

The Impact of the 1938 Fascist Anti-Semitic Laws on Italian Universities: The Case of Veterinary Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Anti-Semitic legislation led in 1938 to the dismissal of tenured university professors of “Jewish race” and their replacement. As to Veterinary Medicine, Abram Alberto Ascoli (1877-1957) in Milan and Michelangelo Ottolenghi (1904-1967) in Sassari were removed from their chairs. Ascoli, a renowned immunologist, was replaced by Luigi Leinati (1895-1992), a veterinary pathologist, preferred to an alternative candidate, Dino Desiderio Nai (1894-1973), a microbiologist. Both Leinati and Nai were Ascoli's collaborators and also outstanding researchers. Personal relations among Ascoli, Nai and Leinati were basically good, so much so that Ascoli's reinstatement after WWII went smoothly. Ottolenghi, tenure-track professor of Anatomy of Domestic Animals was replaced by Aldo Tagliavini (1892-1971), who occupied, however, the chair of Pathology and Clinical Veterinary Surgery. Ottolenghi expatriated to Ecuador and Canada, never to return to Italy, and shifted his interests to Public Health. Tagliavini remained in Sassari for only three academic years (1938-1941), then returned to Milan (1941-1971) on the chair of Veterinary Obstetrics and Veterinary Surgery. His scientific personality moved across different veterinary areas, without ever truly excelling. As to the effects of the substitutions on the development of Veterinary Medicine, the two cases are different: Ascoli was replaced by a valid substitute, whereas the removal of Ottolenghi took priority both over the needs of the faculty and over his intrinsic scientific value. Overall, the anti-Semitic legislation, a dark page of the Italian history, represents an example of the damages that political choices may inflict on the quality of teaching and scientific research.

Key words: Italian Anti-Semitic laws; Veterinary Medicine; Academic Careers.

INTRODUCTION

On September 18, 1938, Benito Mussolini delivered a sadly notorious speech to an over-crowded and cheering *Piazza Unità d'Italia* in Trieste. It was his first and only public speech on anti-Semitic laws, the initial provisions of which had been enacted only two weeks earlier:

With regard to internal policy, the current burning issue is the racial question. ... Those who believe that we have obediently imitated anyone, or worse, acted on suggestions, are poor fools The racial problem did not suddenly burst out of nowhere It is in relation to imperial conquest; because history teaches us that Empires are conquered by arms but are held by prestige. And for prestige

it is necessary to have a clear, severe racial consciousness, that establishes not only the differences, but also very clear superiorities. The Jewish problem is thus only one aspect of this phenomenon. ... World Jewry has been, for sixteen years, despite our policy, an irreconcilable enemy of fascism. ... However, Jews of Italian citizenship who have unquestionable military or civil merit towards Italy and the Regime, will find understanding and justice. As for the others, a policy of separation is what awaits them (1).

Mussolini clarified the ideological path undertaken in the previous months – summarized in the so-called *Manifesto of Racist Scientists*, published on July 15, 1938 – and linked the “policy of separation” to the foundation in 1936 of the Italian Empire in Eastern Africa. At the same time, fascist propaganda emphasized Mussolini’s role as mediator in the Sudetenland crisis; his approach to the French and British governments led to the Munich Agreement of September 30, 1938, which accepted all of Hitler’s territorial claims. With the fascist regime at the height of consensus, the anti-Semitic laws did not spark any public protest in Italy.

Anti-Semitic royal decrees laws (RDLs) determined the exclusion of Italian citizens of “Jewish race” from all sectors of public life: schools, universities, politics, finances and professional activities. As to the universities, one hundred and one, full professors of “Jewish race” were suspended from service on October 16, 1938, pursuant RDL September 5, 1938, no. 1390, and ninety-nine of them were dismissed on December 14, 1938 (2).

Between 1938 and 1945, the Italian academic community reacted in various ways to the dismissal of Jewish professors. Indifference prevailed in the academic community, although several private manifestations of empathy also emerged such as: solidarity, understanding, concern extended to the family, hope for a personal solution to the dispensation, availability to take over the chair, offers of material and professional help – through informal assignments, publication of articles under a pseudonym, bibliographical research, help in promoting expatriation and professional placement abroad; after September 8, 1943, i.e., the start of the hostile German occupation of Italy, also protection and decisive help to avoid deportation to extermination camps.

