

Fernando Liuzzi

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The Musical Quarterly of 1942 recounts a tragic irony of the times: Fernando Liuzzi's premature death passed without due notice in Italy. His dismissal from the University of Rome was also met with silence, and his life itself has been forgotten. Yet he was the musicologist who had done the most to raise awareness internationally about the history of Italian medieval and renaissance music, recalled Ernst Ferand, his Hungarian colleague, a professor at the New School. Like Liuzzi, Ferand had also emigrated to New York in 1939. However, Liuzzi remained there for only a very short time. He had gone to New York in search of work that Fascism had taken away from him, but he didn't even have the chance to start the position he had secured at Columbia University.

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Musical and philosophical studies

He was born on 19 December 1884 in Senigallia, in the province of Ancona, to Federico Liuzzi and Regina Augusta Vivanti, in a family with Jewish origins¹. They lived in Bologna, where Fernando had obtained his secondary school diploma at the Liceo Galvani. In 1903 he enrolled at the University there, and he graduated in Letters on 11 November 1909 with a thesis on "Traces of Pythagoreanism in Roman Literature"². Among the faculty were several distinguished teachers: in Italian literature Giosuè Carducci until 1904-05, who was succeeded by Giovanni Pascoli, with whom Liuzzi took his exams in 1906. Eight years later, in 1914, Liuzzi would set Pascoli's *La cunella* for voice and piano, which he titled *Ninna nanna*.

Bologna was one of the most important centers for music in Italy, and its Liceo musicale (since 1945 the Conservatorio Giambattista Martini) was led from 1886-1902 by the composer Giuseppe Martucci, who gave it a

¹ ASUBo, *Sezione studenti, Facoltà di Lettere e filosofia*, f. 965, "Liuzzi Fernando", City of Bologna, City Registry Office, birth certificate, issued 16 November 1903.

² *Ibid.*, secondary school diploma from the Liceo classico Galvani, Bologna, November 1903. Unfortunately, his thesis is missing from the file, and in the "Processo verbale" [Minutes] of the Registro di Laurea [Degree Records], no supervisor is indicated. For all this information, including the recorded exam with Pascoli on 6 November 1906, I thank Andrea Daltri of the Archivio storico of the Università di Bologna.

Wagnerian symphonic orientation³. The young Liuzzi studied piano and composition with Guido Alberto Fano,⁴ and with Stanislao Falchi at the Royal Academy of Santa Cecilia in Rome⁵. In 1905 he went on to study in Munich at the Akademie der Tonkunst [Academy of Musical Arts] with Felix Mottl and with the composer and organist Max Reger⁶. Meanwhile, he continued his university studies and was especially fascinated by the classes he took with the philosopher and psychologist Theodor Lipps:

The memory of the classes in Aesthetics and Art Theory that Theodor Lipps gave from his low, wide chair in a classroom at the University of Munich is so alive and present within me, it's as if I just left there a few hours ago. I can still see the figure of the Professor [...]. The sound of his voice is more alive than ever for me: a low, sweet, restful sound with which he composed very clear, ordered, and precise words, which I could almost see before they were pronounced, carefully chosen with insightful composure and with consciously subtle taste⁷.

In 1913 he married Paola Forti, who came from a well-off Jewish family from Prato. Together they had two children: Franco, born in 1915, and the following year, Maria Luce, who was called Lucetta.

³ It was specifically Martucci who was responsible for the Italian premiere of *Tristan und Isolde* at the Teatro Comunale, Bologna, on 2 June 1888. Historical background about the Conservatory, located in piazza Rossi, are found at <<http://www.consbo.it>> (accessed 5 October 2022). For biographical information, aside from inaccuracies and omissions, see Ernst T. Ferand, *In Memoriam: Fernando Liuzzi, "The Musical Quarterly"*, 28, 1942, pp. 494-504.

⁴ Guido Alberto Fano (Padova 1875 - Udine 1961), pianist and composer, student of Martucci. Taught at the Liceo musicale di Bologna and directed the Conservatories of Parma, Naples, and Palermo. Professor of Piano in Milan from 1922 to 1938 and from 1945 to 1947, having been suspended from his position with the Racial Laws.

⁵ Stanislao Falchi (Terni 1851 - Rome 1922), composer, taught chorus and composition at the Liceo musicale Santa Cecilia in Rome, of which he was director from 1902 to 1915. He was a catalyst of Roman musical life.

⁶ Max Reger (Brand, Bavaria, 1873 - Leipzig 1916), well-known organist and composer, professor at the Conservatory of Leipzig from 1907 until his death. He was a great admirer of Johann Sebastian Bach; an eclectic composer, the high point of his creative output were his works for organ. Felix Mottl (Vienna 1856 - Munich 1911), composer and conductor, brought Wagner's music to England (1894) and to the United States (1903, Metropolitan Opera, New York). He assisted Wagner in the preparation of the first Bayreuth Festival, during which he conducted the cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. He also conducted Hector Berlioz' complete works for orchestra. He was the conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic in 1904.

⁷ Fernando Liuzzi, *Essenza dell'arte e valore estetico nel pensiero di Theodor Lipps*, "Rivista di filosofia", 1, 1924, p. 17.

