

ATTILIO MILANO'S UNPUBLISHED HISTORY OF THE JEWISH NATION OF LIVORNO
AND HIS LETTERS ON LABRONIC ISSUES (1965-1969): A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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Family memories and study materials, these are the contents that will be treated in greater detail in the context of a project dedicated to the study of the figure of the historian Attilio Milano, a man who spent his whole life investigating in the archives the events of the Italian Jewry.¹

Since December 2014 the rare and valuable books which constitute the bibliographical legacy of Attilio Milano (about 1300 volumes) and above all the large number of his letters, private papers and research notes, are kept, respectively, in the Library of Humanities (BAUM) of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and in the "Renato Maestro" Library of the Jewish Community in the same city, thanks to the decision of the historian's son, Giorgio Milano, to transfer there his father's collection which until then had its place on the shelves of the Italian Temple in Jerusalem. Protagonist and invaluable reference point for historians interested in Italian Jews, on the fiftieth anniversary of his death the figure of Attilio Milano is to be celebrated and kept alive through the enhancement of the collection's largely unpublished material, including a half-completed work on the history of the *Nazione Ebraica di Livorno*.

Attilio Milano (Rome 1907 - Hod Hasharon 1969) was one of the greatest scholars and popularizers of Jewish history in Italy. Although engaged in forensic activity – he held a degree in Law – since his early years Milano devoted himself to the study and research of evidence of the Jewish past. His first works concentrated on the history of the Roman Ghetto: he found a great quantity of interesting and original sources that were unpublished. In 1939, after the enactment of the racial laws, Attilio Milano – who was a convinced Zionist – decided to emigrate to Palestine where he opened a knitwear factory with his brother-in-law. According to the account of his younger brother Alberto, Attilio Milano in 1942 had already mentioned the desire and the need to write a «great work» on the history of the Jews of Italy which, in fact, twenty years later would be welcomed as his *magnum opus*.² In addition to collaborating with «La Rassegna Mensile di Israel», in 1949 Milano published his first book, *Storia degli ebrei italiani nel Levante*, followed by his indispensable and irreplaceable bibliography on the history of Italian Jews, *Bibliotheca Historica Italo-Judaica* (1954). In 1963 he published for Einaudi the aforementioned *Storia degli ebrei in Italia*, followed by *Il ghetto di Roma* (1964). From 1967 to 1969 Milano was editor-in-chief of the Italian section of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* edited by his close friend Cecil Roth.

Over one hundred articles, book chapters, reviews and encyclopaedia entries appeared from 1928 to 1970. As his nephew Lucio Milano underlined during the opening ceremony of the book collection donated by the Author's family, Milano chose to return to Eretz Israel to escape from fascism, but above all to pursue a deeply felt ideal. The early years spent in Rome with his uncle Enzo Sereni were of fundamental importance for his ideas and formation.

Attilio Milano's collection arrived at the Biblioteca Archivio "Renato Maestro" of the Jewish Community of Venice already divided into eighteen binders and fully digitized by the Author's family. The papers and documents had been ordered in folders with original annotations by his son Giorgio Milano according to a chronological criterion regarding general correspondence, while the remaining documentation and part of the correspondence had been organized thematically according to the research and studies carried out by the historian. During the description of the Attilio Milano archive fund, supported by the Direzione Generale degli Archivi in 2019, the complex was rearranged into ten folders according

¹ The project is funded by Foundation Jewish Contemporary Documentation Center - CDEC through the financial donation of Giorgio Milano.

² A. MILANO, "Ricordo di Attilio"; *Scritti in Memoria di Attilio Milano*, «La Rassegna Mensile di Israel» 36 (1970), pp. 21-30: 22.

to a more effective and coherent chronological and thematic order. The collection preserves study notes, handwritten and typed texts, iconographic documentation and, above all, a copious correspondence with well-known personalities of Italian Judaism.

Both the documentation and the letters concern the research and preparation of the historian's articles and monographs and his collaborations with «La Rassegna Mensile di Israel» (RMI), the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* and with the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (EJ).

Much of the information relating to private life and research work can be traced from the extended and precious correspondence of the lawyer Milano with many friends and colleagues. The recovery of Attilio Milano's epistolary material did not present great difficulties; as said, this is almost entirely preserved in the homonym fund and it can be easily integrated with the letters stored in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP) and in the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem. Milano's correspondence also has the advantage of being almost entirely in Italian: there are very few cases in which the historian writes in English, French or Hebrew. The correspondence is very significant, especially considering the possibility that many of his long letters, full of private and study anecdotes, are still among the private papers of his friends which have not yet been investigated.³

The large and complex investigation, which is here partially anticipated, involves the reorganization of the personal documentation and research material relating to the history of the Jews of Livorno preserved in the fund of the "Renato Maestro" Library as well as the revision of Milano's translations of the *Escamot*. This will be followed by the correction of a selection of letters sent by our author to some of the greatest experts on Italian and International Jewish history, such as Daniel Carpi, Vittore Colorni, Dante Lattes, Salo W. Baron and, finally, Cecil Roth, who helped him write the uncompleted book on Livorno. Then I will quickly retrace the genesis of his unpublished work *La Nazione Ebraica di Livorno* by reading the most important letters on the Labronic topic without neglecting even the most intimate ones which, as his friend Giorgio Romano already wrote, are rich in sense of humour and critical awareness which Milano hardly expressed in person. The reorganization of the aforementioned materials represents an introductory work to the publication of the book *La Nazione Ebraica di Livorno*.