On the public level, however, there was no academic protest in Italy (3); as Angelo Ventura masterfully stated in 1995:

The racial laws threw the university community into bewilderment and were certainly greeted with a widespread and tacit feeling of disapproval. But nothing suggests that they prompted an irreducible moral furrow against fascism. Nowhere is there a protest of an offended conscience. Even those who had the authority and social rank to be able to express dissent, even cautiously and without too much risk, remained silent (4).

Replacement was the inevitable consequence of the dismissal of professors of “Jewish race” from the Italian Universities. Suddenly, about one hundred university chairs became vacant triggering a large, nationwide movement to fill them between 1938 and 1944, as newly vacant chairs opened up career opportunities. However, the dramatic question is whether the colleague – who occupied, or attempted to occupy, by transfer the chair of the expelled professor –, or the scholar – who won the chair competition and could be appointed to the chair from which the holder of “Jewish race” had been removed – were aware of the racial cause of the chair vacancy. And, again, did the candidates for replacement consider the reason for the vacancy irrelevant? Indeed, all those involved in the replacement procedures – substitutes and aspiring substitutes, deans and members of the Faculty Councils, rectors, academic and non-academic sponsors – were fully aware of the racial motivations behind the vacancies (5). However, all available evidence suggests that, by and large, Italian academics fully complied with the fascist regime’s directives. Moral indignation, social protests, even human solidarity, if present at all, were limited to interpersonal relationships and exchanges.

Historiography has addressed with “lateness ... [and] distracted interest ... the theme of the persecution of the Jews” begun in 1938 by the fascist regime. The historiography of the expulsion of Jews from schools and universities and of the consequences on the Italian universities has developed only since the 1990s. After a fifty-year oblivion, which had erased “the racial laws and the fascist persecution of the Jews from the historical memory of the country”(6), given the substantial silence of historiography on the fascist regime before and after the publication of De Felice’s fundamental work on the history of the Jews under fascism in 1961, the infamy of the racial laws – in particular the expulsion not only of full professors but also of assistants, lecturers, technicians, administrative employees and students – has been the subject

of extensive investigation (7). The dismissal of professors of “Jewish race” has been evaluated from different points of view: the moral condemnation of the persecution imposed on university professors of “Jewish race” of all levels, including tenured professors, surfaced very late but was unequivocal until the celebration of the “Ceremony of Remembrance and Apology” promoted by the Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities and held at the University of Pisa on September 20, 2018.

The replacement of professors of “Jewish race” has been an issue even more largely neglected by social and historical researchers (8). The replacement process began nationwide in the fall of 1938 and was completed within a few academic years using existing and *ad hoc* legislative provisions: it took place in the spirit of academic continuity and *business as usual*, in a framework of institutional relations unbalanced on the ministerial side.

LAW PROVISIONS FOR REPLACEMENT

The appointment on a vacant chair could be either on a temporary basis, through an annual teaching assignment, or on a permanent basis, through a tenured professor (upon transfer, call of a chair competition winner or request for a new chair competition). Regarding the chair competition, the judging commission, composed of tenured professors, members of the fascist party (9) and appointed by the minister, could nominate up to three winners, referred to as *ternates*. The rules in force for the permanent appointment on a vacant chair were contained in the Royal Decree (RD) August 31, 1933, no. 1592, integrated by RDL June 20, 1935, no. 1071: the faculty Council was responsible for the proposal related to chair denomination, modalities of appointment and names of nominees. In the specific case of transfer, and in presence of multiple candidates, the faculty identified, if possible, a triad (*terna*) in alphabetical order, expressing separately any preference for one of the candidates. However, it was up to the fascist minister to approve or not the faculty’s proposal; furthermore, the minister held the power of autonomous decision-making, being able to decree transfers and appoint alternates in the absence of any faculty proposal.

Once the chair became vacant for any reason, i.e., retirement, death, transfer or dismissal for racial reasons of the

holder, the faculty could – pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 2, art. 5, RDL June 20, 1935, no. 1071 – propose to keep it in the organic roles and fill it with a tenured professor, or suppress it and assign it to another discipline, an operation technically known as redénomination. In the majority of cases, the faculties did not redénominate chairs vacant for racial reasons, since they were often related to key disciplines and reflected an actual need. However, sometimes they also chose an alternate approach: changing the name of the chair and proposing either the appointment of a competition ternate or the transfer of a tenured professor. The triads already available in the fall of 1938 were also used to fill the chairs vacant for racial reasons, given their two-year validity.