Professional activity, musical compositions and theoretical writings

Liuzzi focused on orchestral conducting, composition, and teaching. He was a professor of Composition at the Parma Conservatory beginning 1 December 1910; beginning 1 August 1912 he was professor of Harmony and Counterpoint, and on 1 August 1917 he moved to the Conservatory of Florence with the same title⁸. At that time, the director of the Florence Conservatory was Ildebrando Pizzetti, who had also taught in Parma, a composer connected to the the group “La Voce” with Papini, Prezzolini, and De Robertis. Pizzetti was the teacher of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, who also spent time with Liuzzi, 11 years his senior⁹.

Plagued by health problems, in particular by severe headaches, Liuzzi asked for a year’s leave of absence from the Conservatory, in order to finish several compositions. He had been advised to do so by Arturo Toscanini, who had spoken with Pizzetti on his behalf. However, the request seems not to have been granted, and in the faculty register he is listed as “resigned” in May 1921¹⁰.

Liuzzi continued to be very active, giving his all to articles he wrote for the important publications in his sector; in March 1920 he was among the founding members and signatories, along with Pizzetti, the pianist Ernesto Consolo, Angelo Orvieto and others, of the Amici della musica, which held its first concert at the Palazzo Corsini¹¹. Among Liuzzi’s best compositions of this period are the Sonata for violin and piano, dated 1920 and dedicated to Mario Corti and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (the latter of whom would

⁸ His record of service is precisely noted in the Archivio storico del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, Florence, *Registro docenti*, “Liuzzi F.”. The archive is awaiting reorganization. I thank Paola Gibbin for her research of these sources.

⁹ See Fiamma Nicolodi, *Pizzetti, Ildebrando* in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (from here on referred to as DBI), vol. 84, Rome, Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 2015 <<https://www.treccani.it>> (accessed 6 October 2022).

¹⁰ Archivio storico del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, Florence, *Registro docenti*, “Liuzzi F.”. On these difficulties and on Toscanini’s help, Liuzzi confided in the musicologist Arnaldo Bonaventura, see Biblioteca del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, *Carteggio Arnaldo Bonaventura*, f. L. 7538, letter from Liuzzi dated 18 November 1922.

¹¹ See Johannes U. Müller, *L’Associazione “Amici della musica” e l’origine delle istituzioni musicali fiorentine*, Florence, Cadmo, 2003, pp. 36-38.

become his brother-in-law when he married Clara Forti, the sister of Liuzzi's wife),¹² as well as a rhapsody for orchestra entitled *Gaiola e Marechiaro. Impressione napoletana*, which survives today only in a version for piano. In 1924 he published his most important theoretical work, *l'Estetica della musica* [The Aesthetics of Music], eight essays dedicated to "the memory of Theodor Lipps of the University of Munich, my professor".

The endless competitive exam

In 1923 Liuzzi applied for *libera docenza* (qualification for university teaching) at the renowned Istituto di studi superiori pratici e di perfezionamento in Florence, which then maintained greater autonomy compared to the State universities to which it would soon become aligned. He applied in Aesthetics, so he would be assessed by a commission named by the ministry, composed of three professors of the relevant department and two other professors. In May of that year, the commission was comprised by: the head of the Department of Literature and Philosophy, Olinto Martinelli, a geographer; Francesco De Sarlo, professor of Theoretical Philosophy and Experimental Psychology; Ludovico Limentani, professor of Moral Philosophy; the fervently Catholic Germanist Guido Manacorda from the University of Naples; and Andrea D'Angeli, a lecturer in Aesthetics, who was the only musicologist on the commission¹³. The records of the work carried out by the commission were sent to the ministry on 9 November 1923, and on 20 December signed by the ministry, which then made a written request that the commission be reconvened to submit the candidate to a "cross-examination", in order to resolve "the discrepancy between the premise and the conclusion of the report of the Examining Commission" that the Consiglio superiore della

¹² Cfr. Fernando Liuzzi, *Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco*, "Solaria", 2, 11, 1927, p. 60 and ff.; translated in French in "La Revue musicale", 8, 1927, pp. 55-61.

¹³ ASUFi, AC, SLD, f. "Liuzzi Fernando", letter of the MPI, Directorate-General for Higher Education to the superintendent of the R. Istituto di studi superiori in Florence, Rome, 30 May 1923.

Pubblica Istruzione [Board of Governors for Public Education] had observed. Did everything have to be repeated? In a November 1923 letter to the musicologist Arnaldo Bonaventura, who was an alternate to the same commission (although he was not called upon to participate), Liuzzi predicted that the attainment of his *libera docenza* would be delayed “by a few months”¹⁴.

In fact, it took three years. And it’s not totally clear what transpired, also because the commission’s report is missing from the files, even though it is mentioned as an attachment in several documents. Both the off-the-record information that Liuzzi reported to Bonaventura and the subsequent official request by the ministry indicate that the examining commission considered Liuzzi’s qualifications to be not very relevant to Aesthetics in general and more suited to Music. The candidate did not deny this and added “that the lecture was also based on a musical subject”. For this reason he expected to be asked to make another submission to complement the first. And so it happened in March 1924, although the competition requested only titles, without any lecture, which instead became two and then three¹⁵.

