

## Carlo Schapira, then Sorell

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Having come to Italy in 1925 to study medicine from a small town in Romania, he got married and integrated himself well into Italian society. All of a sudden, he found himself to be of the «Jewish race»: he was no longer an assistant at the university orthopedic hospital; he was deprived of the position that he had taken at a high school; he was removed from the medical registry and lost the possibility to practice his profession. His files at the University and the Ordine dei medici [Medical Board] of Florence are missing; his scientific publications no longer appear in the Biomedical Library's card catalog. His name was Carlo Schapira; this is the name recorded on his boarding documents when he set sail on the *Rex* for New York. There are no more traces of him after that.

His expulsion is one of the many that are seemingly invisible, as if he had been erased even though he was a most promising pupil of the prestigious school of clinical orthopedics led by Guido Palagi. In New York, he changed his surname. Carlo Sorell resumed his work as a clinical orthopedist and his research. After having worked a lifetime in New York, he returned to Florence, where he had studied and had met his wife.

### **A young foreigner's plans to live in Italy**

The son of Baruch Schapira and Sara, or Sarah, Frischlander, Carlo was born on 25 October 1904 in Dobronauti, a small town that at the time was a part of the Duchy of Bukovina, annexed by the Hapsburg Empire in 1775, and that became part of Romania in November 1918. Carlo came to study in Italy. In 1924-25, he enrolled in the Facoltà di Medicina e chirurgia [School of Medicine and Surgery] at the University of Pisa. In his fourth year, he transferred to the School of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Florence where, as documents attest, he enrolled on

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13 December 1927<sup>1</sup>. On 28 June 1930, he presented his thesis on «Le pseudo-tubercolosi polmonari» [The Pulmonary Pseudo-tuberculososes], which he defended on 7 July at the Clinic of general medicine directed by Ferruccio Schupfer (son of the well-known jurist, Francesco Schupfer), who was a specialist in that pathology. His thesis is still preserved in the university's Biomedical Library, but it is cataloged with an error in his foreign surname and name<sup>2</sup>. In August 1933, he finally obtained Italian citizenship<sup>3</sup>, and the following year, on 6 June 1934, he married a Florentine woman, Giselda Biancalani, who was two years his senior, had graduated with a degree in chemistry, and was already an *assistente universitario di ruolo* [full-time university assistant] in pharmacology and toxicology<sup>4</sup>.

He undertook a twofold path for his specialization: he specialized in radiology on 12 November 1936, scoring a 70/70, while, at the same time, entering the orthopedic clinic. As of the 1926-27 academic year, the clinic's Florence location was headquartered at Villa Margherita at Viale Michelangelo 41, at the Istituto ortopedico toscano [Orthopedic Institute of Tuscany], which had been founded in 1923. Its director was Piero Palagi (1879-1947), who successfully endeavored to affirm the importance of orthopedic surgery, which until then had been considered a minor branch of general surgery<sup>5</sup>. Carlo Schapira became Palagi's *assistente volontario* [unpaid assistant] in the 1934-35 academic year and *aiuto volontario*

<sup>1</sup> In the historical archive of the University of Florence (ASUFI), AC, SS, the file «Schapira Carlo» is missing; only his name card remains, first-year student no. 9180, including personal, matriculation and graduation data.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Shapira [sic], «Le pseudo-tubercolosi polmonari», type-written thesis, Facoltà di medicina e chirurgia, Università di Firenze, currently held at the Biblioteca biomedica, Historical theses, T.L. 31.9. The graduation date can be found on the matriculation card ASUFI, AC, SS, «Schapira Carlo».

<sup>3</sup> See the act of 21 August 1933, ACS, MI, DGPS, Cat. A16 *Stranieri e ebrei stranieri*, b. 10.

<sup>4</sup> The wedding date can be found in his *first papers* for his American naturalization, see National Archives at New York City, *New York, State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1794-1943*, Schapira Carlo, 3 November 1939. The document is available online at <<http://ancestry.com>> (accessed upon registration 21 July 2019).

