. I think you are happy, because you have had an opportunity to tell your story and the story of your people, and there's no doubt that, knowing what happened, we won't allow it to take place again. NEVER AGAIN!!!"

Matteo

"... I am not sure whether Edith has been able to feel my happiness, but I know that if I'll ever meet my primary school mates, I will be able to tell them I have met a survivor and writer in the flesh, and I'll assure them she was neither old nor hunched, but rather full of strength and immense happiness in passing down the true value of life..."

Martina

“...she was never pathetic. She made me think deeply about many things that I had never been told before, she wanted us to understand that the Nazi period must not be forgotten, that it’s a reality which still lives, hidden behind different disguises, and that there are still people who die today and lose their lives to injustice. Damn!”

Cornelia

“... overall I felt anguish, sorrow, like a lack of air. At times endearment and fear, too. Moreover, when talking about Germans, concentration camps, the subjugation of Jews, I am overwhelmed by an immeasurable feeling of impotence that crushes my spirit. Out of all the poems, I really liked Birth by chance. As my teacher read it, each new verse felt like a heavy burden falling upon my heart.”

Maurizio

“...in particular, the poems and the book Letter to my mother have moved me deeply. They are very touching. I am not indifferent to all the suffering you and other Jews have experienced during Nazism. I will remember the people who died in concentration camps.”

Marco

“...the poem Every beginning is already the end reflects what is happening today because of people’s superficiality. We often tend to trivialize things, even love – one of the most beautiful things in life”

Fabio

“I have thought deeply after reading some of the writer’s work, and I believe there is evil inside each one of us. The crucial difference is that some of us manage to fight it, while others exercise it against people. I felt discomfort, because evil prevails over the weakest ones.”

Tina

Excerpts from letters I received from Hungary after a screening of a documentary film (1982) on my first visit back in my native village:

“...the trip back to Hungary, the offer of flowers, the homemade pasta of Lidi the neighbor, they only make the tragedy grotesque, unable to break through the icy armour of death. Making this movie was a good thing, because you took the unspeakable pain of many people upon yourself.

With my greatest respect”

Markus

“... dear Edith. Please know that you have a good friend in Hungary, someone who isn’t a writer or an artist, but simply one of many who work a lot but keep their eyes open and think. I am grateful to a person like you. You write and speak in my name too, and for this I owe you a thank you...”

Katalin

“...I am only seventeen. Neither my family nor my school have ever taught me anything about the past. You helped me understand everything. You can count on me, from now on I won’t be anti-Semitic anymore...”

Roza

“...my son came back from school in tears because he was called “Jew”. My husband asked him what tone of voice was used, and the boy (only six years old at the time) replied that the tone was cruel, that being Jewish couldn’t possibly be a good thing. We are Jewish but he doesn’t know this... what should we do?”

Magda

“...someone told our eleven year old son that his family was Jewish. He spat on us, insulted us and then he ran away from home. You, who are full of courage being Jewish (even though you live in the West and not here) please advise us on how to get our son back...”

Iren

“...I don't understand how the State could possibly choose to spend our money on a movie about a Jew who did the opposite of many others who didn't run away from their homeland and participated to the construction of socialism ...”

Olga

“...I am not ashamed to confess that, even though I am a man, I cried all through the movie”

Gyorgy

“...the movie has shaken many dirty consciences in our country, and it has revealed some hidden truths. Why isn't it screened earlier than 10.30 pm, and shown in schools too? You should suggest that to the competent authorities, since you are in a position to do so...”

Anna

“...Edith! The world is rotting. Most of these pigs still live among us. They have no face. They have changed it. They aren't recognizable anymore. I am not Jewish! But I am sorry, and I am ashamed I can only be a Christian! A believer, you see fate hasn't spared me either! If I could, I would take a lot of your burden – may you be happy! Somewhere, once, Anatole France said to someone: “it is in men that men find comfort”. Unfortunately I don't believe that's true! When men really had to do something important for each other, great minds were purposely paralyzed! They preferred to opt for posthumous remorse! That isn't visible from the outside! My sick nation, kneeling before us, IS GUILTY! Edith! Write! Write! And then write some more! Please don't stop.

