



The Greek Community of Livorno: economic interests, religiosity and national sentiment

International Conference organised by the Borgo dei Greci cultural association and the Department of Cultures and Forms of Knowledge of the University of Pisa, as part of the celebrations of the bicentenary of the Greek Revolution of 1821

ABSTRACTS

First session – 8 October 2021

The institutional, religious and social evolution of the Greek community of Livorno

Daniele Edigati (University of Bergamo)

Churches, Nations and the Prince: the Greeks of Livorno from diocesan control to Leopoldian jurisdictionalism

This contribution aims to reconstruct the steps leading to the concession of a Greek Orthodox place of worship in Livorno from the perspective of the Granducal authorities, especially the *Segreteria del Regio Diritto* and the *Segreteria di Reggenza*. We will start by analysing the debate and the juridical arguments used to justify the tolerance of a non-Catholic Christian faith, moving on to examine the formalities and modalities that led to its authorization. Next, we will focus on the peculiar control paradigm applied to the Greek community, up until the Leopoldian era. In fact, because of the absence of a Greek Orthodox Ordinary, the Church was submitted to a rigorous jurisdictional control by the State, which did not, however, completely override the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Pisa, the Catholic Ordinary. This last aspect further confirms the lack of rigidity, in the Ancien Régime, of certain religious and juridical categories that are much clearer and better defined to our eyes today.

Lorenzo Benedetti (University of Pisa)

Under the Gaze of the Church. Archbishop Francesco Guidi and the Orthodox Greeks in Livorno

The present paper aims to investigate and outline some aspects of the relations between the Greek Orthodox community of Livorno and the Archbishop of Pisa, Francesco dei Conti Guidi, during the years of his episcopacy (1734-1778). The port of Livorno was at that time included in the jurisdiction of the Pisan primate, and during the 18th century the Greek Orthodox community, long present in the city, managed to emerge and obtain several grants, such as the erection of a church and the construction of a cemetery, “schismatic” buildings in the eyes of the Catholic Church. As part of broader studies, which focus on the archbishop and on religious minority groups living in the diocese, the present research aims to shed light on the decisions and attitudes of the prelate, of the Pisan Curia, and of the Holy See towards the Orthodox Greeks in Livorno, considering a complex network of relations which also involve other communities located in the port, the local and central civil power, and international diplomacy.

Katerina Galani (Institute for Mediterranean Studies of Rethymno)

Greek navigation and trade in Livorno in the late 18th century

The paper investigates aspects of the economic presence of Greeks in Livorno in the late 19th century, drawing upon the rich archive of the *Sanità*, i.e., the quarantine stations of the port. During the economic and historical conjuncture of the 19th century, the Greeks consolidated a sizeable merchant fleet and became the prime sea carrier in the Eastern Mediterranean. From the Ionian and the Aegean seas they sprang to the markets of the Black Sea, the Western Mediterranean and even beyond Gibraltar, to the Atlantic. In the Italian peninsula, Livorno emerged as an instrumental hub for the Greek shipping and trade activities and hosted a significant Greek community. The paper follows the traffic of Greek-owned ships in the port to examine the sea routes, cargoes, and trade, and unravels the business networks and partnerships formed in Livorno.

Despina Vlami (Research Centre for Medieval and Modern Hellenism of the Academy of Athens)

Making a life in Livorno: the Greek merchant community through the records of Livornese notaries (1795-1878)

The study of the Greek merchant community of Livorno in the 18th and 19th centuries was based on the examination of a plethora of archival sources. However, as a point of reference, it used the fact that the Greeks were organised into a Greek Orthodox Confraternity. Today, by taking a reverse methodological approach, we seek to explore and reconstruct some aspects of the life and activity of the Greek merchants of Livorno that reveal with greater clarity their relationship with the local society and entrepreneurial community. The archives of four Livornese notaries for the period 1795-1878 give us this possibility, and the acts examined – most of them referring to commercial and business activities – allow us to place Livorno in the context of the international commercial-entrepreneurial activity of the Greeks in the 19th century.