Milano's thirty-year-long prolific and incessant intellectual work is organized as follows:⁴

Binder 1 - Corrispondenza italiana (busta 1, fascicoli 1-4): Cecil Roth (b.1, fasc.1, ex I-A); Deputazione di carità (b.1, fasc.2, ex I-B); Fondazione Angelo Sereni (b.1, fasc.3, ex I-C); Scritti in onore di Dante Lattes (b.1, fasc.4, ex I-D).

Corrispondenza generale (busta 1, fascicoli 1-6): Judaica 1939-48 (b.1, fasc.1, ex VIII-A); Judaica 1949 (b.1, fasc.2, ex VIII-B); Judaica 1950 (b.1, fasc.3, ex VIII-C); Judaica 1951 (b.1, fasc.4, ex VIII-D); Judaica 1952 (b.1, fasc.5, ex VIII-E); Judaica 1953 (b.1, fasc.6, ex VIII-F).

Binder 2 - Corrispondenza generale (busta 2, fascicoli 7-11): Judaica 1954 (b.2, fasc.7, ex IX-A); Judaica 1955 (b.2, fasc.8, ex IX-B); Judaica 1956 (b.2, fasc.9, ex IX-C); Judaica 1957 (b.2, fasc.10, ex IX-D); Judaica 1958 (b.2, fasc.11, ex IX-E).

Corrispondenza generale (busta 3, fascicoli 12-15): Judaica 1959 (b.3, fasc.12, ex X-A); Judaica 1960 (b.3, fasc.13, ex X-B); Judaica 1961 (b.3, fasc.14, ex X-C); Judaica 1962 (b.3, fasc.15, ex X-D).

Binder 3 - Corrispondenza generale (busta 4, fascicoli 16-18): Judaica 1963 (b.4, fasc.16, ex XI-A); Judaica 1964 (b.4, fasc.17, ex XI-B); Judaica 1965 (b.4, fasc.18, ex XI-C).

Corrispondenza generale (busta 5, fascicoli 19-22): Judaica 1966 (b.5, fasc.19, ex XII-A); Judaica 1967 (b.5, fasc.20, ex XII-B); Judaica 1968 (b.5, fasc.21, ex XII-C); Judaica 1969 (b.5, fasc.22, ex XII-D).

Binder 4 - Ricerche (busta 1, fascicoli 1-6): Ricerche b.1, fasc.1, ex III-A; Ricerche b.1, fasc.2, ex III-B; Ricerche b.1, fasc.3, ex III-F; Ricerche b.1, fasc.4, ex III-M; Ricerche b.1, fasc.5, ex III-E; Ricerche b.1, fasc.6b, ex XIV-A where we find: b.1; fasc.6a, ex XIV-B/1, XIV-B/51, XIV-B/101, XIV-B/151, XIV-B/201, XIV-B/251, XIV-B/301, XIV-B/351, XIV-B/401, XIV-B/451, XIV-B/501, XIV-B/551. Final folder entitled "Casale Monferrato, corrisp. Jona Clava, mio articolo Rass. M. I, Volume Federico Luzzatto 1962" XIV A-0; Corrisp. Salvatore Foa XIV-A/1-11.

³ This is the case of Yoseph Colombo whose letters are kept in the family home.

⁴ I prefer to preserve the original Italian signature of the fund; "Ex" refers to the digitization's signature on the web page <http://renatomaestro.org/it/archivio-attilio-milano/>.

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- Binder 5 - Ricerche (busta 2, fascicoli 8-9): Ricerche b.1, fasc. 7, ex V-B; Ricerche b.2, fasc.8, ex IV-D "Dizionario biografico 1963". Ricerche b.2, fasc.9a, ex II-A; b.2, fasc.9b, ex II-B; b.2, fasc.9c, ex II-C; b.2, fasc.9d, ex II-D; b.2, fasc.9e, ex II-E.
- Binder 6 - Ricerche (busta 3, fascicoli 10-14): Ricerche b.3, fasc.10, ex III-G; b.3, fasc.11, ex V-A; b.3, fasc.12a, ex IV-B; fasc.12b, ex IV-C "Storia generale 1962"; fasc.12c, ex IV-A "Storia generale 1962-1963". Ricerche b.3, fasc.13a, ex XVI-A/1-7 "Romeo Martini ebrei a Roma"; b.3, fasc. 13b, ex XVI-B/L. Ricerche b.3, fasc.14, ex III-K.
- Binder 7 - Ricerche (busta 4, fascicoli 15-17): Ricerche b.4, fasc.15, ex IV-F; Ricerche b.4, fasc.16a, ex XV-A fino alla b. 4, fasc. 16s, ex XV-S; Ricerche b.4, fasc.17, ex IV-E.
- Binder 8 - Ricerche (busta 5, fascicoli 18-25): Ricerche b.5, fasc.18, ex III-N; b.5, fasc.19, ex V-C; b.5, fasc.20, ex IV-G; b.5, fasc.21, III-L; b.5, fasc.22, IV-H; b.5, fasc.23, ex VI-A; b.5, fasc.24, ex V-D; b.5, fasc.25, ex VI-B.
- Binder 9 - Iconografia (busta 1, fascicoli 1-6; busta 2, fascicoli 7-12): Iconografia b.1, fasc. 1, ex XVII-A; b.2, fasc.2, ex XVII-B; b.1, fasc.3, ex XVII-C; b.1, fasc.4, ex XVII-D; b.2, fasc.5, ex XVII-E; b.2, fasc.6, ex XVII-E. Iconografia b.2, fasc.7, ex XVIII-A; b.2, fasc.8, ex XVIII-B; b.2, fasc.9, ex XVIII-C; b.2, fasc.10, ex XVIII-D; b.2, fasc.11, ex XVIII-E; b.2, fasc.12, ex XVIII-F.
- Binder 10 - Rassegna Stampa (busta 1, fascicoli 1-4) Miscellanea (busta 1, fascicoli 1-7): Rassegna Stampa b.1, fasc.1, ex XIII-B; b.1, fasc. 2, ex XIII-A; b.1, fasc.3, ex XIII-C; b.1, fasc. 4, ex VII-E. Miscellanea b.1, fasc.1, ex VII-D; b.1, fasc.2, ex VII-A; b.1, fasc.3, ex VII-B; b.1, fasc.4, ex III-C; b.1, fasc.5, ex VII-C; b.1, fasc.6, ex III-H, b.1, fasc.7, ex VII-E.

