

Giuseppe (Josip) Medshiboshski

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A Russian Jew, a political exile for suspected anti-tsarist activities, he was among those who had been in Italy for twenty years when the race laws were published, which obliged foreign Jews to leave Italian territories if they had arrived after 1919. When, however, he was removed from the doctors' professional register, he waged a legal battle to continue to treat his patients. And he lost it, of course, even stung by the complaints of certain colleagues who felt damaged, they said, by «competition» from a Jew, who moreover had no Italian citizenship. A cultured man, he taught Russian language and literature at the University of Florence. He did so free of charge, for over ten years, for the benefit of the young people of the country where he had chosen to live with his family.

Youth in Russia

The son of Abraham and Anna Zitvak, he was born on 5 December 1881 in Kishinev (Russia, later Chişinău, capital of Moldova), where in 1903 and 1905 the Jewish population, which exceeded 42%, suffered two bloody pogroms, with the Russian authorities seriously at fault. Having graduated in medicine in Odessa, with socialist views, at the age of thirty Josip was working and living in Riga with his wife Guta, who was five years younger and also a medical graduate. He soon became a father: their firstborn arrived in May 1912 and they called him Abraham, like his paternal grandfather.

Josip, however, was under surveillance and suspected of anti-tsarist activity, like the friends he associated with. If he had not fled, he would have risked arrest¹.

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¹ The few details on the Medshiboshski's Russian and French periods come from the Boralevi

Exiles in France, to Italy

In 1912 he daringly boarded ship in Odessa to take refuge in France. He left Guta in Riga, who later joined him with her baby of a few months after a very tiring train journey. We only know that in Paris they together frequented the circles of Russian exiles; but it was to Italy that they decided to move, to Florence, where there was an important Russian colony. They arrived there on 1 August 1913, as Josip later formally declared².

Since his qualifications in Italy were not valid, in order to work he went back to studying at the Istituto di Studi Superiori in Florence, and at 33 was declared Doctor of Medicine and Surgery, on 6 June or 6 July 1914. The degree diploma, signed by Filippo Torrigiani, the superintendent of the Institute, and by Giulio Chiarugi, the dean of the Faculty, allowed him «to exercise the healing arts and to make use of them for all other legal purposes»³. It was registered to Giuseppe Medshiboshski: the first name was Italianized but the surname remained Russian, and so it remained - he was attached to it - for many years. From 14 March 1914 Medshiboshski, already recorded in the Population Register of Pisa, was recorded in Florence, in via Vittorio Emanuele 143, in the suburb of Rifredi, which was just then being industrialized through the presence of Officine Galileo, Manetti & Roberts and other factories⁴. In March

Meggiboschi family, whom I thank. For general background, see Luba Jurgenson and Claudia Pieralli, *Lo specchio del Gulag in Francia e in Italia*, Pisa, Pisa University Press, 2019, and Giuseppina La Rocca, *L'acquila bicipite e il tenero Iris. Tracce russe a Firenze nel primo Novecento (1899-1939)*, Pisa, Pisa University Press, 2018.

² Archive of the Doctors' Association of Florence (AOMFi), *Fondo Medici chirurghi cessati* (MCC), *Fascicoli personali* (FP), f. n. 239, «Giuseppe Meggiboschi», Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the Fascist provincial union of doctors, Florence, February 6, 1939.

³ There is a photograph of the bachelor degree certificate in the [gallery](#). The date of 11 July certainly relates to the delivery of the certificate, not to the discussion of the thesis, which took place on 6 June, as specified in a subsequent certified copy, or on 6 July as shown by another administrative document, both in AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, "Meggiboschi Giuseppe": these are respectively the certified copy of the degree certificate issued on 11 July 1914 at the Istituto di Studi Superiori of Florence, Florence, 8 October 1930, and the certificate from the director of the secretariat, Florence, February 20, 1915. His personal file as a student in the ASUFI and his degree thesis are missing.

⁴ AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe», Comune di Firenze, Register Office, certificate 22 February 1915.

