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The Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca, Unesco Heritage (Italy)

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Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca (Italy)

ABSTRACT

The ecclesiastical archives contain the millennial memory of our past. Unlike the Italian State Archives and the European National Archives, they are the only institutions that can boast a history coming back much long before the year 1000 a.D. The activity of researcher therefore must be made easier as much as possible. A heritage of enormous importance is located in Lucca. The Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca is one of the most important ecclesiastical archives in the world, with almost 1,500 linear meters of documentation and over 13,500 parchments. Its archival items cover around 15th centuries of history and the wealth of them is known worldwide to scholars and archival institutions. In 2011, the Early Middle Ages documents present in Lucca's Archive were included in the *Memory of the World Register* by UNESCO. This recognition places the Archive in front of two important challenges for the future: the correct preservation of such a precious asset and the correct management of the assets and spaces in which the scrolls are stored. The present paper presents the documentary and library collections of the Archive, briefly focusing on some peculiarities, and analyzing more concretely those aspects that affect the life of the archive itself, for instance its physical location, its historical importance and the role that it plays as a memory of society.

Keywords: Historical Diocesan Archive; UNESCO; Memory of the World; History of the Church; Lucca

Gli archivi ecclesiastici costituiscono la memoria millenaria del nostro passato. A differenza degli Archivi di Stato italiani e degli Archivi Nazionali europei, quelli della Chiesa sono gli unici archivi che possono vantare una storia che vada ben prima dell'anno Mille. La ricerca in questi istituti deve quindi essere agevolata il più possibile.

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Un patrimonio di enorme importanza si trova a Lucca: con oltre 1.500 metri lineari di documentazione e 13.500 pergamene, l'Archivio Storico Diocesano di Lucca è uno dei più importanti archivi ecclesiastici del mondo. Le sue unità archivistiche coprono circa quindici secoli di storia e la sua ricchezza è nota al mondo della ricerca e delle istituzioni archivistiche. Nel 2011, le pergamene altomedievali lucchesi sono state inserite nel *Memory of the World Register* dall'Unesco. Tale riconoscimento pone l'Archivio di fronte a due importanti sfide per il futuro: la corretta conservazione di un bene così prezioso e la corretta gestione dei beni e degli spazi in cui le carte sono collocate. Nel corso del contributo, quindi, saranno presentate le collezioni documentarie e librerie dell'Archivio, soffermandosi brevemente su alcune peculiarità, e si analizzeranno più concretamente quegli aspetti che influiscono sulla vita dell'archivio stesso, considerando anche la sua collocazione fisica, la sua importanza storica e il ruolo che esso ricopre quale memoria della civiltà.

Keywords: Archivio Storico Diocesano; UNESCO; Storia della Chiesa; Lucca

1. The importance of ecclesiastical Archives: internal organization and physical spaces

Nowadays, ecclesiastical archives are precious deposits available to historians, archivists, and scholars to explore either the general history of the Church or a specific context (e.g., a Diocese, a Parrish, a single place of worship). The systematic study of ecclesiastical archives allows to investigate uses, customs, and various aspects of our ancestors' daily life. The documentary testimonies produced by ecclesiastical institutions are not merely the results of an administrative and pastoral activity, but they constitute the memory of past communities (Turchini, 2011) that can be merged to other testimonies (e.g., archaeological, literary, or paleopathological ones) in order to draw a synoptic vision of historical events over time and space. Valorization and inventory activities focused on the archival heritage preserved in ecclesiastical archives must be promoted to increase their use, because this archives play a primary roll for study and research purposes (Romiti, 2010). It is also necessary to go back to the most important historical moments of the history of the ecclesiastical archives, connecting these aspects with the palaces and places where they are now preserved.