Among the correspondence, that with his lifelong friend Cecil Roth is perhaps the most interesting: it consists of 150 letters from December 1929 to February 1967 regarding their intensive investigations in the archives of Italy, their important publications and commitments with the EJ.⁵

The large and rich *epistolario* (covering the period from 24 December 1936 through 8 February 1939) between Attilio Milano (45 letters) and some scholars invited to contribute to the volume in honour of the great Dante Lattes (156 letters), also proves to be of great value: here they discuss the titles of the papers to be submitted and the delays with which these came into the hands of the editor Attilio Milano. Among the names we find Alfonso Pacifici, Yoseph Colombo, Alessandro Levi, Adolfo Ottolenghi, Alfredo Toaff, Israel Zolli, Guido Luzzatto, Gustavo Castellbolognesi, Sabatino Lopez, Mario Ottolenghi, Umberto Nahon, Arnaldo Momigliano, Riccardo Curiel, Aldo Sorani, Giuseppe Gabrieli, Guido Bachi, Enzo Sereni, Elia S. Artom, Guido Bedarida, Vittore Colorni, Bruno Foà, Cecil Roth, David Prato, Martin Buber, Shmuel Y. Agnon, Edmond Fleg, Umberto Cassuto, Enzo Bonaventura, Benvenuto Terracini, Guido Tedeschi, Angelo Orviato. The last letters and postcards deal with sums of money to be paid by check for the publication of the volume which was divided into three special issues of RMI from May to June 1938. The folder also contains some notes and drafts in Attilio Milano's own hand (ex I / D-60-62, 89, 124a, 145, 156).

Also the folder ex VIII-E Judaica 1952 preserves an extensive correspondence between Attilio Milano (15 letters) and important scholars and personalities such as the then President of the "Unione delle Comunità Israelitiche", Bonfiglioli; with Abraham G. Duker, editor of the «Jewish Social Studies» magazine in which Milano published in 1953 the article *The number of the Jews in Sicily at the time of their expulsion in 1492*; we find again Cecil Roth, then Sarai Zausmer of the «Jewish Quarterly Review» on the prospective publication of an article on social and charitable institutions in Rome between 1555 and 1848, and with prof. Alexander Marx from the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York. Among other names we find that of prof. Harry J. Leon of the Department of Classical Languages of the University of Texas; Salo W. Baron, Alfredo Toaff, Vittore Colorni, Isaia Sonne, Milka Cassuto Salzman and her mother Bice Corcos regarding the studies of the late Umberto Cassuto.

⁵ Cecil Roth (London 1899 - Jerusalem 1970) was one of the greatest Jewish historians of the twentieth century. A prolific writer, Roth published a great number of books and articles concerning the history of Italian Jewry. He served as editor-in-chief of Encyclopaedia Judaica from 1965 until his death. Milano and Roth met through their mutual friend Giuseppe Pardo Roques who at that time was President of the Jewish Community of Pisa. He died in the Nazi massacre of 12 August 1944 together with eleven other people.

The folder ex VIII F-Judaica 1953, preserves the correspondence of Attilio Milano (71 letters) with more great experts of Italian Jewish Studies among whom we find Salvatore Foa, Elia S. Artom and Menachem E. Artom, Guido Bedarida, Gino Luzzatto, Alfredo S. Toaff, Simon Bernstein, Moses A. Shulvass, Carlo Bernheimer, Joshua Bloch and Joshua Rosenthal. The folder also includes an exchange of letters with Marino Parenti, director of the Sansoni Editrice in Florence who, after a meeting with Milano in Florence between 20 and 22 July 1953, on 23 of the same month sent him the contract for the publication of the *Bibliotheca Historica Italo-Judaica*. Furthermore, the folder retains a brief exchange of letters with Aldo Olschki and Fabio Della Seta relating to a monograph with a rich photographic apparatus to be published with the same Florentine publishing house. Also included is a short correspondence with Ladislao Münster, professor of Medicine at the University of Bologna and devotee of Italian Jewish studies; with the Mayor of the municipality of Termini Imerese for a study on the Jews of South Italy, and, finally, a letter from the Sally Meyer Foundation inviting him to contribute to a volume of studies in memory of the Foundation's namesake (with a reply by Milano).