Subsequent analyses by the ministry had contested the documents of the newly convened commission, which were transmitted from the chairman to the superintendent on 8 April 1924, and then sent on to the ministry. This time it seems that one examiner missed the vote. Who this was and why the person did not participate is not known. The result would not have been different even if this examiner had voted against Liuzzi, because the four who were present had all voted in favor of his candidacy. However, the ministry judged the deliberation “illegal”, and, with the act of 10 June 1926, the commission was reconvened.

¹⁴ Biblioteca del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, *Carteggio Arnaldo Bonaventura*, L. 7538, Letter from F. Liuzzi, Usigliano di Lari (Pisa) 25 November 1923.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, to cfr. with the records held by ASUFi, AC, SLD, f. “Liuzzi Fernando”, the ministry to the superintendent, 20 December 1923; the superintendent to the head of the Department of Literature and Philosophy, 27 December 1923.

However, the same group could not be reunited: on 14 June Marinelli died and was replaced by the new chairman, Paolo Emilio Pavolini, who had been selected a few months prior. Professor De Sarlo asked to be excused from his role on the commission; he was replaced by Felice Ramorino, who had been an alternate since 1923¹⁶. Before the modified commission, the candidate underwent a further cross-examination “on topics pertaining to the general field of Aesthetics. The discussion lasted more than 30 minutes and all five commissioners took part”; as stated in the minutes, the group then voted in favor of Liuzzi’s request, approved it, and signed it on the spot¹⁷.

Background and political clashes

The convoluted competition in the institution that, in 1924, would become the University of Florence, where there had already been two rectors of opposing political viewpoints, took place amid strong tensions. The minister who had first blocked Liuzzi’s professorship in 1923 was Giovanni Gentile, who in that same period had engaged in a battle against De Sarlo, managing to push him out of the Institute of Psychology that the antifascist professor had founded. If De Sarlo had requested to be excused from his role as an examiner for the third reconvoation of the committee for the competitive exam in June 1926 (but such a request is not in the documentation), in reality he had already been “discharged from service” by the rector on 11 April of that year, for having displayed “incompatibility with the general political directives of the government”, as established by the newly adopted *legge fascistissima of 24 December 1925, no. 2300*.

During this period, there had been an intensification of violent acts around the country: the murder of Matteotti in June 1924; the fatal attacks on

¹⁶ For information about the two new commissioners, see at least the two respective entries *Ramorino, Felice*, in *Enciclopedia italiana*, Rome, Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1935 <<https://www.treccani.it>> e Carmela Mastrangelo, *Pavolini, Paolo Emilio*, DBI, vol. 81, 2014 <<https://www.treccani.it>> (accessed 15 October 2022).

¹⁷ ASUFI, AC, SLD, f. “Liuzzi Fernando”; the commission with its two new members reconvened on 28 June 1926.

Giovanni Amendola in Rome and Tuscany in July 1925; and in Florence, the bloody night of San Bartolomeo against the anti-fascists in October. In May 1925 the majority of the Department professors had supported Croce's antifascist response to Gentile's manifesto; in July their colleague was put on trial for his antifascist activity, and he was fired from the *ateneo* to a public protest. In 1926, however, the same department was led by the fascist Pavolini, whose son Alessandro, then a university student, had led the *squadristi* against Salvemini during a class in March 1925; by 1926 the more combative dissidents, such as Salvemini, who had left the country, came under attack; others, like De Sarlo, were isolated, and everything was effectively hushed up¹⁸.

This turbulent backstory, which was happening at the same time as Liuzzi's problematic exams, was, of course, never mentioned in the official records nor in Liuzzi's private correspondence with Arnaldo Bonaventura during that period, although Bonaventura would have been well informed about these events. His son Enzo not only had worked for years in the Department of Literature and Philosophy, but as the assistant professor to De Sarlo in the laboratory. In December 1923 Enzo Bonaventura suddenly found himself in charge of the Institute of Psychology, because the position had been taken away from his antifascist professor. One could never be too careful, especially in writing; Liuzzi knew of Arnaldo Bonaventura's political sympathies and his frequent presence at Villa il Salviatino, the home of Ugo Ojetti (1871-1946), who was a signatory of the Manifesto degli intellettuali fascisti [Manifesto of Fascist Intellectuals] and a figure much admired by Mussolini. Liuzzi was spending his time at the home of Amelia Rosselli and her sons, who lived on via Giusti, just a few meters from where he lived. The

¹⁸ The efforts to silence the incredible injustices inflicted on De Sarlo, which had repercussions to psychology in Florence and nationally, had lasting success, so much so that this story has only emerged recently. See Patrizia Guarnieri. *Senza cattedra. L'Istituto di Psicologia dell'Università di Firenze tra idealismo e fascismo*, Florence, Firenze University Press 2012, and also Ead., *Italian Psychology and Jewish Emigration under Fascism. From Florence to Jerusalem and New York*, New York, Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016, especially Chapter 3.