1915, when he was enrolled for the first time in the register of the Association of Doctors and Surgeons of Florence⁵, he stated his forwarding address as via delle Centostelle 102, near the Campo di Marte, where since 1910 there had been a military airport, which remained active until 1930. At the start he was a country doctor; travelling by gig in Arezzo, he helped a doctor who was district medical officer, and later he himself became the incumbent of the practice. His license to practice was also validated by the provincial doctor of Arezzo, who was Carlo D'Eufemia, son of a prefect and brother of a prefect with a brilliant career⁶. The family lived in the towns of the areas where he worked, and it was in the province of Arezzo that his daughters were born: Ester in April 1915 in Montevarchi and Flora in June 1917 in San Giovanni Valdarno. In the summer of 1920 the couple with their three children were in Capannoli, near Pisa⁷; until finally, in the following year, they settled in Florence, in the central via Cavour 35⁸.

From district medical officer to consultant

In Florence, the doctor intended to devote himself to private practice, together with his wife Guta, who in December 1921 also graduated from the Istituto di Studi Superiori, with a thesis in dentistry, to practice which in Italy a degree was

⁵ Ibid., signed application on stamped paper by Giuseppe Medshiboshski to the president of the Association of Doctors and Surgeons of the Province of Florence, March 16, 1915, and Judicial Acts of Florence, receipt of payment for enrolment in the doctors' register, March 18, 1915.

⁶ Ibid., certified copy of a previous document, Florence 8 October 1930. It is worth mentioning here Angiolo D'Eufemia (Naples 1881), leader of the Fascist Unions of Florence, and a Fascist squad member from before the March on Rome, member of the National Fascist Party since March 1921, because he would have been commissioner of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova in Florence in 1939, when it was necessary to apply the racial laws and therefore expel the Jewish doctors. Immediately after the war he would be referred to the Commission for the purge and dismissed from service, but without losing his pension, by decision of 22 September 1944; see Alberto Cifelli, *I prefetti del regno nel ventennio fascista*, with a presentation by Guido Melis, Rome, Higher School of Interior Administration, 1999, pp. 100-101.

⁷ Comune di Capannoli e Circondario di Pisa, family status of Giuseppe Meggiboschi, handwritten certificate, 12 July 1920, preserved by the Boralevi Meggiboschi family.

⁸ AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe». The address emerges from the 1921 Census, as evidenced by the document from the Comune of Florence, Registry Office, May 30, 1940, where the wording «of Jewish race» is also printed.

mandatory⁹. Already in 1916-17 Giuseppe Medshiboshski was again among the foreign university students at the Institute: seven Russians, with four enrolled in a specialist course: two women in addition to him and another man who was specializing. The year before, just after he graduated, the School of Dentistry and Dental Prosthetics had been set up in Florence, after the dental schools of Genoa and Milan, and before the national school established in Rome by the decree of December 1923¹⁰. This was thanks to the long-lived dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Professor Giulio Chiarugi, who in 1924-25 was the first rector of the University of Florence (derived from the Istituto di Studi Superiori), but was shortly after forced to resign for his political views. He was succeeded, from 1926 to 1930, by Enrico Burci who, unlike him, was possessed of considerable fascist fervor. Burci, a surgeon, was also the first director of the School of Dentistry, while the two specialists - Luigi Arnone and Giuseppe Cavallaro - were merely appointed as lecturers, as almost everywhere else¹¹. What were the political orientations prevailing in the group of dental doctors in Florence in the twenties and thirties it is not possible to say, but fascism grew rapidly both in the Faculty of Medicine and in the doctors' Association, of which Burci became president in 1930; five years later the associations were suppressed everywhere and replaced by the fascist unions, formally confirming a de facto situation¹².

Dr. Medshiboshski asked the Ministry of National Education for the «recognition of the qualification of specialist» in dentistry and dental prostheses, pursuant to the relevant provisions relating to professional

⁹ See here Guta Gluckmann Medshiboshski. The requirement of a medical degree for the practice of dentistry was established in 1890 and reaffirmed by law n. 298 of March 31, 1912.