The folder ex IX B- Judaica 1955 contains substantial correspondence on the wide diffusion of the bibliography published for Sansoni Antiquariato and on the celebration of the community's two-thousand-year anniversary of the following year. Some letters, such as those written by Umberto Nahon, Fabio Della Seta, Elia S. Artom and Carlo Del Monte, concern the two articles entitled *Glossario dei vocaboli e delle espressioni di origine ebraica in uso nel dialetto giudaico-romanesco* and the *Considerazioni sulla lotta dei Monti di Pietà contro il prestito ebraico*, to be published in 1955 in the volume for the twentieth anniversary of Crescenzo Del Monte's death and in 1956 as a contribution to the volume for Sally Meyer, respectively. Some Milano's letters sent to Marino Parenti mention the writing of his most important work *Storia degli ebrei in Italia*, which the author claims to have written up to that moment «just under half»⁶ and which he plans to finish by the following year. In the folder we find also some letters from Giulio Einaudi addressed first to Bruno Zevi, brother-in-law of Milano, then directly to the Roman historian regarding the opportunity of publishing his *Storia degli ebrei in Italia* (IX / B-144, 161, 172, 188, 199, 202, 203). The exchange of letters with Izhak Ben Zevi, Giorgio Zevi and Benvenuto Terracini concerns the transfer of Jewish archival material scattered around the various Italian communities to the Ben-Zevi Institute in Jerusalem.

The material relating to the Jewish community of Livorno is kept in the folder ex II A-D which preserves the microfilm of the ms. HM 2803 - No. H. 17, *Escamot e Statutos - '600*, Archive of the Jewish Community of Livorno, microfilmed in September 1956 by the Jewish Historical General Archives of Jerusalem. There follows the collection of laws (*Escamot*) of 1756 written in Portuguese by the government of the *Nazione Ebraica* of Livorno and composed of 69 articles collected in 29 sections. The *Escamot* occupy ff. 48-58 of the manuscript entitled *Deliberaçoims do Governo G (1753-1763)*. We also find a copy of ms. 228, *Charters and regulations of the Jews of Livorno 1593-1783* written in Italian and sent to Attilio Milano by his friend Cecil Roth. The folder preserves also the repertoire (ex II-D: ff.1-8) of the issues contained in the *Libro grande dell'università degli ebrei* translated by Sebastiano Venier in 1632. Finally, we have the correspondence between Attilio Milano and Dr Paolo Sciclone regarding the latter's degree dissertation *La comunità ebraica di Livorno (1737-1815)* (Milano's letter dated 11 September 1965 with Sciclone's reply of 19 October 1965).

In addition to the documents sent as attachments to the letters relating to the Jewish press in Italy, in the folder ex XI C-Judaica 1965 b. 4, fasc. 18, Milano's interest in the Labronic history becomes increasingly concrete. In fact, the booklet contains the formal letters that Milano sent to the Jewish Historical General Archives of Jerusalem to request funding for the photographic reproductions of the Archivio Medici-Livorno. In that year, Milano published his first paper dedicated to Livorno Jewry entitled *Le esequie di un Rabbino a Livorno nel Seicento*, printed in the volume in memory of Alfredo Sabato Toaff. This folder consists of 85 letters sent by Milano mainly to scholars and personalities related to the city of Livorno and the Archives of Jerusalem, such as Daniel Carpi, Cecil Roth, Gabriele Bedarida, Mario Luschi, Umberto Nahon, Daniel Cohen, Father Giacomo Martina, Roberto Bachi, Leo Levi, Alfonso Pacifici, Elio Toaff, Carlo Bernheimer, Renzo Cabib, the Mayor prof. Nicola Badaloni, Giuseppe Gini of

⁶ IX B-123 letter to Marino Parenti of Sansoni Editrice.

the Cassa di Risparmio of the city, the previously named Paolo Sciclone, Alberto Rezzauti, Milton Himmelfarb, Giuseppe Tavani (an academic expert on Judeo-Livornese language and literature) Piero Brizzi and Nedo Rossi of the “Centro Studi Storici Livornesi”.

1. *Attilio Milano's unpublished history “La Nazione Ebraica di Livorno”*

In 1955, the great Rabbi Alfredo Sabato Toaff from Livorno, in the introduction to *Cenni storici sulla Comunità ebraica e sulla Sinagoga di Livorno*, wrote:

La storia completa della Comunità ebraica di Livorno, che ancora si attende, meriterebbe di essere scritta. È una storia singolare, direi quasi d'eccezione, sia per le condizioni di privilegio che gli Ebrei godettero in questo porto del Granducato di Toscana, sia perché non è soltanto d'interesse locale, non si restringe al gruppo che abitava la spiaggia tirrenica, ma interessa quasi tutto il mondo ebraico perché si riannoda con la storia politica, del commercio e della cultura dell'ebraismo mondiale.⁷

[The complete history of the Jewish community of Livorno, which is still awaited, deserves to be written. It is a unique story, I would say almost exceptional, both for the privileged conditions that the Jews enjoyed in this port of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and because it is not only of local interest. In fact, the history of Jews in Livorno does not refer only to the group who lived in the Tyrrhenian coastal city, but it affects almost the entire Jewish world because it is intertwined with the political, commercial and cultural history of the Jews in a global perspective.]