After the Council of Trent (1545-1563), Church began to pay a particular attention in compiling, preserving, and storing documentation. From there on it was established the obligation for the curates to compile and store records regarding baptisms, marriages, and deaths. The need for specific ecclesiastical laws about archives was evident. Bishops, in particular, became aware of it, discussing for a long time during diocesan synods the establishment of proper management and preservation rules. For example, Saint Carlo Borromeo (i.e., the Archbishop of Milan from 1566 to 1584) ordered the institution of ecclesiastical archives in those churches that had not one. Moreover, he was the first to give rules for the compilation of parish registers and property inventories, forcing parish priests to keep the original and to deliver a copy to the Diocese. Further, Borromeo listed the types of documentation to be preserved in the archives, also providing precise rules on storage (Boaga, Palese, & Zito, 2003). As a consequence, the benedictine monk Angelo Pietra published in Mantua a treatise on correct compilation and preservation of ecclesiastic documents (Pietra, 1586). The pamphlet *De Archivis* (Baldassare Bonifacio, 1632) and the treatise *De Archivis Antiquorum* (Barisoni, 1737) are two examples of the rich debate arose on this topic. During the 18th century, Pope Benedict XIII established that each diocese, each chapter within cathedral churches, and each chapter within collegiate churches must have an archive (see appendix XI in the Roman Council of 1725 and the apostolic constitution *Maxima Vigilantia* promulgated on 14th June 1727). The first legislation on ecclesiastical archives is due to the *Code of Canon Law* in 1917¹, and subsequent measures were adopted during the 20th century (Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, 1997)².

In Italy, local administrations and the peripheral offices of the State had an important role in the preservation and development of the ecclesiastical archives. This is particularly evident in Tuscany, where the local archival supervision agency (i.e., the Soprintendenza Archivistica e Bibliografica per la Toscana) has implemented a close

collaboration with the Episcopal Conference of Tuscany (De Gramatica, 1998). In recent years, a great attention has been given to parish archives and their preservation (Bonanno, 1997; Pedini, 1998).

Despite various definitions of “archive” describe it as a place where the scriptures are stored (Moroni, 1840), to date there are few official notes or norms produced by the Holy See or by the Episcopal Conference of Italy specifically focused on the organization of the physical space of ecclesiastical archives. For instance, the Vatican Ecclesiastical Archival Association published in 2002 a collection of rules borrowed from Italian legislation that in part refer to physical spaces (e.g., about the antirefire protocol; Zito, 2002). The physical place of the archive plays an essential role in the management of the archive itself. There are several factors that affect the correct functioning of this Institute. First of all, there are several issues related to the safety of the building (e.g., electrical, alarm, antirefire, and humidity systems). Second, issues concerning the physical storage of archival items (e.g., folders and boxes must be in non-acid and neutral-colored paper, shelvings and chests of drawers must be fireproof and resistant; Bertini, 2005). Other factors of extreme importance are the dislocation and placement of funds within the building and the repositories: as asserted by Francesco Bonaini, by entering the archive people should be able to undertake a walk through History and the life of its creator (Lamioni, 2014). Funds should be consequently arranged. During 18th-19th centuries, the Grand Dukes of Tuscany decided to rationalize the documents produced by the centuries-old Florentine magistrates. The headquarter of the Archive was established in the Uffizi Palace. Its monumental galleries were an ideal place because they seemed to perfectly fit with the arrangement of the archives realized by Francesco Bonaini, the General Manager of the new State Archive of the Grand Duchy (Lamioni, 2014). On this basis, the Lucchese archivist Salvatore Bongi arranged the State Archive of Lucca; he published the general inventory into four volumes (Bongi, 1872-1888). Cesare Guasti, the General Manager of the State Archive of Florence after Francesco Bonaini, stated that Bongi’s inventory was an illustrious example: it historically illustrated the elements of political, religious, and administrative life of Lucca, representing the city institutions from its origin (Lazzareschi, 1943). In fact, Bongi succeeded in synthesizing in an operative way what was theorized by Bonaini. The application of the historical method of reorganizing the archives operated by Bongi was based on the in-depth knowledge of the creator of the archive’s history. By studying the documentation of the various institutions of Lucca, the archivist was able to reconstruct the dense relations among the documents that grew during the activity of the creator. Subsequently, following the history of the institutions, Bongi organized the deposits of the State Archives of Lucca, reordering operations according to the historical method (Romiti, 2003).