¹⁰ Useful details in Mauro Melato and Clara Rizzardi, *Radici della moderna professione odontoiatrica*, «Medicina & storia», 8, 16, 2008, pp. 119-145, especially pp. 137-140. The list of seven Russian students enrolled at the Institute in the academic year 1916-17 is in Giuseppina La Rocca, *L'aquila bicipite*, cit., p. 161.

¹¹ See Angelo Chiavaro, *Notizie e commenti. La scuola di odontoiatria e protesi dentale di Firenze*, «Annali di odontologia», 1, 1, January 1916, pp. 56-59.

¹² See RDL 5 March 1935, n. 184, *Nuova disciplina giuridica dell'esercizio delle professioni sanitarie*, GU 16 March 1935, n. 64.

practice of the Royal Decree of 29 August 1929, no 1823, later modified by the Royal Decree of 15 May 1930, n. 861. The MEN, as the former Ministry of Public Education was now called, communicated the positive outcome,¹³ and in December 1930 the Association of Doctors and Surgeons of Florence issued him with the certificate declaring him qualified to practice this specialty¹⁴.

In the same period his status with regard to citizenship was reaffirmed, which he already had certified. With the appearance of four witnesses before the court, an attested affidavit proved that he, a former Russian subject, was «stateless»¹⁵ and this declaration was officially repeated on 6 December 1930 and again on 22 December 1934 on the residence certificate for foreigners in Italy, released by the Florence Public Security Commissioner. Being without any citizenship, and having arrived in Italy before the great war, were to constitute two essential facts in the dramatic events that followed.

Against foreign Jews

When Mussolini's first racial regulations came out, at the beginning of September 1938, a specific provision concerned foreign Jews: RDL n. 1381 provided that those who had settled after 1919 had to leave Italy and its territories in Libya and the Aegean within six months of the decree.

Dr. Meggiboschi - as he appears from this point on certificates: with only the Italian surname - had a certificate issued by the Fascist Medical Union or of the Province of Florence stating that he had been enrolled in the professional register of the same province since 16 March 1915. It was signed, on 19

¹³ AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe». The date of the communication from the Ministry of National Education is unfortunately illegible, but it is certainly after May 1930, of which a Royal Decree is cited, and before 1933, when a further Royal Decree came out in this regard (29 July 1933, n.1150) .

¹⁴ Ibid., certificate from the president of the AOMFi, 26 December, with authentication of the signature issued by the prefecture on 27 December 1930. According to the RDL 13 January 1930, n. 20, licensed dentists should have been enrolled in additional registers. I have not found any trace of it in the personal files of either Giuseppe or Guta Meggiboschi.

¹⁵ Ibid., District Court of Florence, attested affidavit, 8 October 1926, and the affidavits shown in the text.

October 1938, by the «Ministerial Commissioner and President of the Union», «Prof. Dr.» Umberto Luigi Torrini, university professor and practitioner, who also specified that «to date this Union is not aware that, according to the RDL September 7, 1938-XVI, n. 1381, the professional practice permit has been removed [... from Meggiboschi]»¹⁶.

Which, on the contrary, Torrini would have gladly done. So much so that two months later he proceeded with the directorate to remove from the register both the Russian doctor and his wife, Dr. Guta Gluckmann, and several other foreign Jewish doctors¹⁷. In the case of the couple, however, he was guilty of bending the provisions to which he explicitly referred, since they had both settled in Italy six years before the fateful year of 1919, and therefore the RDL in question was not applicable to them.

Immediately after receiving the communication by registered letter from Torrini, Dr. Meggiboschi wrote to him on February 4, 1939, reminding him that he and his colleague, his wife, with their family had been in Italy since August 1, 1913, with stateless passports. Believing themselves «not to be included among the foreigners who must leave the Italian territory» (as per art. 4 of the RDL 7 September 1938, n. 1381), the couple submitted a joint application to the prefect of Florence, on 6 February 1939, for the Fascist union to re-enroll them on the professional register; at the same time they each presented their own objection to the union¹⁸.

¹⁶ Ibid.; In the file there is a copy of the aforementioned certificate, from the Fascist Provincial Medical Union, Florence, 19 October 1938, the original of which was evidently withdrawn by Giuseppe Meggiboschi.