By and large, the minister of National Education, Giuseppe Bottai, complied to the proposals received by the Italian universities in those years. Thus, the university recruitment procedures, through chair competitions and transfers of tenured professors, remained firmly in the hands of the faculty Councils and university authorities. This occurred in a constant and widespread system of self-referentiality (10).

DISMISSAL OF TWO PROFESSORS OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

In 1938, there were 10 active faculties of Veterinary Medicine in Italy (here in alphabetical order; the year of foundation is in brackets): Bologna (1783), Camerino (1826), Messina (1926), Milan (1791), Naples (1798), Parma (1814), Perugia (1826), Pisa (1818), Sassari (1928) and Turin (1769). Pursuant RRDD August 31, 1931, no. 1227, and August 31, 1933, n. 1592, all the Royal Higher Institutes of Veterinary Medicine were incorporated into universities, becoming faculties in all respects. For example, Milan was incorporated in 1932, Turin and Parma in 1934, Naples in 1935; Bologna, Parma and Pisa were already considered to be part of their respective universities (11). Veterinary Medicine was therefore a recent but fully integrated part of the Italian university system in the late 1930’s.

Of the total ninety-six replacement procedures (12), two involved chairs in faculties of Veterinary Medicine held by professors of “Jewish race”: Abram Alberto Ascoli (1877-1957) in Milan and Michelangelo Ottolenghi (1904-1967) in Sassari.

The University of Milan

Ascoli, a highly regarded immunologist, founder in 1924 of the Anti-TBC Vaccinogenic Institute, member of the University's Board of Directors (13), was fully integrated into the Milan academic world and not critical of the regime. In March 1936, he had avoided participating in the international congress of Comparative Pathology that was to be held in Athens because "Italian scholars will not be present for anti-sanctions reasons" (14); therefore, like the vast majority of Italians and Italian academics, Ascoli was aligned with the regime on the issue of the colonial conquest of Ethiopia. After the promulgation of the racial laws, he initially applied for the role of director of the Anti-TBC Vaccinogenic Institute of Milan, (a position he already held on to a voluntary basis), but was turned down.

In the minutes of the competent Faculty Councils there is no trace of the dismissal of professors of "Jewish race". In the meeting of October 31, 1938 of the Council of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Milan, the question of the teaching of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy was discussed, without even mentioning the name of the suspended professor, i.e., Ascoli. The minutes read as follows:

Given the urgency of providing for the teaching of general pathology and pathological anatomy, the Council unanimously proposes to entrust it to Prof. Leinati, demonstrating to him how the organization of the Institute from the point of view of technical personnel and special equipment can give him full guarantees so as to be able to derogate from those reasons that pushed him to move to another chair (15).

The University of Sassari

Ottolenghi, ternate in the competition for the chair of Anatomy of Domestic Animals with Histology and Embryology held in 1937 at the University of Messina (16), was appointed tenure-track professor at the University of Sassari on November 16, 1937. However, the following year, since he was "of Jewish race on his father's side, ... a member of the Jewish community and professing the Jewish religion", he was suspended at first and then dismissed from his chair on December 14, 1938.

Both Ascoli and Ottolenghi, following dismissal, chose to emigrate. Ascoli moved to the USA. He taught at the

Middlesex University in Waltham, MA From 1940 to 1943, then from 1944 to 1946 at the Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ, and from 1946 to 1947 he worked at the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine at Cornell University, New York, NY. Ottolenghi left Italy with his family in September 1939 for Quito, Ecuador. In 1940, together with other Italian Jewish refugees, he was among the founders of *Laboratorios Industriales Farmaceuticos Ecuatorianos* (LIFE), which is still the only Ecuadorian pharmaceutical company today.

REPLACEMENTS ON THE CHAIRS OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

This section provides the complete list of direct and indirect substitutes and of direct and aspiring substitutes for Ascoli and Ottolenghi, thus filling a specific historiographical gap.

The University of Milan

As indicated above, the Veterinary faculty of Milan coped with Alberto Ascoli's dismissal by entrusting an annual teaching assignment to Luigi Leinati (1895-1992), professor of Anatomy of Domestic Animals with Histology and Embryology, who had just moved from the University of Turin (17). In the meeting of November 28, 1938, the faculty took note of the letter from Desiderio Nai (18) – professor at the University of Perugia and former assistant to Ascoli until 1936 – requesting to be called to fill the vacant chair of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy", but reaffirmed the provisional choice made a month earlier (19).