Attilio Milano was not slow in responding to this invitation; while preparing his pioneering *Storia degli ebrei d'Italia* (1963) he began to collect material for the drafting of an essay on the history of the Jewish community of Livorno which was intended by him primarily as «the recreation of a long period to come».⁸

Unfortunately, the sudden illness did not give him time to finish the work. Although a number of scholars have written on the history of Livorno and its Jewish community in the past fifty years, original documentary sources, especially in light of the material collected by Attilio Milano, are far from being exhausted. For this reason, and especially for the contribution that Milano has given in a wonderful, perhaps unsurpassed way, to Italian Jewish Studies, it seems right to enhance and make available his uncompleted work which, in addition to constituting a precious legacy, could open a new and interesting reflection among scholars of the field.

As mentioned, in the very rich fund “Attilio Milano”, fully digitized and available online, among the various printed publications and letters are found some drafts and working papers relating to the unfinished book on the Jewish community of Livorno. Milano's methodical and precise ability to gather research material is reflected in folder Ex II which preserves documents and notes on Labronic Jewry. Attilio Milano's interest in the Jewish community of Livorno certainly grew in 1965, the year in which the historian was finally able to devote himself to his new monograph.

In folder ex XI-C we find correspondence with Daniel Carpi, Gabriele Bedarida, Cecil Roth, Leon Munster and Vittore Colorni regarding the request of materials on the history of the Jews of Livorno in order to complete some articles. The letters sent to Carpi and Colorni – dated respectively 3 January 1965 and 2 May of the same year – are important witnesses of his new interest. In the first letter Milano declares to his friend that he wants to «pick up the last microfilms on Livorno [...] and to write about the seventeenth-century testamentary dispositions in that community» for an article that was eventually published in 1967 in a volume written in memory of Carpi's father, Leone, entitled *L'amministrazione della giustizia presso gli ebrei di Livorno nel Sei Settecento*. A confirmation of his vivid interest in the

⁷ A.S. TOAFF, *Cenni storici sulla comunità ebraica e sulla sinagoga di Livorno*, «La Rassegna Mensile di Israele» 21 (1955), pp. 411-426; the passage is quoted in D. FILIPPI (ed.), *Per una storia della Comunità ebraica di Livorno. Contributo bibliografico (1706-2019)*, monographic issue of «Nuovi Studi Livornesi» 25 (2019), p. 21. Unless otherwise specified, all translations are mine.

⁸ XI-C 79 letter to Vittore Colorni of 2 May 1965.

Livorno events would can be read in a letter sent to Colorni in which Milano writes «I started to investigate the history of the Jewish community of Livorno» confiding to his friend the difficulty of working «for the scarcity of the sources collected and for the difficulty, for me being so far away, to collect new ones».

Just four days after the letter sent to Colorni, the lawyer writes again to Carpi inviting him and Daniel Cohen, at that time respectively curator and director of the Jewish Historical General Archives, to a meeting in Jerusalem «to organize the collection of materials relating to Livorno». In fact, the scholars met between 19 and 25 of May, as can be read in a letter dated 26 of the same month in which Milano writes to Carpi elucidating him on «the aspects discussed during the meeting». The letter is accompanied by a “pro-forma” that Milano was to send to director Daniel Cohen regarding the formal request for a financial aid during the examination of the huge amount of registers, files and envelopes kept in the “Archivio Mediceo di Firenze – Carteggio Livorno”.⁹ On 2 June 1965 Milano sent the aforementioned letter, enlarged and corrected thanks to the pen of his friend Daniel Carpi, in which the scholar explicitly requests that the approximately 220 envelopes on Livorno preserved in the Florentine Archive, amounting to five to seven thousand reproductions, be photographed.¹⁰

From that summer onwards Milano is ever more actively committed to search for sources on the Labronic Jewish community and, for this reason, contacts with Carpi and Roth become more frequent. Especially the latter will provide him with documents and microfilms essential for the preparation of the book: the manuscript containing the “Constituzione Livornina” will be mentioned several times in his works and in the unpublished monograph as Ms. Roth 228. During those months of intense research Attilio Milano will also write to Elio Toaff and Carlo Bernheimer to request specific information and references about the catalogue of the Livorno Talmud Torah Library published by Bernheimer in 1915.

A decisive turning point in Milano’s investigation occurred between August and September 1965 when intense relations began with the then Mayor of Livorno, Nicola Badaloni, and the President of the Israelite Community of the city, Renzo Cabib. From their continuous exchange of letters it is possible to trace the events related to the fundraising for the photographic reproduction of the documents. Carpi, in the name of the Jewish Historical General Archives of Jerusalem, on 4 August wrote a letter to Mayor Badaloni asking him to finance with 750,000 lire half of the huge sum estimated for the work on the archive. The collaboration of the city of Livorno with the General Archives of Jerusalem (Cohen-Carpi), however, will be long in coming: immediately after a formal meeting between Badaloni, Cabib and Milano in Livorno on 8 September,¹¹ in a letter dated 11 of the same month Milano thanks Badaloni for the loan, albeit reduced to 500,000 lire, that the Mayor would bring for approval in the City Council by the end of September. While waiting for the Council’s response, Milano returned to Israel for *Rosh haShanah* and made contact with other experts of Labronic Judaism, including the aforementioned prof. Giuseppe Tavani, Piero Brizzi and Paolo Sciclone. The month of October was also very fruitful for Milano’s research: on 20 October 1965 the lawyer receives from Cecil Roth other material in his possession about the Livorno Jewry and on 26 October begins his correspondence, in Hebrew, with prof. H. Z. Hirschberg from Bar-Ilan University, expert in the history of the Jewish communities of North Africa.