Forti sisters, both Liuzzi's wife Paola and his sister-in-law Clara, were also frequently in attendance at the Rosselli home¹⁹. It's difficult to say if the Liuzzi family was antifascist; they were so before the racial laws, according to a person who knew Liuzzi's daughter Lucetta well²⁰. Certainly the children of Fernando and Paola grew up to be antifascists, as did his sister Enrica's children, both Giorgio (future Medal of Honor recipient for the Liberation of Italy) and Alberto Vigevani, who, starting in their student days, were active opponents of the regime. Meanwhile, among Liuzzi's wife's family, the Fortis, there were antifascists and fascists²¹.

Returning to the topic of Liuzzi's competitive exams, among the permanent members of the examining commission two were resolutely antifascist (Limentani, who was Jewish, as well as De Sarlo and Ramorino, the alternate), while two were definitely fascist (Manacorda and Pavolini). The fascist rector Enrico Burci (1872-1933), who took over in 1926 from the outgoing antifascist rector Giulio Chiarugi, was the one who concluded the seemingly endless affair. He did not rush to do so, however: the commission concluded its work in June 1926, on 23 August they sent their findings to the ministry, which, in turn, on 29 December sent Burci the decree qualifying Liuzzi to be a *libero docente*, which had been signed the day before by Pietro Fedele (1873-1943). The rector finally sent it to Liuzzi on 5 January 1927²².

¹⁹ Specifically at the home of "signora Amelia, a dear and noble woman", Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco recalls having again seen Clara Forti, the woman whom he later married. Cfr. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica (un libro di ricordi)*, ed. James Westby, Florence, Cadmo, 2005, p. 125.

²⁰ I refer here to what was written and confirmed (on 14 November 2022) by a scholar friend of Lucetta Liuzzi, who was also able to review the private notebooks of Paola Forti Liuzzi and avail herself of family stories that confirm the antifascism of the Liuzzis; see Albertina Vittoria, *La breve vita di Antonio Amendola*, in Giovanni Cerchia (ed.), *La famiglia Amendola. Una scelta di vita per l'Italia*, Turin, Cerabona, 2011, pp. 117-158: p. 140 and ff., and Ead., *Intellettuali e politica. Antonio Amendola e la formazione del gruppo comunista romano*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 1985, p. 49.

²¹ For more information about Alberto and Giorgio Vigevani as well as others see [Emigrant Family Members](#).

²² ASUFI, AC, SLD, f. "Liuzzi Fernando", Letter from the dean to Liuzzi, 5 January 1927.

Teaching: from aesthetics to music history

The license was valid for five years and was in Aesthetics, not in the History of Music²³. Liuzzi was hired by the Ateneo as a *libero docente* for the academic year 1926-27, immediately after having received the decree, and continued there in 1927-28. There is no record of Liuzzi teaching at the University of Florence,²⁴ much less holding a tenured chair in the History of Music, as is often attributed to him. That post would instead be assigned to his contemporary Fausto Torrefranca (1883-1955), who, in 1939 was named *professore ordinario*, sealing a career that blossomed thanks his adhesion to the Fascist regime²⁵. Liuzzi had greater success in Rome, judging from the documentation, though incomplete, in his file in the archives of the University of Rome. In a long letter from May 1927, rector Giorgio Del Vecchio, a jurist of Jewish origins with many “Fascist merits” who had been appointed in November 1925, expressed praise and thanks to Liuzzi and to his collaborators Evelina Levi, Rachele Maragliano Mori, and Monsignor Raffaele Casimiri for the valuable work carried out by Liuzzi for the “History of Italian Music” course. He wanted to keep him at the university in the years to follow, he wrote²⁶.

²³ Ibid., the decree is not included in the file of the University of Florence, but it can be found instead in the file at the Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. “Liuzzi Fernando”. The process to obtain a “required qualifications” license had taken almost four years.

²⁴ I thank Fioranna Salvadori of the Archivio storico dell’Università di Firenze for checking in to this. On a copy of Liuzzi’s English c.v. (no date) in NYPL, MAD, ECADFS, I.B., Non grantees, b. 90, f. 21, “Liuzzi, Fernando”, teaching at the University of Florence for the three preceding years, from 1923 to 1926 is indicated, as well as teaching at the Università per stranieri in Perugia.

²⁵ An often-referenced memory, generous but incorrect, of Liuzzi’s brother-in-law Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, cit., pp. 127-129. The first *libera docenza* in the History of Music and Musical Aesthetics had been awarded by the University of Rome in 1915 to Fausto Torrefranca, who was then called to Florence in 1939, and named *ordinario per chiara fama* [full professor] in 1941 at the height of a career that had advanced after Torrefranco’s support for Fascism, according to Pier Paolo De Martino, *Torrefranca, Fausto*, DBI, vol. 96, 2020 <<https://www.treccani.it>> (accessed 10 November 2022). See also Fiamma Nicolodi, *Al tempo della “Voce”*, in Ead., *Novecento in musica. Protagonisti, correnti, opere. I primi cinquant’anni*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2018, p. 29. I thank Paola Gibbin for bringing this to my attention.

