

Szamuel Cytron

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He arrived in Italy in 1933 to study medicine and graduated in 1939. Later, he was interned in Calabria, both in Ferramonti (CS) and Mormanno (CS), where he met his future wife and helped the small local community: «he ran like a bolt to visit those who were sick, at any time»¹. After the war, he continued to work as a doctor in Mormanno until, almost by chance, he moved with his family to Roseto degli Abruzzi (TE).

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Family and education

Szamuel Cytron was born in Białystok (Russian empire, today Poland) on 10 September 1914. His parents, Daniel (? - 1943) and Rywka Lukczeaski,² were part of a wealthy trader family who owned a textile factory in the town. Szamuel's family was very numerous, and he grew up with nine of possibly even ten brothers and sisters³. In 1923, his uncle, Samuel Hirszy Cytron (1858 - ?), bought a beautiful art nouveau palace near the factory, where the whole family moved, including the grandparents and gran-grandparents⁴. Today, the building is the seat of the local museum of the city of Białystok⁵. In Poland, Szamuel attended the male gymnasium of the Society of the Jewish middle schools in Łódź and graduated in the spring of 1933 in Warsaw⁶.

¹ Luigi Paternostro, *Le rondini di Mormanno. Breve storia dell'emigrazione paesana*, und., p. 39, available online: <<https://diazilla.com>> (accessed 20 June 2022).

² ASUSi, *Medicina e chirurgia*, XII.D.a, f. 111, matr. 2063, «Cytron Samuel», «Estratto dal registro delle nascite della popolazione ebraica della città di Białystok per l'anno 1914», 5 October 1933.

³ Testimony of Muni Cytron (Szamuel's son) to Simone Duranti who the author thanks for providing key documents for this article.

⁴ Cf. Laura Camis De Fonseca, *Omaggio a Marussia Cytron Treves*, 17 March 2016, available online in <<http://www.fondazionecdf.it>> (accessed 20 June 2022). Marussia Cytron, probably Szamuel's cousin, fled from Białystok with her parents and took refuge in the Lanzo valley (Turin) during the last phase of the war.

⁵ Cf. the museum's website: Muzeum Podlaskie w Białymstoku, Kamienica Cytronów <<http://muzeum.bialystok.pl>> (accessed 16 June 2022).

⁶ ASUSi, *Medicina e chirurgia*, XII.D.a, f. 111, matr. 2063, «Cytron Samuel», translation of the

The following year, Szamuel emigrated to Italy and enrolled at the University of Perugia, faculty of medicine. The increasingly anti-Semitic sentiments widespread in Poland likely pushed him to move away, just like many other young people of his generation. In 1934, he moved to Florence, but his stay was short. The following year, in fact, he moved to Modena⁷. Two years later, he decided to move again, this time to Siena,⁸ where he enrolled at the University on 10 December 1937 (matriculation number 2063)⁹. On 28 November 1938, he asked to be registered for the VI year of study¹⁰ and in 1939, he passed 15 exams, perhaps with the help of the professors because, as a «foreign Jew», he risked being expelled¹¹. The Questura had already enquired about his status with the University of Siena on 17 November 1938, in the context of applying racial laws to foreign citizens¹². Szamuel asked to discuss his dissertation on 12 October 1938 and graduated on 9 November of the same year, with a mark of 74/110¹³. His dissertation was titled: «Studio anatomico-clinico nel torcicollo congenito di origine ossea» [Anatomic-clinical study on the congenital stiff neck of osseous origins]¹⁴.

Internment and the afterwar period

In June 1940, he was interned in the camp of Campagna (SA); from there, he was transferred to Ferramonti di Tarsia (CS) on 29 September of the same year. Finally, in October 1942, he was assigned to the Mormanno (CS) camp¹⁵.

high school graduation certificate issued by the Warsaw School District Inspectorate, 5 October 1933.

⁷ Ibid., «Carriera scolastica del Sig. Cytron Szamuel», 9 December 1937.