<sup>5</sup> For some notes on the IOT, later dedicated to Palagi, with pictures of the locations taken in 2011, and various references, see The History of Medicine Topographical Database at <<http://himetop.wikidot.com>>. Gian Gastone Neri Seneri and Donatella Lippi spend few words on orthopedics in Florence, even though it is defined as the first in Italy from the 1840s onward with professor Ferdinando Carboni and later with Piero Palagi and Oscar Scaglietti, in *La scuola medica dell'Università di Firenze*, in *L'Università degli studi di Firenze 1924-2004*, Florence, Olschki, 2004, vol. I, pp. 251-419: p. 277.

[unpaid aide] in 1936-37, the year in which he received a perfect score with honors in his specialization in Orthopedics, after defending a thesis titled «Sulle fratture della colonna vertebrale» [On Spine Fractures]<sup>6</sup>. He specialized in Orthopedics right when the field was growing in Italy to the point that the Italian Society of Orthopedics and Traumatology, so named since 1935, was commissioned, in 1936, to organize the next international conference by the International Society of Orthopedic Surgery and Traumatology.

In 1937, he participated in the 28th national congress that the Society held in Turin on 22-23 October<sup>7</sup>, along with, among others, Oscar Scaglietti (1906-1993), of his same age, who was a student in Bologna of Vittorio Putti, who in turn was a colleague and friend of Palagi. He had also been publishing since 1936 in «Archivio di ortopedia», edited by the clinician of the specialty in Milan, appearing as an assistant and then an aide (the *volontario* attribute was omitted) at the Orthopedic Clinic of the R[oyal] University of Florence and at the Orthopedic Institute of Tuscany.

### **First warnings and persecution**

In March 1937, his wife was forced out of the Istituto di farmacologia [Institute of Pharmacology] by its new director after holding for several years the position of assistant, a position that she had obtained through a regular *concorso* [a national contest to secure a teaching position at the university]. Instead, she was sent to teach at a commercial technical institute in Viareggio<sup>8</sup>. Even more than before then, Carlo needed to find some source of income since, as an *aiuto volontario* at the Istituto di clinica ortopedica [Institute of Clinical Orthopedics] of the University of Florence, he was not yet compensated. However, he was a certified doctor by the Board of physicians, surgeons and orthodontists of the Florentine province;

<sup>6</sup> See R. Università degli studi di Firenze, «Annuario per l'anno accademico 1936-37», p. 408.

<sup>7</sup> R. Università degli studi di Firenze, «Annuario per l'anno accademico 1937-38», p. 203.

<sup>8</sup> The unjust treatment inflicted by the new director to Giselda Biancalani has been reconstructed here: see Patrizia Guarnieri, *Giselda Biancalani Schapira*, in Ead., *Intellettuali in fuga dall'Italia fascista*, Firenze University Press, 2019 <<http://intellettualinfuga.fupress.com>>.

therefore, he could practice his profession. He also taught massage therapy courses at Scuola di avviamento professionale [vocational school] E. Peruzzi in Florence. These positions were all quickly taken away from him as a result of the Racial Laws. To identify those who were of «Jewish race», in addition to the questionnaires that were distributed by the universities, the fascist union of medical doctors, which had replaced the medical board in compliance with Law 184 of 1935, requested that each member declared if they belonged to the Jewish race, first of all on their father's side and then on their mother's side. They also had to submit the same declaration for their spouse, who, in Carlo's case, was a Catholic. We do not have a copy of his questionnaire, which was the same as the one completed by other medical doctors in Florence in September 1938. His personal file also appears to have been lost<sup>10</sup>. Once the census was completed, it was easy to proceed to the meticulously systematic persecution: «Schapira Dr. Carlo» [Schapira Carlo, M.D.], who was board certified with the number 603, was among the first 23 on the list of physicians - all of foreign origins - who were expelled from the registry by the fascist union on 30 January 1939<sup>11</sup>. Other expulsions followed against Italians.