Meanwhile, Badaloni’s silence seriously worries Attilio Milano and all his restlessness and anxiety increase in every new letter: Milano first tries to contact the Mayor by means of a formal letter sent by Carpi in the name of the General Archives of Jerusalem, then he decides to write to him personally on 3 December. Eventually, Mayor Badaloni replied to Milano saying that the city council had declared itself in favour of financing the photographic reproduction of the documents kept in the State Archive of Florence, but with a contribution of 250,000 lire for the first year. After receiving the letter Milano, reassured, was finally able to continue the writing of the work and, in the meantime, to examine the first

⁹ XI-C 92.

¹⁰ The full text of letter XI-C 97/98 is reproduced at the end of this paper.

¹¹ The meeting took place on 8 September at 13.00 in the municipality of Livorno; this information is contained in the confirmation telegram (XI-C 168) that Renzo Cabib sent to Milano as he had promised in a letter of 5 September (XI-C 155).

photographic reproductions of the Florentine envelopes that he received around mid-February 1966, according to a letter received from Carpi.

During the spring of the same year, Milano added to the writing of the book on the Jewish Nation of Livorno the composition of an article entitled *Costumanze, spassi e correttivi fra gli Ebrei della Livorno che fu* which he himself defined, in a letter sent to the editor of «La Rassegna Mensile di Israel» Yosef Colombo on 5 June, «flavourful», and which would be published the following year in issue 33.

In the correspondence of the ensuing months, references to the essay on the Jewish Nation of Livorno, became less frequent at least until 2 January 1967 when Carpi sent to Milano the latest photographs of the files related to the Labronic community. In March of the same year, the archivist of the Marseille Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Courdurié, contacted the lawyer asking for advice on the availability of some materials preserved in the Jewish community archive of that city.¹² From Milano's detailed reply dated 17 March we learn that the work of scrutiny started in Florence «will continue for a long time, especially since it is suspended for the moment, given the flood suffered by the State Archives».¹³ These few lines testify to the destructive consequences of the overflowing of the Arno River on the Florentine Archive which, five months after that morning of 4 November 1966, was still in very precarious conditions. The commitments of the following months become more and more intense, Milano is also engaged in other projects: from 1967 the scholar will edit the Italian section of the Encyclopedia Judaica edited by Roth and will take care of the new RMI's iconographic column *Immagini del passato ebraico*.

Milano's correspondence stops on 4 June to start again on 22 June probably as a consequence of the Six-Day War (5-10 June 1967) which, however, does not seem to have turned him away from his study commitments; on the contrary, it gave him the boost to write, together with Yosef Colombo, an entire issue of the RMI dedicated to the war as seen from Italy and enriched with extracts from newspapers of the Peninsula.

Between the end of February and throughout March 1968 the lawyer Milano is involved in the drafting of some articles about Livorno: *La Costituzione Livornina del 1593* will be published in the RMI 34 (1968) and *Gli antecedenti dell'invito fatto da Ferdinando I agli Ebrei di stabilirsi a Livorno* which will be printed by the "Centro di Studi Storici Livornesi". In the meantime, Milano, together with Umberto Nahon, is engaged in collecting photographs of places related to the Jewish community of Livorno for the iconographic column of the RMI.

Milano's correspondence continues uninterruptedly and among the many scholars who contact him on the Labronic topic we find Bruno Di Porto, Enrico Di Leone and Nedo Rossi. However, the work on the Jewish Nation of Livorno seems to proceed slowly. The anomalous two-month epistolary silence of our author, since October 1968, suggests a sudden health problem. In fact, correspondences restart only in December with a letter that Milano sends to his friend Colombo in which he explains that he is resuming work on his book after a massive heart attack followed by various relapses.¹⁴

Slowly back to his studies and research, Milano manages to publish a new article entitled *Uno sguardo sulle relazioni tra Livorno ebraica e i paesi della Berberia* in a miscellany of studies to celebrate Dario Disegni (1969) but this represents his last important work on the Jewish community of Livorno published in his lifetime. In his last letter dated 19 June 1969, the great scholar confides to his friend Colombo to feel an improvement of his health conditions which, however, still prevent him from resuming study and work.¹⁵ Attilio Milano died suddenly on 22 June 1969, too early to see his *La Nazione Ebraica di Livorno* published. He conceived his monograph as follows:

¹² Mr. Courdurié got in touch with A. Milano thanks to S. Schwarzfuchs and D. Carpi (XII-B 59-60 and XII 64-65).

¹³ XII-B 66.

¹⁴ The full text of letter XII-C 204 is reproduced at the end of this paper.

¹⁵ XII-D 47-48.

PREFACE

CHAPTER ONE: THE BACKGROUND

1. The origins; 2. The Jews of Italy at the end of the sixteenth century; 3. The Jews of Spain and Portugal; 4. The Marranos in Italy; 5. Ferdinand I and his invitations to the Jews; 6. The Livornina Constitution.