During the same academic year 1938-1939, in the meeting of June 12, 1939, the faculty adopted the resolution concerning the chair of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy: both candidates for the transfer, Luigi Leinati and once again Desiderio Nai, were proposed without distinction of merit in the shortlist to be sent to the minister of National Education (20): Giuseppe Bottai appointed Leinati with effect November 16, 1939 (21).

The University of Sassari

The minutes of the Council of the faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Sassari, which met on November 15, 1938, are as accurate as they are clear in their proposal to replace Ottolenghi with a ternate in another discipline:

... the faculty Council ... proposes that, for the permanent position that has become vacant following the dismissal of the holder of Anatomy of Domestic Animals [Michelangelo Ottolenghi], be called to fill the Chair of Special Pathology and Veterinary Surgery Professor Aldo Tagliavini, second of the alternates in the pertinent chair competition held at Royal University of Messina (22).

The rector Luigi Gastaldi promptly transmitted the faculty proposal to the ministry with a registered letter dated November 18, 1938. Here we report the salient bureaucratic and procedural passages of the aforementioned letter:

The position that the faculty of Veterinary Medicine intended to provide for with the aforementioned resolutions is the one that will become vacant following the publication of the law provisions for the defense of the race in the Fascist School, already approved by the Council of Ministers, with the suppression of the chair of anatomy of domestic animals of Prof. Michelangelo Ottolenghi, belonging to the Jewish race (23).

The tenured position in Anatomy, formerly held by Michelangelo Ottolenghi, was therefore changed into Special Pathology and occupied for three academic years by Aldo Tagliavini. The appointment of Aldo Tagliavini (1892-1971) as tenure-track professor of Special Pathology and Veterinary Surgery was at first denied by Minister Bottai due to his celebrated status; however, Bottai was later convinced by Tagliavini's arguments and appointed him with effect from January 1, 1939 (24). He subsequently obtained to move to the University of Milan on October 29, 1941. Ottolenghi's tenured position remained vacant ever since.

In 1940, the position for the chair of Anatomy of Domestic Animals with Histology and Embryology was opened again at the University of Sassari. The chair competition was feasible because Dino Monari, professor of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy, moved to the University of Turin on October 29, 1939, and its chair became vacant and available after redenomination. The potential winner of the 1940 chair competition would therefore have been a pseudo-substitute for Ottolenghi. In the case of the Sassari chair competition, none of the candidates obtained a sufficient grade for "scientific maturity and teaching aptitude" and no shortlist of ternates was proposed to the Minister

(25); the candidate *in pectore* of the faculty, Emilio Morpurgo (1893-1959), teaching substitute for Ottolenghi, was rejected in 1940 and continued to teach on annual assignment (26).

A DOMINO OF CHAIRS

Tagliavini was the direct replacement for Michelangelo Ottolenghi in Sassari in 1938 and also the indirect replacement for Ascoli in Milan from 1941 onwards. Tagliavini's transfer from Sassari to Milan – requested by the faculty of Veterinary Medicine (Meeting of November 6, 1940), by the Academic Senate (November 6, 1940) and by the Rector Uberto Pestalozza (letter of 20 November 1940) – was initially rejected by Bottai so as not to deplete the Sassari faculty of tenured professors (letter of November 29, 1940). At this point in the story Achille Starace, lieutenant general of the Voluntary Militia for National Security (MVSN) and former national secretary of the PNF (27), entered the scene, sending a timely telegram to Bottai on 30 November 1940:

I warmly ask you please to examine the proposal of the Rector of the University of Milan regarding Prof. Aldo Tagliavini [PERIOD]. We are talking about horses and therefore I will not add anything else. [PERIOD]. Starace (28).

A compromise was quickly reached: Tagliavini was transferred with DM December 10, 1940, but the effective transfer was postponed to October 29, 1941. The chair occupied in Milan by Tagliavini was that of Luigi Leinati who in turn obtained the chair of Ascoli from 1939 onwards.