### **New and old migrants, qualified and unqualified**

<sup>9</sup> Some pictures of this all-girls high school can be found in Indire, *Fondo Fototeca*, b. 385 <<http://fotoeducatalogo.indire.it>> (accessed 1 September 2019). The news of Schapira's courses at Peruzzi are also in Angelo Ventura, *Il fascismo e gli ebrei. Il razzismo antisemita nell'ideologia e nella politica del regime*, Rome, Donzelli, 2013, p. 173.

<sup>10</sup> There is a copy, however, of the printed questionnaire completed by other doctors in the historical archives of the Ordine dei medici chirurghi e odontoiatri [Board of physicians, surgeons and orthodontists] of the province of Firenze (AOMFi). The consultation of files of the archive (made possible thanks to the President Teresita Mazzei and to Giovanni Morrocchesi, administrative director of the Board) is not immediate: the historical collection is held in *outsourcing*, uncataloged, and the files can be identified not by name, but by board certification number, see AOMFi, *Libro matricolare*. As verified by Lucrezia Nuti, in addition to file number 603, «Schapira Dr. Carlo di Baruch», the files of Oscar Levi, Massimo Salmon, and Stefano Vadasz are also currently missing. So is the file of Rosario Livatino referenced by the former president Antonio Panti in *Ottanta anni fa le leggi razziali. Una vergogna anche per i medici. Ecco cosa accadde a Firenze*, «Quotidiano sanità.it», 27 January 2018 <<https://www.quotidianosanita.it>> (accessed 11 July 2019).

<sup>11</sup> This can be read in AOMFi, *Elenco dei medici di razza ebraica che furono radiati*, which also reports each expulsion date, n.d. but compiled after the «deliberata reinscrizione d'ufficio, 25.9.1955» [official reinstatement of board registration].

What else was left to do other than leave? On 22 February 1939, Carlo bid farewell to his wife, her friends and relatives, and set sail for New York from Genoa on the *Rex*. He arrived there on 2 March. His visa, issued in Florence on 1 February, was valid for six months. He provided as his contacts his wife Giselda in Florence and in New York, such Natale Giachi at 2514 23rd Street in Astoria, NY<sup>12</sup>. He did not indicate any family relation with Giachi. Giachi, a Florentine born in 1889 and migrated to the United States in 1922, was a painter. He lived in Queens, a New York City borough that had a high concentration of Italian immigrants, with an Italian family consisting of a taxi driver, his wife, and his children<sup>13</sup>. It could be that he did not even know him - Carlo arrived in Italy when Giachi had already emigrated. Perhaps, he was given Giachi's name and address by someone else.

However, while en route to the United States, on the same ship as Carlo was one of his colleagues and former university classmates, Willy Oppler (1901-1993). A German Jew, Oppler had been expelled from Florence's registry of surgeons with Carlo. Like him, he had graduated with a degree in medicine in Florence, where he lived, had married an Italian woman, and worked. Like Carlo, he arrived in the United States in February 1939 with a temporary visa. Both had left without their respective spouses. They needed to settle down and obtain a residence permit as soon as possible.

Like many other emigrants during that time, Carlo obtained his visa in Cuba. On 26 August 1939, he went to Havana; on 6 September, he departed on the *American Oriente*, returning to New York on 8 September, with an NQIV (Non-quota Immigrant Visa) to enter the United States. The visa was issued in Havana on 31 August, where like other passengers on board - almost all Italians - he had gone for that specific purpose<sup>14</sup>. Registered as an Italian Jewish citizen born in Romania,

<sup>12</sup> On the same list of foreign passengers, Shapira was passenger number 25 and Willy Oppler was number 4, see Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://libertyellisfoundation.org>> (accessed upon registration 11 July 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Giachi Natale (born in Florence on 25 December 1889) lived in Queens with Tito Sartori, who was of the same age and a taxi driver, along with Tito's wife and daughter. The original document is in the NARA, *1930 US Federal Census Records, ad nomen*, which is available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>> (accessed upon registration 18 July 2019).