⁸ Ibid., «Studiante di medicina signor Cytron Szamuel», 26 January 1938.

⁹ Ibid., Szamuel Cytron's university record book.

¹⁰ Ibid., application issued to the rector of the Università di Siena, 28 November 1938.

¹¹ Cf. the RDL 15 November 1938, no. 1779, *Integrazione e coordinamento in unico testo delle norme già emanate per la difesa della razza nella Scuola italiana*, available [here](#).

¹² ASUSi, *Medicina e chirurgia*, XII.D.a, f. 111, matr. 2063, «Cytron Samuel», «Cytron Szamuel di Daniele - polacco ebreo», 17 November 1938; and reply by the university, 28 November 1938.

¹³ Ibid., Ufficio esami di Stato, «Abilitazione alla professione di medico chirurgo», 1965.

¹⁴ Ibid., application to the rector of the Università di Siena, 12 October 1939.

¹⁵ Leonardo Falbo, *Non solo Ferramonti. Ebrei internati in provincia di Cosenza (1940-1943)*, Cosenza, Pellegrini, 2010, p. 92.

Here he is remembered, with the nickname «Muni», as one of the doctors who helped the local population at any time of day and night¹⁶. In Mormanno, he also met his future wife, Magda Conte (1920-2012), the daughter of an anti-fascist from Lecce, who had been sentenced to the *confino* in Calabria with his whole family. Meanwhile, in Białystok, the Nazis liquidated the local Jewish community. Szamuel's family, interned in the Warsaw ghetto, was almost entirely exterminated, and only a few managed to survive. His cousins Chaim (1896-1971), Szymon (1889-1971), and Yocheved Cytron escaped to Sweden with their nephew Akiwa Arkadia Cytron (1909-1975) and then from there to New York. Akiwa's sister, Dvora Viara Cytron Shapiro (25 March 1912 - 9 October 1987), escaped to Argentina with her husband. Finally, one last cousin managed to survive, Jenina Ina Cytron Weinberg (12 February 1928 - 21 March 1999), and later emigrated to Israel¹⁷. When the Allied troops reached Ferramonti (where he had been transferred again),¹⁸ «Muni» enlisted as a volunteer in the British army, where he was accepted as a medical officer. However, he disliked this assignment, as he had hoped to have a more active role¹⁹. In 1944 he went back to Mormanno to work as a doctor and helped 150 refugees «with great generosity, he never asked to be paid for his work»²⁰.

In 1945 Szamuel and Magdas first son was born, Daniele (1945-2017). In the same year, one of his colleagues asked him to cover for him in Roseto degli Abruzzi (TE) for a short time. Szamuel accepted, initially for roughly 20 days, but was enchanted by the place and the climate, milder than what he was used to in Calabria. Therefore, he decided to move to Roseto with his family in 1946²¹. It was there that, in 1950, the couple had their second son, Muni

¹⁶ L. Paternostro, *Le rondini di Mormanno*, cit., p. 39.

¹⁷ Muni Cytron's testimony, cit. Cf. *The Bialystok Textile Cytron Family After WWII*, in <<https://www.geni.com>> (accessed 20 June 2022).

¹⁸ L. Falbo, *Non solo Ferramonti*, cit., p. 92.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Comune di Mormanno, «Attestato», 24 September 1946.

²¹ Muni Cytron's testimony, cit.

(1950). After a few years, the family moved again, this time to Pescara, as there were no middle schools in Roseto²². In 1965 Szamuel managed to have his medical license recognised as permanent (he had worked with a provisional one)²³. He died in Pescara on 5 May 1999, when he was 84.

Archival sources

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²² Ibid.

²³ ASUSi, *Medicina e chirurgia*, XII.D.a, f. 111, matr. 2063, «Cytron Samuel», request to the rector of the Università di Siena, 23 November 1964, and minutes of the subcommittee of the faculty of medicine, 5 May 1965.

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