LAW PROVISIONS FOR REINSTATEMENT. WHO RETURNS AND WHO DOES NOT RETURN

Post-fascist reparative legislation, approved by the governments of the National Liberation Committee (June 1944-June 1946), allowed the *de jure* and/or *de facto* reinstatement (29) of Jewish professors dismissed in 1938. The reinstatement process, based on the combined provisions of two RDLs and two DLLs issued in 1944 (30), established the return of the tenured professor either to his original chair or, subordinately, to a different, doubled or supernumerary chair (31). Explicit consent and possession of Italian citizenship were, however, necessary requirements for reinstatement.

With subsequent provisions, all reinstated professors were placed in supernumerary chairs (RDL May 27, 1946, no. 535) and allowed to remain in service until the age of 75.

Ascoli and Ottolenghi were both reinstated *de jure* as of January 1, 1944 pursuant DM May 28, 1946 (32) e DM September 10, 1948 (33), respectively.

Ascoli resumed effective service on July 7, 1947 (34) and remained in service until October 31, 1952. Having become Professor Emeritus in 1953, he won the Feltrinelli Prize for Medicine from the *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* in 1954 (35). In the same year (June 2, 1954) on the occasion of the inauguration of the new headquarters of the Anti-TBC Vaccinogenic Institute, the Rector of the University of Milan, the constitutionalist Giuseppe Menotti De Francesco (1885-1978), held an authentic panegyric in honor of the now retired Ascoli (36): since De Francesco had also been rector during the dark period of the Italian Social Republic (October 1943-April 1945), the words of praise and homage for Ascoli clashed with the silent rejection of the entire university from 1938 to 1945.

Ottolenghi did not return to Italy after his *de jure* reinstatement and was placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He remained in Latin America (Ecuador, Colombia and Peru) and later moved to North America (United States and Canada). He was considered in service but abroad (37) until August 20, 1949, when he was placed on early retirement (38) having exceeded the maximum limit of absence following his *de jure* reinstatement.

THE SCIENTIFIC AND TEACHING PROFILE OF DISMISSED PROFESSORS AND OF THEIR SUBSTITUTES AND ASPIRING SUBSTITUTES

Beyond the moral question, of extraordinary human importance even before the political one, the question that we ask here is whether racially motivated substitutions have also caused additional scientific damage to the university. The key point to examine is if the dismissal of professors of "Jewish race" involved loss of scientific and teaching capital due to substitution with colleagues of inferior caliber. Furthermore, was there any long-term effect of the replacements on the overall development of Italian Veterinary Medicine?

Around 1930 and beyond, absolute value assessment indices, such as impact factor, number of citations, were not

available. Therefore, a meaningful although not exhaustive comparison among researchers, as we conceive it today, has not been possible. Consequently, comparisons made now for then have a limited value because empirical parameters developed *ex-post*, are only descriptive and highly subjective. Here we decided to consider scientific value, didactic value and authority of the persons involved. *Scientific value* refers to the number and importance of international and national papers, their content and the presence of seminal elements, that is, elements that represent a milestone in the development of the discipline; *didactic value* refers to the publication of treatises, even in collaboration, and to the skills recognized over time; *authority* refers to the importance over time of the scholar, the creation of a school, the more or less fundamental role in the development of the discipline or of one of its branches.

As to the case of Milan, its evaluation seems straightforward: Leinati and Nai were researchers and professors of good reputation and displayed great culture and scientific ability over the years (39). Nai was a direct student of Ascoli, and their relationship was very probably good if not even affectionate. Ascoli, Nai and Leinati coexisted for years in the same Institute, even after WWII. The scientific contributions of all three were notable and gave prestige and authority to the faculty of Milan and to their respective disciplines. Leinati's longevity has certainly contributed to maintaining his figure in the spotlight, without however in itself representing an element of further merit compared to the other two colleagues.

The replacement of Ascoli for racial reasons did not cause any objective decline in scientific and teaching quality. The directions of scientific research remained the same, or at least coherent in the more general field of Microbiology and Comparative Pathology. The city of Milan is located in a highly industrialized and productive area, with an advanced cultural and social background. This was possibly a factor in the selection of reference figures of high technical value also in the University.

More complex, if not almost impossible, is the evaluation of the situation at Sassari. Ottolenghi and Tagliavini held chairs in different disciplines, making any comparison difficult or at least very subjective. Furthermore, Ottolenghi was replaced early in his career, which took a completely different path in exile, first in Latin America and then in Canada.