With sincere devotion”

Ferenc

“...dear Mrs. Edith, I decided to write to you because the day I met you was one of the most important days of my life... I have often asked myself who will take your place in passing on the story of the biggest massacre ever, Nazi fanaticism, the hatred for innocent children, women and men. Who will remind others of that which you could never forget? I know we are surrounded by ignorance and that young people don't want to know anything about this, they even deny the existence of death camps and they are hard to persuade otherwise; I tried to tell the story of camps to my schoolmates, that story of yours which could become our future.

...no prayer in the world will ever be able to undo what was done to you.

...your books can teach me about you and your life, even if that is very painful and it takes the smile away from my lips, the joy and illusion of a better world.

Thank you, especially for the time you shared with me, I hope I will see you again; that would mean a lot to me because there are no more people like you, or better there aren't many left.

With great affection”

Maria

These letters are another reason to keep going, working, writing.

Links

www.uniroma3.it/ateneo/cerimonie-istituzionali/laurea-honoris-causa-a-don-roberto-sardelli-e-a-edith-bruck/

<http://streaming.uniroma3.it/streaming1.htm>

www.ansa.it/canale_lifestyle/notizie/people/2018/11/21/laurea-a-bruck-ho-studiato-ad-auschwitz_deb6e5e2-a273-4295-b7eb-8e071a042b07.html

<http://radio.uniroma3.it/2018/11/22/lauree-honoris-causa-edith-bruck-e-don-roberto-sardelli/>

Lectio Magistralis

**Università Roma Tre, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Comunicazione e Spettacolo
21 novembre 2018**

*Edith Bruck**

Riassunto. Il 21 novembre l'Università Roma Tre ha conferito a Edith Bruck la laurea *honoris causa* in Informazione, editoria e giornalismo. La *Laudatio* è stata svolta dal prof. Paolo D'Angelo, Direttore del Dipartimento di Filosofia, Comunicazione e Spettacolo. La Commissione di Laurea è stata così composta: prof. L. Cantatore, Prof.ssa L. Chiappetta Caiola, prof. Paolo D'Angelo, prof. Massimiliano Fiorucci, prof. David Meghnagi, prof. Roberto Morozzo della Rocca, prof.ssa Susanna Pallini, prof.ssa Paola Perrucchini, prof.ssa Veronica Pravadelli e prof.ssa Anna Lisa Tota.

Parole chiave: Auschwitz, Antisemitismo, Olocausto, Letteratura, *Shoah*, Testimone.

Nota redazionale di David Meghnagi**

Edith Steinschreiber Bruck è nata nel 1932. Fu deportata nei *Lager* nazisti di Auschwitz, Kaufering, Dachau, Christiandstadt, Landberg e Bergen Belsen. Nei Lager perse i genitori e un fratello. Dopo la guerra trovò rifugio in Israele. Nel 1954 si stabilì a Roma. Da scrittrice ha dedicato la sua vita alla testimonianza. È autrice di numerosi romanzi e raccolte di poesia. Ha contribuito a far conoscere al pubblico italiano opere di poeti ungheresi. Ha collaborato alla radio e alla televisione, e ha diretto tre film. È tra gli scrittori più prolifici nell'ambito della letteratura italiana sulla *Shoah*. Il 21 novembre 2018 l'Università Roma Tre ha conferito a Edith Bruck la *laurea honoris causa* in Scienze della comunicazione. Pubblichiamo qui di seguito la sua *Lectio magistralis*.



Cerimonia all'Università Roma Tre, 21 novembre 2018

* Scrittrice italiana nata in Ungheria, e-mail <edithbruck@gmail.com>.

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Prof. Luca Pietromarchi (Rettore dell'Università Roma Tre) e Dr.ssa Edith Bruck (scrittrice)
Università Roma Tre, 21 novembre 2018



Prof. David Meghnagi e Dr.ssa Edith Bruck
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Io non avrei potuto studiare per la povertà tra poveri con o senza antisemitismi e leggi razziali. La mia Università si chiama Auschwitz. Luogo assunto a simbolo del Male tra i 1635 campi di concentramento nella civilissima Germania e alcuni nei paesi occupati e alleati con Hitler. Università, dove si impara tutto per sempre, anche conoscere se stessi: l'antropologia, la filosofia, la Storia, la psicologia la fede e la religiosità, il valore della vita e del pane.

