

Philip (Jeruchim Fischel) Ernst

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Polish Student, from the USA to Italy

Jeruchim Fischel Ernst was born on June 15, 1910 in Zablotow (Austro-Hungarian Empire, now Poland). He is the son of Anzel.

Ernst emigrated to New York in 1928 after receiving an affidavit from Frieda Ernst, who worked as a costume designer, and Pearl Brunstein, who worked as a cloak finisher; Frieda, born in 1910, came to New York a year before the arrival of Jeruchim Fischel and is presumed to be his older sister. Jeruchim Fischel moved to Brooklyn and obtained U.S. citizenship in 1934 with the name Philip Ernst¹.

Ernst came to Italy to study medicine and enrolled at the Università di Siena on December 14, 1935 (matriculation n. 1926). In December of 1937 he moved to Turin but returned to Siena on September 24, 1938 (on November 18, 1938 he enrolled in his sixth year at university). On November 17, 1938 the Questura (the public safety administration in charge of immigration affairs) inquired about the presence of Ernst at the university due to his status as *ebreo straniero*, or “foreign Jew”. Shortly after, Philip requested to present his thesis. He graduated with a degree in medicine on July 15, 1939².

On April 6, 1940 Ernst left for Genoa on the boat *Manhattan* heading to the United States of America³. In his draft papers, compiled in October of 1940, the young medic claimed to be working at Unity Hospital at 1545 St. Johns Place, Brooklyn; he married Lida Lerner, who also graduated in medicine from the

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¹ The National Archives and Records Administration, Washington (DC), *Petitions for Naturalization from the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, 1897-1944*, M1972, Roll 862, petition no. 217499 (disponibile online previa registrazione su <<https://www.ancestry.com>>); for Frieda's naturalization application, cfr. *ivi*, Roll 820, no. 203434.

² ASUSi, *Medicina e chirurgia*, b. 102, f. «Philip Ernst».

³ Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>> (Date of access August 2020).

Università di Siena in July of 1939. She was a resident at 165 Minna Street⁴. We do not know whether he was chosen for the draft or if he enlisted as a volunteer; he apparently departed from Casablanca for New York on July 7, 1944, which would imply that he worked with troops stationed in North Africa. After the war, the couple went on a trip to Israel, since Philip appears to have departed from Lod Airport on January 2, 1950 and was in transit from Paris to New York on January 7, 1950. The couple, which resided in Mays Landing, New Jersey in 1950, had two children Jerome and Doris⁵. Philip Ernst died in Tel Aviv in June of 1980⁶.

Archival sources

- ASUSi, *Medicina e chirurgia*, b. 102, f. «Philip Ernst».
- Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>>.
- The National Archives and Records Administration, Washington (DC), *Petitions for Naturalization from the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, 1897-1944*, M1972, Roll 862, petition no. 217499.
- *United States, Social Security Death Index (SSDI), 1935-2014*, n. 052-14-9490 (available online at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>).

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⁴ The National Archives and Records Administration, St. Louis (MO), *Draft Registration Cards for New York State, 10/16/1940 – 3/31/1947, ad nomen* (available online upon registration at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>).

⁵ On the travels of 1944 and 1950 cfr. Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org>> (Date of access: August 2020); information on children, «Lida Lerner», departure from Le Havre for New York August 15, 1953.

⁶ United States, Social Security Death Index (SSDI), 1935-2014, n. 052-14-9490 (available online upon registration at <<https://www.ancestry.com>>).

Cite as:

Francesca Cavarocchi, Simone Duranti, *Philip (Jeruchim Fischel) Ernst* in
Ead., *Intellectuals Displaced from Fascist Italy*, Firenze University Press, 2019.

<<http://intellettualinfuga.fupress.com/en>>

ISBN: 978-88-6453-872-3

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Publication date: 5 August 2020