²⁶ Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. “Liuzzi Fernando”, rough draft by rector G. Del Vecchio to F. Liuzzi, Rome 30 May [1927]. The year attributed here is certain because it is also indicated as *anno V fascista* [the fifth year of the Fascist regime]. The Bolognese jurist Del Vecchio (1878-1970) was rector only from 1925-1927; culturally an anti-idealist, politically Fascist, a convert to Catholicism, he was pushed out because of the Racial Laws and, helped by

On 19 October 1928 Liuzzi made a request to the rector to be able to teach at the University of Rome; in 1930 he requested and obtained from the ministry that his license be converted to teaching the History and Aesthetics of Music, and, as a result, his lectureship was confirmed in June 1932²⁷. At that time, the rector was Pietro De Francisci, who had been Mussolini's minister of Justice for a few months; and it was directly in front of him that Liuzzi pledged his loyalty to the King and to Fascism on 20 November 1931; in October 1932 he enrolled in the Partita Nazionale Fascista [National Fascist Party],²⁸ and he was awarded an "unpaid" one-year teaching assignment in the History of Music, which then continued to be renewed on an unpaid basis²⁹. For the two-year period of 1936-38, De Francisci nominated him to be director of the Institute of Music History in the Department of Literature and Philosophy, and the employment decree for the academic year 1937-38 finally provided for a gross salary of 6000 lire per year, in that the teacher was declared "not to have received any fixed salary from the State"³⁰.

Liuzzi and his family moved to Rome, where they lived at Piazza Sant'Anselmo 1 in the Ripa district, from which they then moved to the nearby via Raimondo da Capua 12, on the Aventine Hill³¹. His son and daughter

his assistants who were close to Vatican circles, he lived in hiding in a convent. Rehired in 1944, he was then suspended as part of a purge trial, which resulted in a suspended sentence of less than one year, against which he protested. See at minimum Vittorio Frosini, *Del Vecchio, Giorgio*, DBI, vol. 38, 1990 <<https://www.treccani.it>> (accessed 10 November 2022).

²⁷ Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. "Liuzzi Fernando", letter from Liuzzi to the rector, 19 October 1928; copy of the *decreto ministeriale* [ministerial decree] of 10 April 1930 regarding the conversion of his title; registered letter of the rector of the University of Rome to Liuzzi, 6 July 1932. The decree of confirmation was dated 28 June 1932.

²⁸ Ibid., record of the taking the oath of loyalty by Liuzzi Fernando, 20 November 1931; he repeated it 5 years later, once again in front of Pietro De Francisci, on 10 December 1936, and in 1936 he presented to the University an attestation of the PNF of Rome that certified him as enrolled since 29 November 1932.

²⁹ Ibid., *decreto rettorale* [rectoral decree] 23 July 1932. In the file there are no decrees for the preceding years.

³⁰ Ibid., handwritten statement by F. Liuzzi to the rector 21 December 1936; note by the administrative director, Rome 13 May 1937, and R. Università di Roma, rectoral decree of assignment to Liuzzi, 18 November 1937.

³¹ The addresses were retrieved from letters in the Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. "Liuzzi Fernando", and in the Biblioteca del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, *Carteggio Arnaldo Bonaventura*, f. L. 7538, which holds 41 letters from Liuzzi.

attended University; Lucetta fell in love with archeology and with Antonio, a student of Letters who was attracting attention because of his important surname – he was an Amendola, son of the influential leader of the parliamentary opposition to Fascism, who had died as a result of attacks by Fascist squads – and for his own intelligence and knowledge, so much so that in 1935 Antonio won a competition of the Littorali della cultura e dell'arte³². On 29 August 1938 the young couple were married.

From the limelight to dismissal

The years in Rome were perhaps the most fruitful for Fernando Liuzzi. He was interested in Medieval Christian hymnodies and in the connections between Italian and Flemish music; he studied the compositional style and influences of Palestrina, Italian folk songs, and wrote articles on Bach and Beethoven. Above all, he devoted his attention to the monumental publication, in 1935, of the *laudari* of Cortona and Firenze. In addition to restoring these ancient songs, he analyzed the history of liturgical drama of the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, looking in particular at the contributions of music to theatrical activity. He reconstructed the incidental music composed in 1585 by Andrea Gabrieli for Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex*, for the opening of the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, adding a sixth voice and some orchestral sections to the work. The revised score was also performed in the ancient Roman theater of Sabratha in Tripolitania, for the inauguration of Italo Balbo, the governor of Libya, who requested his collaboration in 1937³³.

In 1938 he was commissioned to create a modern version of Orazio Vecchi's *Amfiparnaso* (1597), which had great success at the Maggio musicale

³² Cfr. A. Vittoria, *Intellettuali e politica*, cit. The Littorali della cultura e dell'arte were a series of artistic and cultural competitions among university students, organized by the Fascist regime.

³³ Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. "Liuzzi Fernando", letter from Liuzzi to the rector to request authorization, Rome 26 January 1937.

fiorentino,³⁴ where several of his scores had been performed starting with the Festival's first edition in May 1933. He was also interested in medieval musical notation, most notably in markings found in a manuscript of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

When the racial laws were promulgated he was relieved from his teaching duties at the University of Rome. Strangely, his name is missing from the invaluable list of faculty, including adjuncts, who were "of the Jewish race", which was published in 1997³⁵. He was also dismissed from the "special courses" that he had been teaching at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia since 1930, as well as from a course on The History of Music in Rome that he had taught at the Istituto di studi romani [Institute of Roman Studies], founded in 1925³⁶. His name was entered on the list of "authors whose works are not appreciated in Italy"³⁷.