Il dolore quando ti sputa addosso un bel bambino biondo. L'uomo che in schiavitù è più indifeso e incapace di badare a se stesso. La donna che è più forte, più resistente al dolore, più scaltra e inventa trucchi per non essere selezionata per il crematorio e per un altro giorno di vita.

L'invisibilità. Si imparano anche le lingue delle bestemmie. La diversità del comportamento tra le classi sociali.

La vergogna e la pietà per gli aguzzini non per se stessi. E che il freddo, la fame, il terrore oscurano la ragione, non permettono sentimenti.

Si capisce l'avvenuta disumanizzazione dei deportati da tempo diventate Kapo e le nostre compagne pronte per una misera funzione che le dà la possibilità a rubare dal fondo della nostra brodaglia qualche pezzo di rapa.

Ma si scopre anche la luce nel buio quando un soldato ti dà una patata calda, un guanto bucato, l'avanzo di marmellata nella gavetta che ti butta per lavarla, e la domanda "Come ti chiami?" che ti sembra la voce del cielo, non sei più solo il numero 11152.

Esisti! E perciò che spero ed esci migliore da quell'inferno:

"Non potrai mai essere razzista, fascista."

"Non discriminerai mai nessuno."

"Non assomiglierai mai ai tuoi persecutori."

Io che mi sono laureata nell'Università del Male con lode, ho imparato il Bene, dallo sterco ho estratto l'oro. Mi colpisce doppiamente quando oggi da una signora di Padova all'uscita dalla chiesa sento dire a un giornalista che affoghino pure tutti gli emigranti. E di un uomo di Lodi chiamare i bambini che non hanno accesso alla mensa comune zecche di cani.

Mi spaventa il terrorismo cieco, il fanatismo islamico, il vento nero che soffia di nuovo in Europa e non solo.

Mi chiedo come mai l'uomo non impara niente dei propri crimini e continua a perpetrarli: Si fa sedurre da nazionalismi, razzismi, odi, egoismi. Costruisce muri, recinti di filo spinato, non ha pietà per chi fugge da guerre, fame, violenze e torture. Invece di confrontarsi col passato nega la propria complicità, responsabilità per ciò che è accaduto ieri, accade oggi e potrebbe accadere domani. A che cosa hanno servito i Gulag e i Campi di sterminio?

Di Auschwitz non si guarisce né scrivendo né parlando, ma è un vissuto che va raccontato soprattutto per i giovani, per il loro presente e futuro, perché tutto ci riguarda tutti. La comunicazione non è premere un tasto, ma conoscere rispettare ogni essere umano di qualsiasi fede, di colore se si vuole ancora dirsi umani. La Storia è seminata di menzogne, mistificazioni, interessi, guerre, ambizioni, potere e sfruttamento sui più deboli.

Il ruolo del testimone è faticoso, scomodo, raccontare e rivivere il vissuto e un peso ma sempre vale la pena perché c'è ascolto. Nel mio caso i giovani leggono e si laureano sui miei libri, pochi o molti non ha importanza.

La lingua adottata dal mio arrivo in Italia nel 1954, per me e la salvezza, la libertà, la corazza che mi protegge dal dolore che suscita la mia lingua natia. Se scrivo PANE in ungherese, rivedo la figura di mia madre accanto al forno nel eterno grembiule infarinato. Il suo volto rosso per la fatica e la felicità per le cinque pagnotte ai suoi tanti figli. Il pane italiano è solo quello del fornaio.

La lingua italiana e la mia casa, e il mio paese, e in questa mia lingua adottata da grande e amata come fosse un bambino l'ho fatta crescere e mi ha permesso di crescere e raccontare l'indicibile.

In momenti di sconforto mi chiedo se è utile ancora scrivere, gridare, testimoniare, ammonire le coscienze. Poi mi dico: "Fai, cammina, credi, ami finché c'è un solo lettore, una sola persona in più che capisce il diritto di ogni persona alla propria dignità, non ci sono sott'uomini solo sott'ideologie che portano alle barbarie".