¹⁷ Ibid., registered copy with acknowledgment of receipt, and «confidential and personal» on headed paper of the provincial Fascist medical union, from the provincial secretary U.L. Torrini to Dr. Giuseppe Meggiboschi di Abramo, 31 January 1939; for the same communication to his wife, reference is made here to [Guta Gluckmann Medshiboshki](#).

¹⁸ AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Giuseppe Meggiboschi», handwritten letter from Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the secretary of the provincial fascist medical union, February 4, 1939; handwritten request from Guta Meggiboschi and Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the prefect of Florence, February 6, 1939, and communication by Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the Fascist Medical Syndicate of Florence, February 6, 1939. From the latter the communications are on headed paper with the Florence address of Via Cavour and an address in Montecatini Terme, piazza D'Azeglio 4, where he had another premises.

Battles and legal traps

On the basis of the legislation then in force, the applicants were right. A further emergency decree, however, was on the way: drawn up purposely to remove all professionals of the «Jewish race», foreigners and Italians, from the registers. It was issued in June 1939. Doctors removed from the register could not practice; their fault was being Jewish. Doctor Meggiboschi then took another route to object: he was not of Jewish race, but of «Arianna [sic] race, having been born to Aryan Orthodox parents in Russia». He claimed that he was able to prove this thanks to recently found documentation». What it was, however, he did not explain in his letter to the union registered on 19 August, 1939, and there is no trace of this documentatation in his file¹⁹. He referred to a racial investigation still in progress, and nevertheless informed them that «he is declared to be at present belonging to the Jewish race and is stateless».

This laborious formula, with the distinction between what seems and what is, which someone had perhaps suggested to him, was in total contrast to what he himself had just asserted about his alleged Arian status. Why had he ever made such contradictory statements? It was the [law n. 1054 of 29 June, 1939](#), which prohibited Jewish professionals from practising, and at the same time imposed on them the obligation to declare themselves of the Jewish race.

Up to then, the couple had avoided requests for information on race and religion, which the Fascist Medical Union had already issued to its members in the autumn of 1938 through a «personal card». So at least it seems, given that the cards for the Meggiboschis are missing; they also received a reminder about it on 8 January 1940²⁰. They are, however, present for almost all the others, and filled in: after personal data, the cardholder had to indicate which trade union and which professional register he belonged to; and then «if he

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., draft from the provincial secretary U.L. Torrini to G. Meggiboschi, 8 January 1940, subject «personal file».

belongs to the Jewish race on your father's side, if he is registered in the Jewish community, if he professes the Jewish religion», or another religion and which one, and if he had converted to another religion, or if some relative had, and when ; and finally if the mother and/or spouse were of «the Jewish race»²¹.

It was one thing, however, to ignore forms and questionnaires, which in any case almost all of them answered, whereas to fail to make the racial self-declaration required by law entailed a real penalty: arrest for up to one month and a fine. It was difficult to escape, and practically impossible not to fall into the trap that the law set for those who had already been declared of Jewish race. On 1 December 1939, in an identical letter to Meggiboschi, to his wife, and presumably to other applicants, the secretary Torrini confirmed their removal from the register, all the more necessary for those who were foreigners and in fact without any citizenship²².

«For legal and moral reasons»

Yet Giuseppe Meggiboschi persisted in looking for a way out. The couple went ahead, in parallel, always by legal means: on 23 December each of them presented their own appeal to the Court of Appeal of Florence against the striking off measure, the second that had been inflicted on them, and both sent a copy to the same union. The argument of the appellant Meggiboschi was that «by a sheer mistake he declared himself as being of Jewish race, while he is originally from a Russian Orthodox family of Aryan race; and indeed, in order to obtain the necessary correction, the relevant procedure is in progress with the competent authorities, which must be close to a final resolution »²³. In conclusion, he asked that the striking off, being at least premature, be

²¹ For the pre-printed questions, see, for example, AOMFi, Miscellany not inventoried, the personal file «Levi Sergio» carefully filled in, Florence 21 September 1938.

²² AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe», draft from provincial secretary U.L. Torrini.