Antonella Capitanio (University of Pisa)

Precious furnishings from the Greek churches of Livorno

In the *Discorso storico-critico intorno all'origine e al possesso della venerabile chiesa nazionale della SS. Annunziata dei greci della città di Livorno*, published in 1856, we are reminded how, at the time of the French invasion, “hundreds of pounds of silver” were taken from the church: a realistic quantity given that, in addition to the documented existence of hanging lamps, chalices and other sacred vessels, most of the images of the iconostasis were provided with silver coverings which allowed only the painted faces to be visible. Although all that remains is a description of these rich furnishings and sumptuous drapes – since even the pieces that were spared and those that were added through subsequent donations, were then lost during WWII – we still have concrete evidence from the other Livornese Greek church, the SS. Trinità Greek Orthodox church, inaugurated in 1760 and then torn down during the urban demolition of 1935: liturgical drapes and vessels, conserved in the collections of both the *Museo della Città* in Livorno and the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens, provide a significant example of the splendour of the liturgical apparatus in use by the local community, to which prestigious donations were later added, such as the one by Catherine II of Russia, mentioned even by Russian historiography.

Maria Constantoudaki-Kitromilides (University of Athens)

Funerary monuments and archival documents for the cemetery of the old Greek Community of Livorno

The cemetery of the old Greek Community of Livorno contains over 200 funerary monuments from the 19th-20th centuries. Their shapes vary from simple tombs with modest engraved or relief decorations to more complex structures of ambitious design. This contribution looks at a number of these types of funerary monuments, classed according to their style and decoration. For some of

these it is possible to identify the authors. We will dedicate particular attention to those monuments bearing full relief or bas-relief portraits of the deceased, others depicting human figures in sorrowful poses, and those with a more symbolic theme, referring to the passing of time, life, death, or the character or occupation of the person buried. The inscriptions, in Greek and other languages, many bearing the names of family members and their varied occupations, provide valuable information about the social structure, the history and other aspects of this important Greek Diaspora community. Finally, we will focus on documents from the Livorno State Archive containing testimonies on the Greek cemetery and its church.

Vincenzo Farinella (University of Pisa)

The pictorial programme of Palazzo Maurogordato, Livorno

The pictorial decoration of Palazzo Maurogordato, entrusted in the 1860s to a Florentine painter of the “Neo-Medicean” school, reveals the clear desire of the family to emphasize their Hellenic origins. The historical fresco in one of the rooms on the piano nobile, overlooking the *Fosso Reale* canal, refers to one of the most symbolic events in the struggle for Greek independence: the death of Botzaris. This episode, for that matter capable of generating a rich pictorial tradition, highlights the heroic struggle of the Greek people against the oppressor, a struggle that resonated widely and evoked great sympathy in Europe, including Italy. Apart from the monumental ballroom enriched by a lavish cycle of Classical stucco decorations, the other frescoed rooms emphasise, through their various scenes (Apollo’s Chariot, The Feast in Honour of Bacchus, The Myth of Diana and Actaeon, etc.), the prestige of Classical culture, implicitly pointing to Greece as the cradle of European civilization.

Konstantina Balafouti Menarin (University of Bologna)

National Identity, multicultural society, and good living: from Livorno to Syros, the first Greek recipe book

At the beginning of the 19th century, Kydonies, Syros and Livorno formed a vast multicultural area in which people, ideas, recipes and cooking ingredients circulated. Physician P. Zontanòs, who lived in this context, took the “European” culture of cookery to the Island of Syros, his second home, through the translation and publication of the *Magheiriki* (*Μαγειρική*). Starting from this publication, which is the first recipe book of Modern Greece, we will follow the life and activities of this refugee from Asia Minor in the Italic region. We will discover a continuous thread uniting Syros and Livorno: two major centres of transit trade, composed of multicultural societies in which many Greek merchants excelled and where the high socio-economic level was also expressed through the development of a more varied and refined style of cookery. Recipe books, which in Appadurai’s opinion usually belong to the humble literature of complex civilizations, often tell unusual tales: in the case of Zontanòs’ book, the original Italian text was found in Livorno where the Greek community lived and worked. In this presentation, we will try to decipher and explain the reality of these two cities behind the story. Both had the goal of adding another piece to the mosaic of identities within the fragmented national context, and this was also reached through gastronomy, tastes and flavours, both familiar and new. The book by Zontanòs returns to Livorno on the bicentennial of the Greek Revolution, as a testimony of a substratum of desire for emancipation in Europe, and of how the Diaspora Greeks expressed this sentiment in Greece.