<sup>14</sup> On Carlo Schapira's trip from Havana to New York, see Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search*,

he gave his mother's, Sara Frichlander [sic], address in Romania, and gave, as his destination address, that of J. Picchiani, 2370 28th Street, still in the neighborhood of Astoria in Queens, New York. This was the address of James Picchiani, a 55-year-old, who had emigrated in 1911 and was naturalized as an American in 1934. It has not been possible to ascertain whether he was really Carlo's brother-in-law as stated in the passenger manifest, and thus the husband of one of his or Giselda's sisters. Nevertheless, this contact appears to be connected with the Florentine relatives of Carlo's wife, and was part of a much earlier wave of non-Jewish, non-intellectual immigrants<sup>15</sup>.

In the meantime, on 27 August 1939, one of his colleagues, who had also been expelled from the university and Florence's registry of medical doctors, arrived with his wife and daughters; even before leaving Italy, Mario Volterra had contacts at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital, which would turn out to be useful.

### **Citizens of New York. What about in Italy?**

On 3 November 1939, Carlo made the declaration of intention to be naturalized pledging under oath: «I will, before being admitted to citizenship, renounce for ever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty»<sup>16</sup>. According to the traditional formula, he also swore that he was «not an anarchic, a polygamous or a believer in polygamy», and that it was his intention, «in good faith, to become a citizen of the United States of America and to reside permanently therein». In addition to giving his name and birth information, he declared that at that moment, he was married, without children, and resided at 600 West 161st Street in New York. This was a ten-storey building with roughly sixty apartments, built in 1920 in the Washington Heights neighborhood, which was

*ad nomen* <<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>> (accessed upon registration 14 July 2019).

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem. Based on the Queens address that was provided, the contact person in New York was James Picchiani, who was 54 years-of-age in 1938, when he returned to New York; he emigrated from Florence in 1911 with his wife Ernestina (her maiden name is unknown) and a sibling, while another sibling lived on Via Vittorio Emanuele in Florence.

<sup>16</sup> National Archives at New York City, *State and Federal Naturalization Records*, State of New York, Declaration of intention, n. 445766, which is also the source of information provided thereafter in the text (available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>, accessed upon registration 18 July 2019).

populated by Irish, Polish, and Hungarian immigrants, and became the area with the most German Jews in New York in the 1930s, to such a degree that it was called Frankfurt on the Hudson<sup>17</sup>.

One year later, his wife, Giselda, finally arrived at the beginning of November 1940. At this point, Italy had declared war and Dobronauti, where Carlo was born, was annexed by the Soviet Union for a brief period following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939. In 1941-1944 Dobronauti returned to being a part of Romania, until North Bukovina was occupied again by the USSR and integrated into Ukraine. Giselda and Carlo relocated many a time, always trying, like everyone else, to better their lives. Giselda quickly began searching for work in New York. However, it is difficult to reconstruct how they made a living, and how he found a job and then another, what jobs these were and for how long he held them.

Carlo Schapira did not turn to the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars, although he was familiar with their work. His wife even went to their office for an interview in February 1942, which led to nothing. His colleague Willy Oppler had also tried to get their help years back, prior to seeking refuge in Italy; but in general, medical doctors were dissuaded from reaching out to them and instead were recommended to go to the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Physicians, which assisted those who practiced medicine, not *medical scientists* who conducted specialized research. The latter was precisely what Carlo Schapira wished to pursue.

In November 1939, shortly upon arrival, he declared to be an instructor in his *first papers: a teacher, not a professor*<sup>18</sup>. In 1942, he had an office in the residential area of Manhattan's Upper West Side, at 470 West End Avenue, a building that was built in 1928. As for his home, he lived at 570 West 57th Street. In the phonebook of that and the following year, he is listed as Carlo Schapira M.D.<sup>19</sup> These are all of the

<sup>17</sup> Steven M. Lowenstein, *Frankfurt on the Hudson. The German Jewish Community of Washington Heights, 1933-1983. Its Structure and Culture*, Ann Arbor (MI), Detroit Wayne State University Press, 2014.

<sup>18</sup> National Archives at New York City, *State and Federal Naturalization Records*, cit.

<sup>19</sup> «New York City Directory», 1942, p. 879; *ibid.*, 1943, p. 895, where in addition to the office at the same address as the previous year, an office is also listed at 320 W 36th Street.

context clues that we have, as no other passenger by his or his wife's name appeared in any database of travel documents to the United States. Could he have returned to Italy for good, regardless of his sworn intention of becoming a U.S. citizen and a permanent U.S. resident? Even this hypothesis remains unproven.