²³ Ibid., an appeal (typewritten) on stamped paper by Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the first president of the Florence Court of Appeal, and president of the district commission for special professional registers on racial issues, 23 December 1939.

suspended until judgment. On the other hand, he confirmed his statelessness, as if this could save him from having provisions applied that affected foreigners earlier and more severely than Italians.

He did not have very strong arguments. But they were supported with such a wealth of legal references as to suggest that he was assisted by a lawyer, who did not appear, of course. Any Jewish lawyer as a professional was also subjected to the same provisions of removal from the register that they were contesting, and was granted the possibility of attending only Jewish clients and then only if he had enrolled in the special register. But the point was that Meggiboschi was trying to pass for Aryan, and therefore could not be defended by a Jewish lawyer; not even by an Aryan, however, because in fact the Aryan status he claimed was not yet established. Nor was it later. On February 22, 1940, the District Commission at the Court of Appeal declared its incompetence to decide on Dr. Meggiboschi's appeal. On 4 March, still awaiting the outcome of the request for assessment that he appears to have forwarded to the Demorazza (Directorate-General for Demography and Race), he filed an appeal against the provision of this Commission, to no less a person than the Minister of the Interior and to the Central Commission for the practice of professions by citizens of Jewish race: with the arguments already given, he again asked that the decision to remove him from the register be suspended «for legal and moral reasons», which caused him «enormous hurt». As always, he sent a copy of the appeal to the Fascist union, which as always filed it, on 18 March, 1940²⁴.

Without even waiting for the decisions of the higher authorities to whom the doctor had turned, in a long reply dealing with all Meggiboschi's appeals, the secretary, Umberto Luigi Torrini, reasserted the removal. He considered it unchallengeable, as it was decided on the basis of the laws on race, superior to any provision invoked by the applicant, including the law on the discipline

²⁴ Ibid.

of the health professions²⁵. He did not fail to warn him that he should desist, if he did not want to incur the penalties provided for unlawful exercise of the profession. It was the end of April.

On 13 June 1940, Torrini sent a «personal and confidential» registered letter to the prefect; he was passing on to him a letter from one of his members, a colleague, calling for measures against the unlawful exercise of the health profession by Dr. Meggiboschi and Dr. Gluckman Meggiboschi, «foreign Jews removed from the professional register», as well as their son. In Signa, in the province of Florence, there was a dental surgery with a plate bearing their name; it was open on Wednesday and Sunday morning.

Who was the Professor Dr. Rosolino Babini, the author of the letter against «exempted» Jews who illegally continued to practice? He was an academic like Torrini, and, specifically, a dentist; he too had a dental surgery in Signa (as well as in Florence) and a dentist son: the competition from the Meggiboschi's was harming him: this is why - he wrote without hesitation - he was raising the case and invoking the protection of the union for those who were in line with the law, like him²⁶.

The right to complain? Expulsion for the Jews

Torrini was collecting information, complaints, and informers's accounts; perhaps he was inviting these, then using them to denounce his Jewish colleague and to demand the legal sanctions. This is documented by a series of his recommendations regarding Meggiboschi: to the prefect after the one on 13 June, another on 28 June; to the King's Attorney of the Civil and Criminal Court of Florence, on 6 August 1940, and two more on 25 November, this time

²⁵ Ibid., copy of the registered letter from L.U. Torrini to Giuseppe Meggiboschi, 24 April 1940, subject «Appeal rejected».

²⁶ Ibid., Letters from Rosolino Babini to the president of the union, one undated, logged on 10 May 1940, and one dated 17 June 1940, on headed paper, Via Boncivelli 1 (now the Isolotto area), Florence, logged on 19 June. U.L. Torrini's registered letters refer to these.

enclosing a letter from Dr. Pietro Giagnoni similar to that from Babini²⁷.

The Prosecutor «of the King Emperor» finally answered him, on 21 December 1940, informing him that Dr. Meggiboschi had been sentenced to a penalty of 1,000 lire, and likewise his wife Guta Glukmann²⁸.