He decided, therefore, to leave the country. It seems that he spent a period in 1939 as a visiting professor at the *École des hautes études de Belgique* in Brussels,³⁸ in recognition of his work on the musical relations between Flanders and Italy during the early Renaissance. He went to Paris with his wife, and it is known for certain that there Paola met a Communist Party official who gave her a letter for her son-in-law Antonio, who continued to be committed to attracting young intellectuals, artists and university students to the antifascist cause. The letter was from Giorgio Amendola (1907-1980), who had secretly resettled in France in October 1937, following the instructions of his party, and had then gone to Tunisia; he advised his younger brother "to

³⁴ Cfr. Fiamma Nicolodi, *Italian Opera*, in David Charlton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 383-402.

³⁵ The retroactive decree of termination is in the Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. "Liuzzi Fernando", note from MEN to the rector of the University of Rome, 2 June 1939. I thank Nica La Banca for having located this file. Cfr. the list for the University of Rome in the collection of essays by Angelo Ventura, *Il fascismo e gli ebrei. Il razzismo antisemita nell'ideologia e nella politica del regime*, Rome, Donzelli, 2013, p. 176 (1st ed. of the essay 1997).

³⁶ See NYPL, MAD, ECADFS, I.B., Non grantees, b. 90, f. 21, "Liuzzi, Fernando", c.v. typescript.

³⁷ This list is reproduced in the Appendix of Giorgio Fabre, *L'elenco. Censura fascista, editoria e autori ebrei*, Turin, Zamorani, 1998, pp. 474-481.

³⁸ This is mentioned in E.T. Ferand, *In memoriam*, cit., pp. 494-503.

remain united [...] in the pride of belonging to our family". It appears that Paola memorized the letter to be able to report it safely to Lucetta and Antonio, who were under intense police surveillance³⁹.

Unwelcome in Italy, invited to the US

Two of Paola Liuzzi's three sisters were preparing to expatriate to the United States with their respective husbands: Clara with Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and their children left in mid-July 1939; Piera with Cesare Tedeschi and their children departed in September 1939. On 30 August 1939, Fernando embarked alone on the Queen Mary from Cherbourg, France, headed to New York⁴⁰. His wife remained near their daughter Lucetta, who was pregnant. In his landing documents, Liuzzi listed as a reference his New York friend Gustave Reese (1899-1977), an expert in medieval and renaissance music as well as the secretary of the American Musicological Society⁴¹. Liuzzi had been invited to participate in the International Congress of the American Musicological Society in New York, where he gave a lecture in French "*sur les 'Barzelette' et 'Canzoni a ballo' italiennes du XV siècle*" during the session about Medieval and Renaissance music on 14 September 1939⁴². In a **group photo** from the event are the first president of the AMS, Otto Kinkeldey, as well as the then-current president, Carleton Sprague Smith, and Liuzzi is seen standing next to Gustave Reese. The occasion also offered Liuzzi the

³⁹ A. Vittoria, *La breve vita*, cit., pp. 140 and 158. An exceptional portrait emerges of Liuzzi's son-in-law, of his charm, of his circle of intellectuals. See also Giorgio Amendola, *Lettere a Milano. Ricordi e documenti 1939-1945*, Rome, Editori riuniti, 1973, p. 121, and ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 98, f. 140517, "Amendola Antonio".

⁴⁰ Cfr. the name "Liuzzi Fernando" in the Ship Manifest, in The Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search* <<https://heritage.statueofliberty.org>> (accessed with registration 15 October 2022).

⁴¹ Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages: With an Introduction on the Music of Ancient Times*, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1940. The book would later be published in Italy (*La musica nel Medioevo*, Florence, Sansoni, 1980), translated by **Flora Aghib Levi D'Ancona**, who had emigrated to the United States and later returned to live in Florence.

⁴² Cfr. all the *Program. International Congress of the AMS, New York, September 11-16, 1939*, reproduced in *Celebrating the American Musicological Society at Seventy-five*, Brunswick (ME), AMS, 2011, pp. 76-78.

opportunity to reconnect with the German musicologist Alfred Einstein (also pictured in the photograph), who had taken refuge in Italy, specifically in Florence, until the Racial Laws were promulgated. They saw each other again, and Liuzzi also met Alfred Einstein's famous cousin, Albert, who played his violin in duo with Liuzzi at the piano⁴³.

Liuzzi had entered the United States with a passport visa, issued in Paris, that allowed him to remain only for a defined period of time: 60 days, as noted in on the ship's documents. Evidently, he intended to remain for longer, and with the contacts that he had (aside from long distance support from his family who had settled there, the Tedeschis in New Haven and the Castelnuovo-Tedescos in Larchmont), he was looking for an academic appointment in order to work. He found one, but it was temporary and was not immediate. He needed to look for something more.