Tagliavini's career and figure were those of a sort of

valid migrant substitute, as he moved from Parma to Milan, then to a chair in Sassari and then back again to Milan. He taught Veterinary Anatomy, then Veterinary Legislation, changed to Veterinary Obstetrics, and finally Veterinary Surgery. His scientific production – even once he finally arrived in Milan where he concluded his career in 1962 – did not leave traces as significant as those recognized for Ascoli, Nai and Leinati. One of his most important achievements was the creation in 1958 of a university Center for Experimental Medicine and Surgery. Over the years, this Center also became a point of reference for the city's hospitals. However, it is difficult to establish whether this useful bridge between human and veterinary medicine was built by Tagliavini's will or rather prompted by the need for experimental surgery of the large Milanese hospitals, such as the National Cancer Institute located meters away from the faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

In conclusion, in the case of Sassari, unlike Milan, the dismissed professor had brilliant qualities but was still too early in his career to express them fully. On the other hand, his substitute taught and professed another discipline. The faculty of Sassari was established in 1928, only shortly before merging into the University in 1934 (40): the tradition was therefore still to be built. Professors frequently came from the continent – and often tried to return to the continent as quickly as possible. The means available, the surrounding environment were not comparable to those of Milan, located in a different industrial, productive, and wealthy context.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although the two cases show different aspects of the issue, they have in common the dramatic nature of the recounted facts and the crudeness of the attesting documents, evident in both Milan and Sassari cases. When legislative and executive powers remove a professor and promote another in his place, not based on merit but rather on racial discrimination, a wound is inflicted on scientific thought and freedom of expression. Thus, human and scientific potentials are crushed in an unacceptable manner. Historical evidence suggests that the protagonists of these described events did not perceive this wound at all before and after 1938.

As to the development of Veterinary Medicine, in the late fascist period and in the first twenty year of post-fascist Italy, the case of Milan shows recovery of scientific capital,

upon reintegration of Ascoli, and coherent scientific progress conducted by Ascoli, Nai and Leinati. As to the case of Sassari, Ottolenghi's dispensation may represent a loss of capital that is not only potential; his brief replacement by Tagliavini certainly did not increase the scientific potential of the faculty.