La Dr.ssa Edith Bruck a casa

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Lettere che ho ricevuto da studenti italiani:

“...Questa lettera è una richiesta di aiuto. Io le chiedo di aiutare la mia giovane coscienza a non dimenticare, a non riaddormentare lo spirito che si ribella a questo mondo così brutto nei confronti del quale però non posso essere indifferente, perché esso è anche mio. Io le chiedo, se ha un po' di tempo, di corrispondere con me, per aiutarmi a crescere con la testimonianza del suo dolore che, se mi è permesso dirlo, con tutto il rispetto, io quasi le invidio, perché le ha donato una forza, una sensibilità, una dignità che io non possederò mai. Comprendo il suo desiderio di “custodire” per sé la sua sofferenza e mi perdoni se forse le domando una violenza alla sua persona, ma la prego, mi insegni a parlare della deportazione. Noi ragazzi di oggi, così stupidi e ignoranti di fronte ai superstiti della guerra potremo continuare a denunciare le atrocità compiute nel cuore dell'Europa appena mezzo secolo fa, mantenendo al posto di tutti voi, la promessa fatta a chi, morendo nei campi, vi ha pregato di RACCONTARE... Io, cristiana, chiedo a lei che si professa laica ma che ha dimostrato, come le ha detto giustamente suo marito, di essere una persona di profonda religiosità, di aiutarmi anche a portare avanti l'impegno che assunto abbracciando questa fede. Forse le sembrerà strana questa richiesta, ma mi creda, sono sicura che nessun sostegno potrà essere più efficace del suo esempio...”

Laura

“...lei sta andando via col suo passo lento. Mi pare contenta, perché ha potuto raccontare la sua storia e quella del suo popolo, ed è certo che noi, sapendo ciò che è successo, non lo faremo risucceidere. MAI PIU!!!”

Matteo

“...Non so bene se Edith abbia sentito la mia felicità, ma sono sicura che se un giorno o l'altro incontrerò alcuni dei miei compagni delle elementari, potrò dire loro che ho visto dal vivo una sopravvissuta scrittrice e potrò assicurarli che non era né vecchia né curva, ma piena di forza e di felicità immensa nel trasmettere il vero valore della vita...”

Martina

“...non è mai stata patetica. E mi ha fatto riflettere su molte cose che nessuno prima mi aveva detto, voleva farci capire che non bisogna dimenticare il periodo nazista, che è tuttora una realtà nascosta sotto altre forme e che c'è gente che ancora oggi muore per l'ingiustizia, che perde la vita. Accidenti!”

Cornelia

“...Le sensazioni che ho provato generalmente sono angoscia, pena, come se mi mancasse l'aria per respirare. A volte anche tenerezza e paura. Inoltre quando si parla di tedeschi, di campi di concentramento, di ebrei sottomessi, ho un senso grandissimo di impotenza che mi butta moralmente giù. Tra le poesie mi è piaciuto molto NASCERE PER CASO. Ogni volta che la professoressa leggendo iniziava un nuovo verso, per me era un mattone che mi crollava addosso”

Maurizio

“...In particolare le poesie e il libro LETTERA ALLA MADRE mi hanno colpito profondamente. Toccano il cuore. Io non sono indifferente a tutta la sofferenza che lei e gli altri ebrei hanno provato durante il nazismo. Mi ricorderò delle persone morte nei campi di concentramento”

Marco

“...La poesia OGNI INIZIO E GIA' LA FINE rispecchia quello che succede al giorno di oggi per colpa della troppa superficialità delle persone. Molte volte si tende a banalizzare ogni cosa, anche l'amore che è uno degli aspetti più belli della vita”

Fabio

“...Dopo la lettura di alcune opere della scrittrice, ho riflettuto e credo che in ognuno di noi c'è il male. Con la profonda differenza che alcuni riescono a combatterlo, altri lo affermano contro le persone. Ho provato una sensazione negativa perché il male prevale sul più debole.”

Tina

Estratti da lettere che ho ricevuto dall'Ungheria in seguito alla proiezione di un documentario (1982) sulla mia prima visita di ritorno al mio villaggio natale:

“...Il viaggio di ritorno in Ungheria, l'offerta dei fiori, la pasta fatta in casa della vicina Lidi non fa che rendere grottesco il dramma, senza poter sfondare la corazza gelida della morte. È un bene che abbiano fatto questo film, perché lei ha preso su di sé il dolore inesprimibile di tanta gente.