### **Reinstatement to the university and the Medical Board?**

After the liberation of Florence in August 1944, the special Commission of the restored Medical Board, nominated by the Tuscan Committee of National Liberation on 24 September 1944, deliberated the Board's reinstatement and the reintegration of all doctors who were expelled due to fascism into the provincial registry<sup>20</sup>. The commission was presided by Dr. Luigi Rochat, a Waldnesian member of the Action Party, whose son-in-law Guglielmo (Willy) Jervis had been executed one month prior, after the SS had locked him up and tortured him in Torino. This was an important decision by the Board, which would continue to be discussed frequently, even ten years later. Practically, however, it needed to be implemented, and this was no easy task to accomplish. Some would never return. Others had migrated far away. People had to be tracked down and informed. Would Carlo Schapira, Mario Volterra, and Willy Oppler, who had all settled down in New York, cross the Atlantic again? Would they find their homes and jobs back in Florence? As for the School of Medicine in Florence, the vacancies left by the staff members who were removed from their posts due to the Racial Laws were never entirely filled, and other rather significant vacancies had also weakened the clinical departments. The orthopedic clinic where Schapira had worked was on the verge of collapse after the war; due to radiation exposure, the director, Piero Palagi, fell ill and died in March 1947. To remedy the situation, the University hired Oscar Scaglietti (1906-1993), who was arguably the best student of Putti's school in

<sup>20</sup> AOMFi, report drawn up and signed by Gianfranco Tassinari, secretary of the special commission of the OMCO, meeting of 25 September 1944, point 2: «The reinstatement to the Board and the reintegration of the medical doctors expelled by the Fascist Government into the medical registry».



Bologna, who in turn passed away at the end of 1940. Scaglietti became *ordinario* [full-time professor] in 1956<sup>21</sup>.

Until 1938, Schapira's training had been very similar to Scaglietti's: they were of the same age and both got their start in spine orthopedics. That the School reinstated specifically the former aide of the orthopedic clinic, who had migrated to the United States, is not supported by any evidence at present - Schapira's personal file is missing from the ASUFI - and seems quite unlikely. The academic position that he held prior to the Racial Laws was on a voluntary basis and because of this, officially he was not even expelled with a specific order<sup>22</sup>. In fact his name does not appear in the registry of provisions of the Corte dei Conti [Court of Auditors] towards Jewish state employees, which also includes university personnel<sup>23</sup>. Did anyone from the University of Florence try to contact him about returning? It would not have been impossible to let him know since his wife (who was also a part of the Florentine academic community) had family in Florence.

### **A sea of difference exists between saying and doing; in fact, an ocean**

What we know is that, different from many others who ended up going abroad again, disappointed and disheartened, Carlo and Giselda did not return, not even

<sup>21</sup> Scaglietti was hired by the University of Florence in November 1947; he became full professor in November 1956 and returned to Bologna in 1967. See Stefano Arieti, *Scaglietti Oscar*, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 91, Rome, Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 2018, *ad vocem*, <<http://www.treccani.it>> (accessed 15 July 2019).

<sup>22</sup> In the pioneering essay written by Francesca Cavarocchi and Alessandra Minerbi, *Politica razziale e persecuzione antiebraica nell'ateneo fiorentino*, in Enzo Collotti (ed.), *Razza e fascismo. La persecuzione contro gli ebrei in Toscana (1938-1943)*, I, Rome-Florence, Carocci-Regione Toscana, 1999, pp. 500-501, a table provides a list of the 39 instructors who were expelled from the University of Florence, with a column dedicated to the eventual reinstatements: it includes 15 yeses (including Schapira, but this is a typo, since the yes refers to the following instructor, Isacco Sciaky); the responses for the other 24 are left blank. The source is not indicated but the authors, whom I asked, believe that even then, that is roughly 20 years ago, Schapira's file was not available. I believe that the so-called reinstatements all require verification, even in relation to the different meanings with which the term reinstatement was and is used, which should be the reintegration into the same position from which one was originally expelled. The term was also intended in a much broader sense, for different types of re-appointments (e.g., in exceeding number) and more or less substantial, that is, it was tied to an actual search and rehire of the instructor by the School and the university, and was even used for the *libera docenza*, which was a type of qualification - later dropped - and not an academic position.