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2. The first RDL was entitled *Provvedimenti per la difesa della razza nella scuola fascista*; subsequent RDLs were November 15, 1938, no. 1779, *Integrazione e coordinamento in unico testo delle norme già emanate per la difesa della razza nella Scuola italiana* and November 17, 1938, no. 1728, *Provvedimenti per la difesa della razza italiana*. Attilio Gentili and Cesare Sacerdoti (University of Pisa) were only suspended.
3. The only exception is that of Attilio Cabiati, full professor of Economic and Financial Policy in the faculty of Economics of the University of Genoa “... removed from teaching by the Fascist Government in 1939, following his courageous free attitude culminating in a letter addressed to a Minister, in which he described the racial laws as immoral and unlawful” in Historical Archive of the University of Genoa, Economics and Commerce, Minutes of the faculty Council. From no. 316 (in part) of January 21, 1943 to 348 (in part) of May 2, 1946, V/3, no. 9. Meeting of July 25, 1945, Minutes no. 336.
4. Angelo Ventura, *Le leggi razziali all'Università di Padova, in L'Università dalle leggi razziali alla Resistenza, Giornata dell'Università italiana nel 50° anniversario della Liberazione* (Padova, 29 maggio 1995). Padova (Italy): Cleup, 1996, now in *Il fascismo e gli ebrei. Il razzismo antisemita nell'ideologia e nella politica del regime*. Rome (Italy): Donzelli, 2013, p. 117.
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 10. Giovanni Montroni, *La continuità necessaria. Università e professori dal fascismo alla Repubblica*. Florence (Italy): Le Monnier, 2016, p. 4.
 11. Giancarlo Mandelli, Antonio Lauria, Bruno Cozzi (eds.), *Due secoli di ordinamenti e statuti. La Scuola Veterinaria di Milano (1791-1991)*, Milano: Edizioni Sipiel, 1992.
 12. The replacement procedures concerned only ninety-six chairs because: Cesare Sacerdoti retired on October 28, 1938, Felice Supino (University of Milan) held a chair *ad personam* which disappeared with his dismissal; Attilio Gentili, declared "mixed non-Jewish", Walter Bigiavi (University of Parma) and Cesare Grassetti (University of Catania), having obtained the "declaration of non-belonging to the Jewish race", regained the chairs from which they had been removed.
 13. Giuseppe Armocida, Ascoli, Alberto. *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*. Rome (Italy): Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 34, 1988.
 14. The sanctions were implemented by the League of Nations in retaliation for Italy's war against Ethiopia. The position of Ascoli is documented in the HAUMi, personal file 137, Ascoli Alberto, typewritten letter dated March 21, 1936 from Ascoli to the rector of the University of Milan on letterhead of the Institute of Comparative Pathology, with autographed signature.
 15. HAUMi, Minutes of the Council of the faculty of Veterinary Medicine, October 24, 1936- December 16, 1945, meeting of October 31, 1938, Teaching assignment of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy, p. 39; present, Guido Finzi, dean, Pietro Stazzi, Ludovico Beccari, Felice Cinotti, Luigi Leinati. Guido Daniele Finzi (1884-1959), an active member of the fascist party since 1922 and a controversial personality, later changed his name in Guido Vecchi-Finzi to escape the consequences of racial laws. However, not all professors were fascists: Remo Rabbellotti (1920-1944), assistant in Veterinary Pathology, left the University of Milan in May 1944 and joined the partisans fighting the Wehrmacht on the mountains. Captured, he was then sentenced to death [Roberto Cardano, Alessandro Mainardi, Dante Mena, Emilio Mena (eds.), *Remo Rabbellotti. La vita per l'Italia (1944-1994)*, Galliate (Novara, Italy): La Verde-Azzurra, 1994].
 16. DM October 13, 1937 (BU, 64, vol. II, December 2, 1937-XV, no. 48, pp. 6301-6303). The judging committee included Umberto Zimmerl (1872-1945), mentor of Ottolenghi who had been his assistant until 1933 at the Institute of Anatomy of Domestic Animals in the University of Turin.
 17. Leinati had been transferred from the University of Turin to that of Milan with DM July 21, 1938 and effect October 29, 1938 (BU, 65, vol. II, December 1, 1938-XVII, n. 48, p. 3601).
 18. In addition to being a university professor, Nai was also an athletics coach: by applying methods developed on racehorses to middle-distance runners, it was Nai who led the Italian Luigi Beccali (1907-1990) to the gold medal in the 1500 meters at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles.
 19. HAUMi, Minutes of the Council of the faculty of Veterinary Medicine, October 24, 1936 December 14, 1945, Chair of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy, pp. 45-46; present, Guido Finzi, dean, Pietro Stazzi, Ludovico Beccari, Felice Cinotti, Luigi Leinati.
 20. *Ibidem*, Proposals for the chair of Pathological Anatomy, pp. 56-57; present, Guido Finzi, dean, Pietro Stazzi, Ludovico Beccari, Felice Cinotti.
 21. No further elements are available to explain the ministerial decision, which however confirmed the previous choice of the faculty Council. Leinati was a war invalid – he suffered from a partial disability in his arm following a wound received in WWI – a circumstance that may have been an advantage.
 22. Central State Archive (CSA, Rome, Italy), Ministry of Public Education, Directorate-General for Higher Education, Division I, University Professors' Files, b. 449, Tagliavini Aldo: Minutes extract of the faculty Council, present: Dino Monari, dean, and Prospero Masoero..
 23. *Ibidem*, from the rector of the Royal University of Sassari to the honorable Ministry of National Education – General Directorate of Higher Education – Rome; subject: Prof. Aldo Tagliavini – Appointment as tenure-track professor of Special Pathology and Clinical Surgery.
 24. The appointment was first denied on November 30, 1938: "I take note of the proposal of this faculty ... I must however point out that the appointment of Prof. Tagliavini cannot be decreed for now