In January 1941 the Court of Appeal of Florence ruled on the appeal against the removal from the register of Jewish professionals, about which the secretary of the Fascist Medical Union had asked for clarifications, in a letter dated 28 November, 1940. Which were the following: the removal from the register for being of Jewish race had nothing to do with the types of removal provided for by the health law of 5 March 1935; professional activity by citizens of Jewish race had to cease without exception by 28 February, 1940, except for those who had been registered in the added lists if they were exempted Jews or in the special lists. The removal from the register had to be notified by law, but the law of 29 June 1939 «does not in any way grant the interested party the right to complain or appeal to a higher body». In short: the right to complain was excluded - «it would not be known to which body to bring the complaint» - and so was the suspension of the removal, since the unalterable final date for it had passed²⁹. Specific cases were not mentioned, but Torrini did not care about the appeals.

Special lists

At the end of May 1940, Giuseppe Meggiboschi collected various documents on stamped paper - from the Municipality for residence, from the Criminal Records Office, from the Magistrate's Court, from the Police Headquarters for good behavior - on which there was no lack of pre-printed wording, or the

²⁷ Ibid., U.L. Torrini to the prefect, 13 June 1940 and 28 June 1940, followed by those to the prosecutor, 6 August 1940 and 25 November 1940, with attached letter from Pietro Giagnoni, 21 November 1940.

²⁸ Ibid., attorney's office to the provincial Fascist Medical Union, Florence, 21 December 1940.

²⁹ Ibid., Court of Appeal of Florence, to the provincial secretary of the Fascist Medical Union, 14 January 1941.

stamp «of Jewish race»³⁰. These were needed so that they could apply for entry in the special register reserved for non-exempted Jews, who were allowed to carry out their profession, although exclusively with patients of Jewish race. His wife Guta did likewise. Among the papers, however, the outcome of the application that each of them presented to the Court of Appeal in Florence, together with the legally required documents, is missing. Not only that. In the Association's historical archive there is also, as far as is known, both the added list for exempted Jews and the special list for the non-exempted. The only relevant documents, though incomplete, were drawn up after the war when when attempts were made to find the names of those who had been removed due to the racial laws, in order to re-enrol them ex officio.

After the Liberation of Florence, the secretary of the reconstituted Doctors' Association of the province of Florence asked the Florence Court of Appeal to send him the documents presented «for entering in the special register». All that remains of the reply seems to be a list of 12 names: these were all Italian Jews, except for the Meggiboschi couple, repeatedly certified as foreign and stateless³¹. If at the time their application had really been accepted, it is not clearly demonstrated, and by law it should not have been because they lacked Italian citizenship which was an indispensable requirement for registration in that special register.

Among those removed to whom the right to exercise the profession was to be restored, some had died, others had emigrated and it was not always known if and when they would return, others had gone into hiding in 1943. Thus with Dr. Meggiboschi and his family. They had lived in hiding near Montecatini Terme³², where before he had for many years held a dental surgery and some

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ AOMFi, Un-inventoried miscellany; the list with the 12 names is defined as «List of documents presented by doctors surgeons of Jewish race for entering in the special register», Florence, 22 January 1945. But it is only a first page, copied in these two files and probably in the other ten, thus lacking the details in the documents themselves. However, in the re-registration application Meggiboschi mentions that he has been entered in the special register.

³² Written evidence from the Boralevi Meggiboschi family to the author, 8 March 2019.

loyal patients. On 29 September 1944 he asked the reconstituted Doctors Association of Florence to be re-entered in the register, from which in 1939 he had been removed, after twenty-four years of membership³³. He did not know that the Association's commissariat had already readmitted him, with his wife Guta.

He resumed his profession, to which two of his children also dedicated themselves, and also today his grandson Paolo, son of his firstborn.

Satisfaction and bitterness

From 1955 Giuseppe Meggiboschi volunteered to teach Russian language and literature, free of charge as a *cultore della materia* («scholar of the subject»), in the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Florence, in which Paolo Lamanna was then rector; he had undoubtedly compromised with fascism but passed unscathed from the purge procedures³⁴. In the mid-fifties, in the same Faculty, chaired by the jurist Giuseppe Maranini (1902- 1969), who from 1938 to 1943 had travelled in the opposite direction, from fascism to anti-Soviet socialism, among the scholars and lecturers there were intellectuals who were to become illustrious: the great poet Mario Luzi (1914-2005) for French language and culture, the sociologist Franco Ferrarotti, the political scientist Giovanni Sartori, and the historian Giovanni Spadolini, whose father owned the apartment in via Cavour where the Meggiboschi lived before and

³³ AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe», letter on stamped paper from Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the Doctors Association, 29 September 1944.