Con stima”

Markus

“...Edith cara. Sappi che in Ungheria hai una buona amica, che non è una scrittrice né un'artista, ma una come tanti che lavorano molto ma ha gli occhi aperti e pensa. Ed è grata a una persona come Te. Ciò che dici e ciò che scrivi lo fai anche a nome mio, e ti devo un ringraziamento...”

Katalin

“...Io ho solo diciassette anni. Né i miei né la scuola mi hanno mai insegnato niente sul passato. Lei mi ha fatto capire tutto. Conti su di me; da oggi in poi io non sarò più antisemita...”

Roza

“...Mio figlio è tornato da scuola in lacrime perché gli avevano dato dell'ebreo. Mio marito aveva chiesto in che tono gli era stata detta quella parola, e il bambino, che allora aveva solo sei anni, rispose che il tono era cattivo, che non poteva essere niente di buono essere ebreo. Noi lo siamo ma lui non lo sa... cosa dobbiamo fare?”

Magda

“...Nostro figlio di undici anni aveva saputo da qualcuno che eravamo ebrei. Ci ha sputato addosso, ci ha insultato ed è scappato di casa. Lei che ha tanto coraggio a essere ebrea, vivendo però in Occidente e non qui, ci dia un consiglio per recuperare nostro figlio...”

Iren

“...Non capisco come ha potuto lo Stato spendere i nostri soldi per un filmato su un’ebrea che ha agito al contrario di tanti altri, che non sono scappati dalla propria patria e hanno partecipato alla costruzione del socialismo...”

Olga

“...Non mi vergogno pur essendo un uomo di confessare che ho pianto durante tutto il filmato...”

Gyorgy

“...Il filmato ha scosso molte coscienze sporche nel nostro Paese, e rivelato verità nascoste. Invece che alle 10.30 di sera, perché non lo proiettano prima e anche nelle scuole? Lei che può, lo suggerisca alle autorità competenti...”

Anna

“...Edith! Il mondo marcisce. Gran parte di questi maiali vivono ancora tra noi. Non hanno faccia. L’hanno cambiata. Non si può più riconoscerli. Io non sono ebreo! Ma mi dispiace, e mi vergogno di poter essere solo cristiano! Credente, perciò neanche con me ha avuto riguardo il destino! Se potessi, mi addosserei molto del tuo fardello – che tu possa essere felice! Anatole France, da qualche parte, una volta aveva detto a qualcuno: «L’uomo attraverso l’uomo si consola». Purtroppo non lo credo! Quando realmente doveva fare l’uomo per l’uomo qualcosa di importante, le grandi menti si paralizzarono appositamente! Preferirono assumere il rimorso postumo! Tanto, non è visibile all’esterno! La mia nazione malata e in ginocchio davanti a noi, È COLPEVOLE! Edith! Scrivi! Scrivi! E scrivi! Ti prego non smettere.

Con sincera devozione”

Ferenc

“...Cara Signora Edith, ho deciso di scriverle perché il giorno in cui l’ho conosciuta e stato uno dei più importanti della mia vita... Mi sono chiesta tante volte chi sarà dopo di voi a tramandare la più grande strage di massa, il fanatismo nazista, l’odio verso gli innocenti, i bambini, le donne e gli uomini. Chi sarà a ricordare quello che voi non avete mai potuto dimenticare? So che viviamo nell’ignoranza e che i giovani non vogliono sapere, e addirittura negano l’esistenza dei campi di concentramento ed è difficile persuaderli; io ho cercato di raccontare ai miei compagni la storia dei campi, la vostra storia che potrebbe diventare il nostro futuro.

...Nessuna preghiera del mondo potrà mai riparare quello che vi è stato fatto. ...Attraverso i Suoi libri posso conoscere meglio la Sua vita e Lei stessa, anche se sapere è molto doloroso e toglie il sorriso dalle labbra, tutta la gioia, l’illusione di un mondo migliore. La ringrazio soprattutto della disponibilità che ha avuto per me e spero di poterla rivedere, ci tengo moltissimo perché le persone come Lei non ci sono più, o comunque ne sono rimaste pochissime.

Con grande affetto”

Maria

Queste lettere sono un’altra ragione per andare avanti, lavorare e scrivere.

Links

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