<sup>23</sup> Cfr. Annalisa Capristo, Giorgio Fabre, *Il Registro. La cacciata degli ebrei dallo Stato italiano nei protocolli della Corte dei Conti 1938-1943*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2018; he is not listed with either surname.

after having at least checked the actual possibilities of adequate accommodation in Italy. They waited.

The first time that they traveled to the old world was four years later, on 4 August 1948, on the *SS America* bound for Le Havre. They presumably went on to Italy and Florence, all the more so since Giselda stayed for another two weeks before departing once again for New York, this time on her own. Carlo returned before her, on 13 September 1948, leaving from Cherbourg in Normandy on the *Queen Mary*, where he traveled with three pieces of luggage in first class<sup>24</sup>. Two years later, presumably during his summer holiday, they left once again on the *Queen Mary*, planning to stay in Europe for 6 weeks; they did so again in 1952, when on 30 July, they departed on the French ship *Liberté* towards Le Havre<sup>25</sup>. From there, they made the return journey on the *Ile de France*, boarding on 16 September, and for three years in a row, they went back and forth together to their home in New York, always located at the same address. The following year, they sailed with 6 suitcases from Genoa on 24 September 1953 on the *Andrea Doria*; on 23 September 1954, they sailed from Normandy on the *Queen Elizabeth*. On 3 November 1956, they returned to New York from Rome by plane with TWA<sup>26</sup>. Then, in 1959, they once again sailed on the *Liberté* at the end of the summer<sup>27</sup>.

The documentation regarding travelling to Europe is not accessible afterwards; however, they continued to make the trips.

### **An invaluable testimony for the investigation**

<sup>24</sup> For the journey from New York, see NARA, *Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Departing Passenger and Crew list*, A4169, Roll 5, Sorrell Carlo and Sorell Giselda, available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>> (accessed upon registration 20 July 2019). After that trip, it should be noted that research is to be conducted using the name Sorell, not Schapira, see Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>> (accessed upon registration 14 July 2019).

<sup>25</sup> See NARA, *Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Departing Passenger and Crew list*, A4169, Roll 91, Sorell Carl and Sorell Giselda, available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>> (accessed upon registration 20 July 2019).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, see the trips *ad nomen* in the mentioned order.

<sup>27</sup> See NARA, *Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Departing Passenger and Crew list*, A4115, Roll 544, Sorrell Carl.

Neither the travels described above nor any other information could have been identified without a key testimony of the daughters of Dr. Volterra, who were very young at the time. Carlo Schapira changed his surname, as did his wife: they dropped his very Jewish surname and became Mr. and Mrs. Sorell, as they were listed in the official records<sup>28</sup>. However, the daughters do not remember when this took place. Perhaps after 1942 and before 1945. In Manhattan's 1943 «City Directory», he still shows up under his original surname<sup>29</sup>. He was naturalized by the Court of New York under his new surname on 4 November 1945: Carlo Sorell was now a citizen of the United States, and lived with his wife in a beautiful area of Manhattan at 457 W 27th Street<sup>30</sup>.

In 1946, he moved his office to 40 Washington Square South, right next to New York University<sup>31</sup>. If he could not get hired by an American university, he was still able to establish himself in a hospital system among the most advanced in his field. The Hospital for Joint Diseases, currently known as the NYU Langone Orthopedic Hospital and ranked tenth in the United States for orthopedics,<sup>32</sup> was founded in 1905-06 by the two Frauenthal brothers, who were medical doctors who had immigrated from Germany; one of them was married to the wealthy Minnie Rothschild, a very active president of the Ladies' Auxiliary. In a short time, their hospital had gained an excellent international reputation also for the treatment of children with severe deformities. In 1939, after various expansions, it reorganized

<sup>28</sup> This testimony was released on 20 February 2019 to Lucrezia Nuti by Sara and Giovanna Volterra, twin daughters of Dr. Mario Volterra, who were five years old when they immigrated to New York with their parents. I was able to contact them thanks to the Florentine Jewish Community. They do not remember when this name change took place, but according to them, it was done in order to avoid having the same name as a criminal.