“But in the meantime he must get by”

He made contact with the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars. The secretary set up a meeting with him on 24 November 1939 at her office. This is what Miss Betty Drury noted about the interview: “A rather impressive person. English not yet adequate; insists on speaking French. Energetic and interesting character. He talked about his brilliant career – he wanted to discuss his case with Professor Ascoli”. A month later she wrote to Ascoli, who was teaching at the New School for Social Research. He was neither an expert in musicology nor in literature, but he was prominent and rich (thanks to his American fiancée, who later became his second wife), and he was often consulted regarding Italians by the secretary of the ECADFS. In her letter, Miss Drury explained the situation: Liuzzi wanted financial assistance to be able to finish his book, while waiting to begin teaching at Columbia University the following summer. Unfortunately, it was impossible

⁴³This event is reported by Elio Piattelli, *Alla ricerca della musica perduta*, “Shalom”, 1, December 1984, pp. 18-19.

to grant his request: the rules of the ECADFS stipulated that only a colleague or university could make a formal request for a grant to be able to put a displaced scholar on their payroll permanently or, at minimum, for a year. And even this was not enough, she added, because the Emergency Committee had to take other factors into account. Miss Drury asked Ascoli if by chance Professor Liuzzi had managed to find something. Max Ascoli did not respond, or at least, there is no trace of a response from him in the file, where generally verbal communications were also noted⁴⁴.

From Drury's brief notes, it is confirmed that his "appointment at Summer School" 1940 at Columbia University was discussed in the interview; "History of Italian Lyrics, Poetry and Music" was probably the title of the course. On the side, she had noted a name: Dino Bigongiari. He was the head of the Italian Department at Columbia, a Dante scholar, a Tuscan who had emigrated to the United States as a boy and was openly sympathetic to Fascism⁴⁵. Did Liuzzi perhaps owe his appointment to Bigongiari? Or was he someone whom Drury intended to contact, having written his name on her memorandum under "action to be taken"? Surely it was Liuzzi who suggested that she "write to Prof. Carleton Sprague Smith" (something that she seems not to have done), who was president of the American Musicological Society as well as the chief of the Music Division of The New York Public Library. The book that Liuzzi was writing was then two-thirds completed – Miss Drury took note of this – and the Columbia University Press would publish it. "But in the meantime he must get by"⁴⁶.

He gave her his address: he was staying in Room 71 A at 315 West 99th Street,⁴⁷ a former hotel built in 1920, transformed into single room

⁴⁴ NYPL, MAD, ECADFS, I.B., Non grantees, b. 90, f. 21, "Liuzzi, Fernando", "Interview memorandum", 24 November 1939, prepared by Betty Drury, and minutes of her letter to Max Ascoli, 14 December 1939.

⁴⁵ Barbara Faedda, *From Da Ponte to the Casa Italiana: a Brief History of Italian Studies at Columbia University*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2017 (Liuzzi is not mentioned).

⁴⁶ NYPL, MAD, ECADFS, I.B., Non grantees, b. 90, f. 21, "Liuzzi, Fernando", "Interview memorandum", 24 November 1939.

⁴⁷ The address appears in *Ibid.*

occupancy apartments. He also left her a copy of his curriculum vitae, in English, with a long list of his works. At the beginning he listed his personal details and his “offspring: Franco, born 1915, Lucetta, born 1916 married (1938) to Antonio Amendola, son of Giovanni (deceased in 1926)”. Almost as if he were a son, this fatherless young man was included, even if mentioning the name of Giovanni Amendola would certainly not have pleased those who sympathized with Fascism.

Loneliness and illness

Liuzzi was also worried about the problems facing his family who had remained in Italy. He was thinking not only of Paola but of his son, daughter and son-in-law, of their beliefs that could put them in danger, of the young couple who were expecting a child. What would the future hold for them? He felt powerless to help, and he suffered from loneliness.

In January 1940 he had a heart attack. He was hospitalized at the Jewish hospital Mount Sinai, where he was “cared for with the best advice and attention possible, for a month and a half. I can say that the entire New York music world is interested in my case, and many Italian doctors have kindly done all they can to put me back on my feet”⁴⁸. He was very grateful to Professor Mario Volterra from Florence and to Massimo Calabresi, the renowned cardiologist, who had both emigrated themselves due to the Racial Laws, the first to New York, the other to New Haven. They told him that his convalescence would be long – that it would take “many months more”. So,

In light of the fact that, in the meantime, I have become a grandfather, and that my wife couldn't join me because my son-in-law had been called up as an officer, etc. etc., since the international situation is looking gloomier and gloomier, I seized the opportunity to take the last departure of the *Rex* from New York, and I returned to my country and to my family, to my great satisfaction.

Things were more complicated than what Liuzzi wanted to or could have

⁴⁸ Biblioteca del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, *Carteggio Arnaldo Bonaventura*, f. L. 7538, letter of F. Liuzzi, Rome 10 July 1940.

explained to Arnaldo Bonaventura, in justifying “taking a long leave of absence from Columbia University [...] and leaving other things on hold, including work on Italian folk songs in America”. From the letter we learn that Bonaventura had been one of his referees along with several Italian musicians that Liuzzi mentioned to him (Bertoni, Toschi and Toscanini), as well as some foreigners.