Second session – 9 October 2021
Historical and literary aspects of the Greek presence in Livorno

Mathieu Grenet (University of Albi – Institut Universitaire de France)

Greek notable and Epirote merchant: the Livornese trajectory of Alexander Patrinos (1765-1825)

The aim of this contribution is to take a deeper look at a key figure in Greek trade in Livorno between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century: the merchant Alexander Patrinos, originally from Ioannina, arrived in Tuscany in the 1770s. The wealth of Livornese documentation about him, combined with the valuable autobiography that he left behind, enable us to reconstruct a trajectory which is both unique in terms of the events it comprises and exemplary for its underlying dynamics. In fact, the case of Patrinos allows us to gain an unusual insight into how the Greek mercantile elite of Livorno traversed a particularly complex period, marked especially by the successive French occupations of the city and later, of course, by the 1821 Revolution. It also provides a picture of how these upheavals led the members of this elite to rethink their social, economic and political role within the local Greek Orthodox community.

Maria Christina Chatziioannou (National Hellenic Research Foundation – Athens)

From the international trade of Livorno to the political economy of the Greek state. Deciphering Andreas Louriotis (Ioannina 1789 - Athens 1854)

Andreas Louriotis constitutes a characteristic case study that can help us understand how an economic agent of the old regime, active in the international trade of the Mediterranean world, transferred his activities to the national Greek state. He had been living in Livorno since the early 19th century and had lived there through the Napoleonic Wars. He maintained a trading house and a merchant network with strong ties in the Ottoman Empire, especially with Constantinople, Smyrna, as well as with Naples, in the Italian peninsula, and Messina in Sicily. He reoriented his commercial activities through the Greek revolutionary experience of 1821. Louriotis capitalized his trade experience from Livorno, an early trading post of supply and exchange. He held an active role in the Greek Revolution as a member of the negotiations committee for the first loans of independent Greece, became a quasi-politician, and during his dawn was a landowner in Attica.

Caterina Carpinato (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Language and national sentiment: Dimitrios Drossos, the Palli family, and Giorgio Kutuffà's Grammar of the Modern Greek Language (1825)

A cosmopolitan and multilingual city, Livorno in the 1820s was the homeland of a lively Greek community that was becoming aware of the importance of the Greek language, not just as a communication tool, but also as an element of national identity. Dimitrios Drossos dedicated himself to learning the language of his ancestors and composed poetry in Greek; Angelica Palli translated from Greek the literary texts of her time, and Giorgio Kutuffà wrote a grammar book to teach the basics of Modern Greek. In the heated climate of the Greek Revolution and the restoration of freedom after centuries of foreign domination, some Greeks in Livorno retook possession of their language as a means of claiming a new national dimension.

Umberto Cini (Office of Interpreters and Translators of the Italian Chamber of Deputies)

The European education of Spyridon Zambelios (1834-1839): unpublished letters from a Livornese archive

This presentation traces the educational path of a young patrician from the Ionian Islands, destined to leave a long-lasting influence on Neo-Hellenic historical thought. It is based on around 30 letters that he wrote to his father between 1834 and 1839 from the various European cities to which his

wandering studies took him. This unpublished corpus of letters is conserved in a private archive in Livorno, where the “very learned Greek” lived his last years (1873-1881). From his letters, overflowing with critical spirit and impatience, mostly written in Italian, emerges the profile of an intellectual man, leaning towards the conquest of a European dimension in which his homeland Greece is still an unexplored territory. At the end of his five-year apprenticeship, the 24-year-old Spyridon reluctantly returned to his native island, taking with him his collection of books which would become a springboard towards a second conquest, that of a new national identity.

Third session – 9 October 2021

Livorno’s contribution to the Greek Revolution, the publication of *Elliniki Nomarchìa*, and the philhellenic milieu of Tuscany

Alessandro Volpi (University of Pisa)