CHAPTER TWO: LIVORNO AND THE JEWS UNDER THE MEDICI GRAND DUKES OF TUSCANY

1. The first decades; 2. Progresses; 3. Full consolidation

CHAPTER THREE: THE DWELLING PLACE

1. Demographic development; 2. The center of residence; 3. Powers and constraints; 4. The cemeteries

CHAPTER FOUR: INTERNAL GOVERNMENT

1. Administrative bodies; 2. Internal regulations; 3. Special powers for administrators; 4. Some privileges of the community body; 5. Changes after the beginning of the nineteenth century; 5. Public finances

CHAPTER FIVE: USES, COSTUMES, CORRECTIVES

1. The sumptuary laws; 2. The clothes; 3. Wedding customs; 4. Death and funerary practices; 5. Game and fun; 6. Other.

Topics for other chapters: 1. prostitutes; 2. the printing house; 3. the local dialect; 4. the synagogal building; 5. The “Confraternita di meritar fanciulle”; 6. *Biqqur Cholim*; 7. Forced baptisms

CHARACTERS AND AUTHORS: 1. Mosè Montefiore; Elia Benamozegh; Azulai

APPENDIX I - The Livornina Constitution of 1593

The first two chapters of the unpublished manuscript can be considered completed; the third, instead, is incomplete, especially paragraph 1. Chapter four does not present paragraph 5 on public finances; paragraphs 4-5 of chapter five must be largely integrated, and paragraph 6 is totally absent. Among the various author’s notes stored in the folder we find some pages dedicated to specific topics conceived as paragraphs to be included in the chapter “External relations” or in the one entitled “Prayer, education and assistance centers” that the author had time to write only partially.

Among the chapters merely listed, we find the one on “Characters and Authors” which was to include the biographies of over twenty men of the Livorno Jewish community between the 1700s and 1800s; then a chapter on “Costumes and Episodes” in which Milano planned to include sections related to Sabbatianism, to the Bagitto dialect and some accounts related to the Jews who fled from Livorno to settle in Tunis and Tripoli. In the final epilogue Milano would have treated briefly the events that involved the Jewish community from 1859 to the Contemporary Era. The volume was to be accompanied by illustrations and photographs which fortunately we find well preserved in the aforementioned folder. Milano’s seriousness on researching historical evidence is confirmed by the vast archival investigation and by the conspicuous bibliography on the Labronic community.

As he did for his best-known works, Attilio Milano wanted to offer once again to the public unfamiliar with historical notions a complete work on Sephardic Jews who migrated from Spain and Portugal to settle in the city port of Livorno. The publication of his *La Nazione Ebraica di Livorno* serves first of all to underline Milano’s extraordinary talent for collecting documentary material scattered in archives throughout Italy and Europe; secondly, to make available to scholars what would have been the first history of the Jews of Livorno. Even the publication of the extensive correspondence is of great importance because it constitutes a valuable documentation of his biography: issues of identity – cultural, linguistic, national, religious – are central in his letters.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Attilio Milano’s death has already started with the recent reprint of his first book, *Storia degli ebrei italiani nel Levante*, which also represents the inaugural volume of the new editorial series “Scale Matte” born to make newly available fundamental texts related to Italian Jewry.¹⁶

¹⁶ A. MILANO, *Storia degli ebrei italiani nel Levante*, Il Prato, Padova 2019.

*Letter to Daniel Cohen, Director of the Jewish Historical General Archives, Jerusalem, of 2 June 1965 from the original in the Biblioteca Archivio "Renato Maestro", Venice.*¹⁷

Hod Hasharon,
2 giugno 1965

Egregio Sig. Direttore
Archivio Generale per la Storia Ebraica
Gerusalemme

Egregio Dott. Cohen,

Il grande interesse che ho sempre avuto per la storia degli ebrei a Livorno dal Seicento ad oggi, e la constatazione da me fatta redigendo la STORIA DEGLI EBREI IN ITALIA sulla scarsità di documentazione circa la loro vita sociale e commerciale dei tempi passati, mi hanno spinto ad approfondire le mie ricerche su questo argomento, allo scopo di trarne, eventualmente, uno studio completo sui fatti e le opere della comunità ebraica di Livorno.

L'esame che ho fatto delle riproduzioni fotografiche dei documenti esistenti presso codesto Archivio, ha allargato un po' le mie conoscenze in materia. Ma ancora resta molto e molto da ricercare.

Qualche mese fa ho visitato gli Archivi di Stato di Firenze. Ne ho ricevuta l'impressione che la maggior copia di documenti possa essere tratta da quello di Firenze (Archivio Mediceo del Principato-Carteggio Livorno) dove, fra le numerose relazioni del Governatore di Livorno a Firenze, si trovano abbondanti riferimenti alla attività degli ebrei livornesi. Data la ristrettezza del tempo che avevo a disposizione, non ho potuto appurare se nello stesso Archivio Mediceo sono comprese anche le carte del periodo lorenese e di quello borbonico, delle quali è indispensabile tener conto. Io spero che lo studio che ho in animo di proseguire possa essere di interesse per il vostro Archivio. Ma io personalmente non sono in grado di sobbarcarmi, né alla fatica di sfogliare tutte le filze dell'Archivio Mediceo-Livorno (e di quelle lorenese-borboniche), né all'onere di far eseguire la riproduzione fotografica che possono interessare.