But this kind of work requires a level of effort that, for now, I am not certain that I can sustain, so it will be for another time... or for a future reincarnation of mine. As far as Columbia is concerned, I will resume my professorship next year, if my health permits me to do so; otherwise this will go to hell as well⁴⁹.

A desire to return

He was joking around about it. At Columbia, however, he had not had a professorship but simply an *appointment* for the “summer session” beginning 1 April 1940 in the Romance Language Department, as evidenced by the card completed in his name among the official appointments. If he had been able to honor the commitment, hopefully the position would have been renewed, but there is no other documentation about this in the archival records of Columbia. On his card there was only the added note “did not serve”, without any mention of leave⁵⁰. It is unlikely that the University would have granted him a long leave of absence from a temporary assignment, one that had never been started, for a scholar who had just arrived in the United States, particularly when there were so many others who were still looking for work. He had suffered: “I know what distance + loneliness mean”⁵¹. In addition, he had faced considerable stress due to his health problems, including the strain of crossing the ocean on the *Rex*, alone, when crossings were by then

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Columbia University Archive, *Academic Record*, card for “Liuzzi Fernando”. I thank the archivist Jocelyn K. Wilk for having confirmed that there was no other correspondence in the *Central Files, Office of the President Records*.

⁵¹ Biblioteca del Conservatorio L. Cherubini, *Carteggio Arnaldo Bonaventura*, f. L. 7538, letter from F. Liuzzi, Rome 10 July 1940.

treacherous; the ship was intercepted and searched by the French and English naval vessels. Such were the dangers that the glorious Rex, **which had made crossings to America since October 1932**,⁵² made its last trip to Italy on 20 May 1940, with few passengers on board. Among them was Liuzzi, who disembarked at Genova and then finally rejoined his family.

His health worsened: he died at a hospital in Florence, at the age of 55, on 6 October 1940.

On the subject of justice

On 8 November 1949, a registered letter from the University of Rome, formally submitted and signed by the rector, to “Distinguished Professor Fernando Liuzzi” asked him to justify with a documented declaration “if he had been legitimately prevented” from teaching as a *libero docente*⁵³. This surprising request was made based on “official information available at this University”, which showed that Liuzzi had not been teaching there since 1937-38. According to a ministerial circular of 1 October 1925, anyone who did not fall into specific cases of “legitimate impediment” (and, in fact, his situation was not one of them), would be disqualified from holding the title of adjunct professor.

Perhaps the diligent official had missed something. According to the ministerial note received by the rector and registered by the same University of Rome on 2 June 1939, Fernando Liuzzi had already been “disqualified from holding the title of adjunct professor, because he is of the Jewish race”, in the Decreto Ministeriale [Ministerial Decree] of 18 March 1939, which was deemed retroactive to 14 December 1938, in application of the so-called

⁵² Archivio storico Luce, Genoa, *Giornale Luce*, 7 October 1932, departure of the transatlantic ocean liner SS Rex to America <<https://www.youtube.com>> (accessed 7 October 2022).

⁵³ Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. “Liuzzi Fernando”, draft of the registered letter from the University of Rome to Fernando Liuzzi, 8 November 1949. In addition, the note on the matter from the rector to Liuzzi, 12 June 1939. Liuzzi’s final teaching at the University took place from 29 January 1937 to 28 October 1938, as per assignment.

Laws in Defense of the Italian Race⁵⁴. Those Fascist laws had, at that point, been repealed for a long time, since January 1944 with the Badoglio government and since June 1944 following the Liberation of Rome⁵⁵. The disqualification of adjunct professors for political and racial reasons had been declared illegal, and therefore it was the University that should have had to explain itself or at least apologize for not having yet returned to the professor the title and position that were taken from him.

Professor Liuzzi had died without these apologies reaching either him or his family members. All of those who in 1940 came together to announce Liuzzi's death – “his wife Paola Forti, his children Franco and Lucetta with her husband Antonio Amendola and granddaughter Eva Paola, his sister Diana de Benedetti and his Vigevani nephews, his mother-in-law and all his relatives”⁵⁶ – had to subsequently face persecution, living in hiding, escaping to safety in Switzerland, fear, and much suffering⁵⁷.

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A selection of his numerous works are in the already cited article by E. Ferand. For the following references and some musical information in this text, the author thanks the pianist Alessandro Marangoni.

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⁵⁴ Ibid., note from MEN to the rector of the University of Rome, 2 June 1939.

⁵⁵ See the regulatory section, especially *From persecution to reparation*.

⁵⁶ Archivio storico La Sapienza, AS 1707, f. “Liuzzi Fernando”, mourning card for the death of Fernando Liuzzi, 6 October 1940, about which evidently the University had been informed.

⁵⁷ See at least the brief story of Lucetta Liuzzi, who arrived in Switzerland by crossing the lake, on their adventures as Jews and antifascists, as members of the Partito d'azione, in Archivio di Stato, Bellinzona, *Internati italiani*, b. 8, f. 2, notes from an interview with Lucetta Liuzzi, cited by his cousin John Tedeschi in Id. with Anne Tedeschi, *Italian Jews under Fascism 1938-1945. A Personal and Historical Narrative*, Madison (WI), Parallel Press-University of Wisconsin, 2015, pp. 328-329, with various references to Liuzzi.

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