Philhellenic circuits. The “other” philhellenism of the Vieusseux

Between 1814 and 1817, Giovan Pietro Vieusseux set out on a long journey to do business in the principal markets of Northern Europe and the Tsarist and Ottoman Empires. He kept a “journal” about his trip, to which he attached a number of “merchant letters” dedicated to the cities he considered crucial for commercial exchange with Livorno, home to the premises of the *Casa Senn* on behalf of which he was making the trip. The Genevan described Constantinople as a great new opportunity for the Livornese merchant community, providing, however, that a conflict between the Russian Empire and the Porte, of which he could see worrying signs, did not break out. This presentation aims to shed light on the contrast that began to arise, from the end of the Napoleonic era, between economic interests – the exchange system put in place by the Livornese Greek merchant community – and the national aspirations sought by a significant part of that same community. This contrast generated a partly contradictory form of philhellenism, distinct from the more determined and committed form that arose around the *Gabinetto Vieusseux* of Florence, particularly around Pierre Vieusseux, Giovan Pietro’s father, one of the principal brains behind the financial and political network built in support of the Greek cause. The aged Pierre, who was very critical towards his son’s excessive pragmatism, strove to find financiers in Geneva, Paris and Florence for the philhellenic expeditions while at the same time pressing Giovan Pietro to direct his *Antologia* towards a position more favourable to the Greek cause and more critical of the Tsarist philhellenism existing in Tuscany. From this perspective, the standpoint of the Vieusseux family contributed to the formation of circles that were only partially integrated with the Livornese community, and which, instead, gave life to “another” philhellenism, closer to the academic experience in Pisa.

Christos Bintoudis (La Sapienza University of Rome)

Enrico Mayer, a Hellenophile of Franco-German origin in Livorno in 1821

The scarce bibliography available regarding the life and works of Enrico Mayer, an intellectual of Franco-German origins, mainly concerns his considerable pedagogic work. My contribution aims instead to highlight Mayer’s philhellenic oeuvre which is not limited to the well-known, although still unpublished, poetry *Ditirambo alla Grecia* and *Nella morte del Lord Byron. Ode alla Grecia*. I have taken into account his pedagogical knowledge in my analysis of Mayer’s philhellenism, traces of which can also be found in his linguistic and glottological studies. My intervention, which is based on the study of Mayer’s manuscripts kept in the family archive in Tuscany (Santa Maria a Monte, near Pisa), will seek to underline the importance of Mayer’s philhellenic position in Italy, just as the Greek Revolution broke out in 1821, by placing it within the wider Tuscan philhellenic context of the 1820s.

Francesco Scalora (Center for Hellenic Studies – Harvard University)

Demetrio Camarda (1821-1882), proponent of Hellenic studies in Livorno

A genuine interpreter of the ideologies of the Risorgimento, and known above all for his *Test of Comparative Grammar on Albanian Language*, Demetrio Camarda was a priest and a teacher of Greek in Livorno. He was a sincere follower of the evolution of the Greek national cause, to which he dedicated important writings and observations. In close contact with numerous intellectuals, literary figures and linguists of the time, he joined a substantial group of scholars and patriots who, centring around the figure of Dora d'Istria, never ceased their efforts to bring the Greek case to the attention of European public opinion.

Giovanni Ranieri Fascetti (IIS G. Galilei-A. Pacinotti – Pisa)

European secret society support of the Greek cause for freedom: the Livorno-Pisa crossroads

Following the banishing of Freemasonry, the Carboneria was established as a highly politicised and radically Republican secret society, finding a sister in the Greek *Filiki Eteria* which was likewise inspired by the Masonic model. It was a new era of Revolutions, in which European combatants fought for the freedom of all humankind, from the Greeks to the peoples of Latin America. Tuscany played a crucial role in this revolutionary period since one of the nerve centres of the Carboneria was located in its coastal area: the Temple of Minerva Medica in Montefoscoli, founded in 1821. Its financier, Andrea Vaccà Berlinghieri, its architect, Ridolfo Castinelli, and all the supporters linked to them, such as Byron and Shelley, directed their efforts not just towards the cause for the unification and independence of Italy, but also to the rebirth of Greece as a Nation.

Kalliopi Oikonomou (1st Lyceum of Pefki – Attica)

Giuseppe Chiappe, philhellene: from lawyer in Livorno to volunteer in the 1821 Revolution

The case of Giuseppe Chiappe is an exemplary one, which is useful for an understanding of the important role played by philhellenism in the strengthening and final success of the 1821 Greek Revolution. Chiappe, who was a lawyer in Livorno, decided to move to the island of Hydra in Greece with his wife and children and to actively help the Greeks in their fight for freedom from the Ottoman Empire. His action was threefold: he actively participated in naval operations during the struggle, he edited two newspapers that contributed to the dissemination of news at home and abroad about the Greek Revolution and its successful outcome and, in the years following the birth of the new Hellenic State, he was appointed judiciary roles there. In addition to his own contribution to the Greek struggle, that of his wife Chiara Chiappe was also significant. In collaboration with celebrated Greek women from all over the country, she worked to gain the support of fellow philhellene women worldwide.