Secondo quanto mi fu riferito, l'Archivio Mediceo contiene 220 filze, ognuna delle quali di 400 pagine circa. Da un breve esame che ne ho fatto, dal cinque al dieci per cento delle pagine comprende materiale sugli ebrei. Io considero che una persona capace possa sfogliare 4 o 5 filze al giorno, annotando quanto di utile vi rinviene. Si tratta quindi di un lavoro di spoglio di una cinquantina di giorni e di fotografia di 5-7 mila pagine. A questo va fatto seguire l'ingrandimento dei microfilm, salvo che le pagine non siano riprodotte addirittura in grandezza originale.

Io mi permetto rivolgermi alla vostra competenza e alla vostra cortesia, affinché vogliate facilitarvi un compito, che poi richiede, da parte mia, un lavoro imponente per essere condotto a termine.

Con i miei migliori omaggi

Avv. Attilio Milano

Hod Hasharon,
2 June 1965

The Director
Jewish Historical General Archives
Jerusalem

Dear Dr Cohen,

I have always had a keen interest in the history of Jews in Livorno from the seventeenth century to the present day. After I noticed the lack of documentation about their past social and commercial life while writing *The History of Jews in Italy*, I was prompted to further my research on the subject with the

¹⁷ Attilio Milano Archive, Binder 3, "Corrispondenza generale", Judaica 1965, b.4, fasc.18, ex XI-C 97-98.

aim of potentially developing a complete study of the events and deeds involving the Jewish community in Livorno.

The analysis I conducted using the photographic reproductions of documents held at the Archive broadened my knowledge of the matter to some extent. However, there is still a huge amount left to research.

I visited the State Archives in Florence a few months ago. I received the impression that most of the documents can be obtained from this city (at the Archivio Mediceo del Principato – Livorno Correspondence), as the many reports sent by the Governor of Livorno to Florence contain numerous references to the activities of Jews in Livorno. Given the lack of available time, I have not been able to ascertain whether the Archivio Mediceo also includes documents from the Lorraine and Bourbon periods, which must also be taken into account. I hope that the research I am intending to continue may be of interest to your Archive. However, I am personally unable to sustain the effort of examining all the files pertaining to Livorno in the Archivio Mediceo (and those related to the Lorraine and Bourbon periods) or shoulder the burden of producing the photographic reproductions that might be of interest.

According to what I have been informed, the Archivio Mediceo contains two hundred and twenty files, each of which has around four hundred pages. From a brief examination that I conducted, I would say that five to ten per cent of the pages feature material on Jews. I estimate that a competent person would be able to leaf through four or five files a day, noting down anything useful found there. This examination stage would take about fifty days, photographing between five and seven thousand pages. This would be followed by making enlargements of the microfilms, unless the pages are reproduced in their original size.

Allow me to appeal to your expertise and kindness in the hope that you will assist an undertaking which will require a significant amount of work on my part to achieve completion.

With my very best regards

Attilio Milano

Letter to Yoseph Colombo, Editor of «La Rassegna Mensile di Israel», of 8 December 1968 from the original in the Biblioteca Archivio “Renato Maestro”, Venice.¹⁸

Hod Hasharon,
8 dicembre 1968

Caro Yoseph,

Sono di nuovo al tavolo di studio, per qualche breve quarto d'ora. L'ho passata molto brutta, con un infarto cardiaco e una sequela di ricadute. Fra clinica e ospedale, ho passati più di due mesi. Ora mi sto riprendendo piano piano, ma mi debbo molte e prolungatissime attenzioni.

Penso alla serie iconografica. Oggi ti mando Manduria e Bologna, che avevo già mezze pronte. Poi vedrò di rabberciare Finale Emilia. Poi vedremo ancora, senza troppi programmi. Mi permetto di accluderti anche una lettera per il Prof. Tavani, di cui non ho l'indirizzo, con preghiera d'inoltrarla. Con affetto.

Hod Hasharon,
8 December 1968

Dear Yoseph,

I am back at my study table for short bursts of time. I have been through an extremely tough period with a heart attack and a series of relapses. I spent more than two months either in the clinic or the hospital. I am now slowly getting better, but I will have to take special care of myself for a very long time.

I am thinking about the iconographic series. I am sending you Manduria and Bologna today, as they were already nearing completion. Then I will piece together Finale Emilia. After that, we will see

¹⁸ Attilio Milano Archive, Binder 3, “Corrispondenza generale”, Judaica 1968, b.5, fasc.21, ex XII-C 204.

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what can be done, without too much planning ahead. I also enclose a letter for Prof. Tavani, whose address I do not have. I would be grateful if you could forward it to him.

Yours affectionately.

Francesca Valentina Diana
Università di Pisa
e-mail: francesca.diana@fileli.unipi.it

SUMMARY

The present paper illustrates the first results of a recent project aiming the description of the Attilio Milano fund preserved at the Biblioteca Archivio "Renato Maestro" (Venice). The large and complex investigation, which is here partially anticipated, involves also the selection of letters sent by our author to some of the greatest experts on Italian and International Jewish history who helped him write his uncompleted book *La Nazione Ebraica di Livorno*. I quickly retrace the genesis of his unpublished work by reading the most important letters on the Labronic topic. A draft of the volume index and a translation of two letters are included.

KEYWORDS: Attilio Milano; Biblioteca Archivio "Renato Maestro"; Jewish Nation of Livorno.

PART II

LITERATURE, THEATRE, LANGUAGES