³⁴ In the year of the racial laws, his was the editorship of a work by the Duce, of which every copy has not by chance disappeared from the university libraries in Florence; see Benito Mussolini, *La dottrina del fascismo*, edited by Paolo Eustachio Lamanna, Florence, Le Monnier, 1938, which he also promoted in the appendix of his manual of the history of philosophy for high schools, widely adopted even in the postwar years. As a young man Lamanna, the son-in-law of a doggedly anti-fascist academic, had signed the so-called Croce manifesto. Maranini, on the other hand, had had the professorship by virtue of his eminent reputation, thanks to the intervention of Mussolini, a friend of his father, but following the racial laws (his mother was Jewish) his conversion had begun. See his collection *Socialismo non stalinismo*, preface by Giuseppe Saragat, Florence, All'Insegna di Alvernia, 1949.

after the war³⁵. They were young, whereas Giuseppe Meggiboschi was 74 when he took up this university post; he kept it until October 31, 1966, when he was about to become 85³⁶. He died in April 1968.

In March 1965 he received the gold medal for 50 years of enrollment in the Doctors Association of Florence³⁷. His wife, who had died earlier, did not. In 1967, another doctor was awarded the gold medal for her half-century of enrollment in the Association. She was a recognized member of the Fascist paramilitary, enrolled in the National Fascist Party from 1921, who after 8 September 1943 had collaborated with the republican government of Salò, and against whom the provincial delegate of the High Commission for sanctions against fascism, the magistrate Paolo Barile (1917-2000), had signed the request for purge in 1945. Never applied, however, in the substantial failure of the entire purge process, so that the doctor always remained enrolled in the Association³⁸.

For Giuseppe Meggiboschi the actual years of medical profession had really been not fifty, but forty-five. Over the five missing years, from 1939 to 1944, silence has fallen, as if he had never been removed as a result of the racial

³⁵ ASUFi, AC, *Consiglio di amministrazione*, taken from the minutes of the Board of Directors, meeting of 15 July 1955, and Minutes of the Board of Directors, meeting of 4 July 1956, where the experts on the subject and the appointees are mentioned in the text, Minutes of the Board of Directors, meeting of 23 October 1957. I thank Fioranna Salvadori of ASUFi for her research on these sources, though Meggiboschi's files both as a teacher and as a student are missing. On the relationship with the Spadolini and with their father Guido, who saved the Meggiboschi's furniture in 1943, written evidence of the Boralevi Meggiboschi family to the author, 8 March 2019.

³⁶ See *Annuario per gli anni accademici 1965-66 e 1966-67*, Florence, Università degli studi di Firenze, 1969, p.632.

³⁷ AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe», note of thanks from Giuseppe Meggiboschi to the president of the Doctors' Association of Florence, who was then Giovanni Turziani, 25 March 1965.

³⁸ This failure was bitterly admitted by Paolo Barile himself, who was tortured by the fascists but escaped their death sentence, on which Stefano Merlini, *Barile Paolo*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Roma, Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 2017 <<https://www.treccani.it>> (accessed 9 November 2020). The case of Nella Pecchioli just mentioned has been reconstructed by Lucrezia Nuti, «Espulsioni ed epurazioni a confronto: antifascisti, ebrei, fascisti nell'ambiente medico fiorentino [Expulsions and purges compared: antifascists, Jews, fascists in the Florentine medical environment]», thesis, supervisor Patrizia Guarnieri, University of Florence, 2019-20.

laws, and no one had been responsible for it.

Archival sources

- AOMFi, MCC, FP, f. n. 239, «Meggiboschi Giuseppe».
- ASUFi, AC, *Consiglio di amministrazione*, CdA minutes 1954-55 and ff.

Patrizia Guarnieri

Translated by Tom Dawkes

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