

Norbert Sigmund Brückmann

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Norbert Brückmann had to interrupt his education as a specialist in gynecology after enactment of the Race Laws. He resumed his studies after liberation. He then undertook a complicated process of emigration and integration into the United States workforce.

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Italian Education

Norbert was born in 1910 in Weinheim, a small town near Mannheim. The son of Sigmund, an upholsterer and interior decorator, and Setti Shellenberg, he attended trade school at the Weinheim Realgymnasium, earning his diploma in 1928¹.

In November of 1925, he received a degree in Medicina from the Università di Perugia, receiving a grade of 100/110. In January 1937, he applied to take an advanced specialized course in Ginecologia ed ostetricia at the Università di Firenze². In 1938, after two years at the University, he was expelled due to his German Jewish identity. The young doctor appeared to have remained in Italy during the war, given that he resumed his studies immediately after the liberation of Florence. In fact, on October 27, 1944 he was accepted to the University for his third year and, since the 1943-44 academic year had been folded into the following academic year, he was able to graduate in 1945³. In October of that year, he applied to the department of Radiologia ed elettroterapia⁴, asking to be exempted from paying half the required fee, given his stateless status.

1 ASUFI, AC, SS, f. «Brückmann Norbert», registration card, 12 January 1937.

2 Ibid., request to the provost, 12 January 1937; *ibid.*, Università di Perugia, degree certificate, 16 November 1936.

3 Ibid., request to the provost, 27 October 1944, 30 October 1944.

4 Ibid., request to the provost, 22 October 1945.

Emigration to the United States

Brückmann decided to move to the United States as his sister Irene Mina (1905) had done in 1937. With her husband, Siegfried Heinemann, an upholsterer, Irene had first moved to Milan and then traveled overseas. Their mother, Setti, had died in 1938, while their father, Sigmund, was taken prisoner in 1940 and deported to Gurs. He died in Nexon, a concentration camp near Limoges in France⁵. With her husband and two adolescent sons, Herst and Ernst, Irene Mina embarked from Genoa in December 1946 and arrived at Ellis Island on January 8, 1947. As their sponsor, they named one of Siegfried's sisters-in-law who had lived in New York since 1919⁶.

It's not clear when Norbert left for the United States.

In August, 1950 he married Eva Kuznitzky (1922-2000)⁷ in Bayonne, New Jersey. Eva had gone to Switzerland in October 1943, probably from Italy, and then emigrated to the United States after the war⁸. In 1955, when she applied for naturalization papers, she was working at Rockland State Hospital, a psychiatric establishment located in Orangeburg, NY⁹.

Norbert died in New York on January 19, 1967¹⁰.

Archival sources

- ASUFI, AC, SS, f. «Brückmann Norbert».
- *Ellis Island Foundation, Passenger Search, ad nomen*

5 Information on Norbert and the other family members in *Jüdische Spuren in Weinheim, ad nomen*, available online at <<http://www.juden-in-weinheim.de>> (accesso 31 marzo 2019).

6 See Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>> (accessed 31 March 2019).

7 New Jersey State Archives, Trenton (NJ), *Marriage Indexes, Bride, 1950, ad nomen* (available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>).

8 See the database *Switzerland, Jewish Arrivals, 1938-1945, ad nomen* (available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>).

9 The National Archives at New York City (NY), *Soundex Index to Petitions for Naturalization Filed in Federal, State, and Local Courts Located in New York City, 1792-1989, ad nomen* (available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>). On the hospital see <<https://www.abandonedamerica.us>> (accessed 31 March 2019).

10 New York State Department of Health, Albany (NY), *New York State Death Index, ad nomen* (available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>).

<<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>>.

- *Jüdische Spuren in Weinheim, ad nomen* <<http://www.juden-in-weinheim.de>>.
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Francesca Cavarocchi

Translated by Vera De Benedetti Bonnet

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