- because he is single”; following a heartfelt and unctuous personal letter from Tagliavini to Bottai (*ibidem*), the minister appointed him with DM 20 December 1938 (BU, 66, vol. II, October 5, 1939-XVII, no. 40, pp. 3035-3036).
25. DM October 9, 1940 (BU, 68, vol. I, April 3, 1941-XIX, no. 14, pp. 1127-1128).
 26. Emilio Morpurgo would win a chair competition only in 1952 [Antonello Mattone (ed.), *Storia dell'Università di Sassari*, Vol. 2, Nuoro (Italy): Illisso Edizioni, 2010, p. 377]. Morpurgo escaped racial persecution because his father had converted to Catholicism in 1870 (Mariangela Rapetti, Racial laws in the Italian Universities of Cagliari and Sassari. For an archive directory, *Trauma and Memory*, 8, 2020, pp. 15, 17).
 27. Partito Nazionale fascista, fascist national party.
 28. CSA b. 449, Tagliavini Aldo.
 29. A professor is reinstated *de facto*, not simply *de jure*, in university roles even in a chair or location different from that of 1938.
 30. RDL January 6, 1944, no. 9, *Riammissione in servizio degli appartenenti alle amministrazioni dello Stato, degli enti locali e parastatali e controllati dallo Stato, aziende che gestiscono servizi pubblici o d'interesse nazionale, già licenziati per motivi politici*; RDL January 20, 1944, no. 25, *Disposizioni per la reintegrazione dei diritti civili e politici dei cittadini italiani e stranieri già dichiarati di razza ebraica e o considerati di razza ebraica*. DLL September 7, 1944, no. 255, *Reintegrazione in servizio di professori universitari*, and DLL September 7, 1944, no. 264, *Modificazioni al vigente ordinamento universitario*.
 31. Each university faculty had an organic endowment of chairs, that is, a fixed number of chairs. With the reinstatement of professors dismissed for both racial and political reasons, the endowment could be exceeded: in this case, any additional chair was labelled supernumerary.
 32. BU, 74, July 1, 1947, no. 13, p. 1236. The pertinent DM was prepared after Ascoli had expressed his desire to be reinstated on March 6, 1946 (HAUMi, personal file 137, Ascoli Alberto, Telespress no. 36194, June 18, 1946 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Italian Embassy in Washington and to the rector of the University of Milan, subject: Prof. Alberto Abramo Ascoli).
 33. BU, 76, vol. II, November 3, 1949, no. 44, p. 2752.
 34. HAUMi, personal file 137, Ascoli Alberto, draft of a letter from the rector Felice Perussia to the Ministry of Public Education, February 28, 1948, subject: Prof. Ascoli Alberto Abramo.
 35. For any study or set of studies that lead to important new acquisitions in the field of the etiopathogenesis of human or animal infectious diseases (<https://www.lincei.it/it/premi-feltrinelli-1950-2011>; date of consultation September 14, 2024).
 36. HAUMi, personal file 137, Ascoli Alberto, three-page typescript with handwritten corrections by De Francesco.
 37. Pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 1, art. 2, DL May 7, 1948, no. 1033, *Disposizioni aggiuntive alle norme sulla riassunzione in servizio dei professori universitari già dispensati per motivi politici o razziali*.
 38. Pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 2, art. 2, DL 7 May 1948, no. 1033: “... However, the professors themselves will not be able to remain in office for more than one year from the entry into force of this decree.” and paragraph 3: “After this period, professors who have not resumed effective service in the university in which they are tenured are placed on retirement and admitted to retirement benefits. ...”.
 39. Giuseppe Armocida, Bruno Cozzi, *La medicina degli animali a Milano. I 200 anni di vita della Scuola di Veterinaria (1791-1991)*, Milan (Italy): Edizioni Sipiel, 1992; Giuseppe Aureli, Bruno Cozzi, Il Museo Anatomico dell'Istituto di Anatomia degli Animali Domestici dell'Università di Milano, *Natura*, 74, 1984, pp. 129-155; Valentino Chiodi, *Storia della Veterinaria*, first ed., Milan (Italy): Farmitalia, 1957; second ed., Bologna (Italy): Edagricole, 1981; Mandelli, Lauria, Cozzi (eds.), *Due secoli di ordinamenti e statuti*, 1992; Giancarlo Mandelli, *Nascita e sviluppo dell'anatomia patologica nella Scuola veterinaria milanese*, Milano Città delle Scienze, 2010 (<http://milanocittadellescienze.it/>); Dino Desiderio Nai, Commemorazione di Alberto Ascoli, *Atti SISVet.* 12, 1958, pp. 19-25; Gianluigi Redaelli, Livio Leali, Dino Desiderio Nai, precursore della riforma sanitaria in campo veterinario e significato della sua opera per l'amministrazione sanitaria, *Notizie Sanità, suppl. to no. 27*, pp. 12-26 (without date, likely 1974).
 40. The situation was different in Milan: the School of Veterinary Medicine, founded in 1791, was already a well-known and recognized scientific Institution when, in 1932, it joined the University.