<sup>29</sup> «New York City Directory», 1942, under the name Schapira Carlo.

<sup>30</sup> See The National Archives at New York City, *Soundex Index to Petitions for Naturalization filled in Federal, State, and Local Courts located in New York City, 1792-1989*, Sorell Carlo, 4 November 1945, with the address cited above, available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>> (accessed upon registration 20 July 2019).

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem and the new office in the «New York City Directory», 1946, under the name Sorell Carlo, with addresses and telephone numbers. The New York Public Library holds a digital collection of «New York City Directories» from 1786 to 1934. For some of the subsequent ones, see <<https://www.ancestry.com>>, *ad nomen*.

<sup>32</sup> See *NYU Langone Orthopedic Hospital* <<https://nyulangone.org>>, and Banyon McDowell, William S. Green, Joseph D. Zuckerman, MD, *Hospital for Joint Diseases, 1905-2005: One Hundred Years of Excellence*, n.d. but 2005 <<https://med.nyu.edu>> (accessed 20 July 2019).

with the plan of becoming a research and training institution, affiliated with a Medical School, or at least capable of offering postgraduate courses in addition to the renowned Sir Robert Jones Lectures, and later with the Columbia University College of Physicians. By 1940, it began publishing its own journal, the «Bulletin of the Hospital for Joint Diseases Orthopaedic Institute». Some of Sorell's scientific contributions appeared here.

During the time of war, the Hospital for Joint Diseases was lacking sufficient staff; of the 338 doctors attending, in 1940 35% left to fill either industrial or military roles. But the investment in the future of the hospital never failed. Travel scholarships were instituted in order to keep the hospital's specialists as up to date as possible about what was being done elsewhere. In addition, top doctors were recruited, including Director of Laboratories Henry Jaffe (1896-1979), Henry Milche (1865-1964) who worked at Mount Sinai Hospital, where Mario Volterra had also worked, allowing the establishment of a privileged relationship that lasted for years. This relationship created special openings for immigrant physicians, such as hand surgery specialist Emanuel Kaplan (1894-1980), who was educated in Ukraine, and Paul Lapidus (1893-1981), the so-called father of foot surgery, who arrived from Russia.

Sorrell appears as a *consultant* for the Hospital for Joint Diseases, although it is unclear as to when he had this role, and later as a *senior* specialist, his major responsibilities being toward the patients. His collaboration with the journal dates to the 1950s; he was also a member of the American College of Surgeons, located at 63 E 91st Street in New York City.

Who did he interact with? Surely with his colleague Volterra, as his daughters remember, but also with other Italian professionals from various fields. An informal sympathy card, sent to Ada Vera Viterbo on 14 November 1961 and signed by Giselda and Carlo Sorell, suggests that he had a long, amicable relationship with

the Florentine sculptor who had immigrated to New York with his wife in February 1941<sup>33</sup>.

He died on 7 April 1991, eight years after his wife. This information is traceable through the US Social Security Death Index, which includes as his last residence the zip code of the Consulate of the United States in Italy, since his precise location was unknown. According to what Sara and Giovanna Volterra remember of this colleague of their father's, he was surely in Florence. That is where he returned after having spent a lifetime in New York.

### Major publications

- *Sulle rotture del tendine del quadricipite femorale*, «Archivio di Ortopedia», 52, 2, 1936, pp. 329-356.
- *L'Osteotomia cuneiforme dell'astrafalo nella cura di alcune deformità del piede*, «Archivio di Ortopedia», 54, 1, 1938, pp. 143-177.
- *Spontaneous Rupture of the Extensor Pollicis Longus Tendon in Rheumatoid Arthritis*, «Bulletin of the Hospital for Joint Diseases», 19, April 1958, pp. 65-71.
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