Obviously, the setting up of repositories needs a careful consideration about the architectural possibilities of the building. If it is placed in a prestigious historical building, the repository have to be organized by rationalizing the available spaces, while trying to maintain a chronological succession as faithful as possible.

2. The Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca

Among the archives distinguishing in Italy and in Europe by their importance we have to mention the Vatican Secret Archives, the most significant ecclesiastical archive in the world. Looking at the outline of the history of the Church the second one is the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca where, in addition to the incredible documentary heritage there preserved, much more peculiarities must be identified. Considering the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca, its geographical location testifies its importance. Located inside the Archbishop's Palace just behind the Lucca Cathedral, the Archive is present in all levels of the building. The original wardrobes belonged to the Archives of the Beneficiati of the Lucca Cathedral (i.e., an ancient city institution dating back to the 11th century; Savigni, 2010) are placed along the corridors and in the halls of the various floors. There are also the original wardrobes coming from the parsonage of the Church of Saints Paolino e Donato, inside which the volumes and records of the same parish are stored. Moreover, wardrobes of the Ruspoli donation host the archives of the Deanery and the Seminary of San Michele in Foro, along with the archives of various brotherhoods (i.e., Suffrage, Holy Trinity, and Saint Mary of the Rose). **(Figures 1-2)**



Figure 1: Lucca, Archiepiscopal Palace

Source: Archdiocese of Lucca



Figure 2: Lucca, Archiepiscopal Palace: 1st floor

Source: Archdiocese of Lucca

The heart of the Historical Diocesan Archive is at the second floor. The study hall, which welcomes over 600 users every year, is housed in the ancient bishop's apartments. In fact, the archbishops of Lucca chose to leave the north side of the building during the 80s of the last century. Thus, it was decided to transfer there the historical documentation of the Archbishopric. The other places of storage of documents and volumes of the Historical Diocesan Archives are located around the study hall.

2.1. The diplomatic collection

One of the most important presences in the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca is the diplomatic collection, that refers to several archival fonds. More than 13,500 parchments are stored in special wooden cabinets. Specifically, 1,844 parchments date back to before Year 1000, and 158 refers to the Lombard period; the latter ones are of particular historical interest and value because they constitute over 50% of the still existing documents all over the world for the period prior to June 774 (i.e., the fall of Pavia and the end of Lombard Reign in Center and North of Italy). **(Figure 3).**



Figure 3: Diplomatic Collection

Source: A.S.D.Lu

Moreover, there are 311 documents belonging to 7th and 8th centuries, that are about 20% of the preserved documentary heritage of that time in the world, while the 800 scrolls from Lucca dating back to 9th century represent half of the Italian archival heritage of that period (Cappellini, Rossi, & Unfer Verre, 2012). The oldest document (i.e., year 685) is preserved in contemporary copy and is about the recognition of rights and duties to the Lucchese monastery of San Frediano in the person of the abbot Babbino made by the bishop Felice (before 685 - after 686; Supino Martini, 1988)³. The first original document (i.e., year 723) concerns the foundation of the monastery of Saint Peter in Castiglione di Garfagnana by the brothers Aurinand and Gudifrid, and the related privilege granted by the bishop Telesperiano (before 713 - after 729) for the election of the abbot directly by the congregation (Supino Martini, 1988)⁴. Both these places are still existing and easily identifiable. For instance, in Castiglione di Garfagnana (i.e., a village on the border between the provinces of Lucca and Modena), there is still the church dedicated to Saint Peter.

This documentation has been preserved thanks to both the absence of natural disasters and human destructions. The constant care paid by the archivists of Lucca has guaranteed the transmission of the parchments over the centuries, even after they had lost their legal validity, becoming the focus of research especially for the scholars of the 18th and 19th centuries. The exceptional nature of this documentary richness has been

recognized for centuries both in Italy and in Europe. For instance, the historian Ludovico Antonio Muratori said he had found a «vetustissima charta» (i.e., “a very old document”) of the years of Charlemagne «in archivio archiepiscopi Lucensi, hoc est amplissimum tabularium venerandae antiquitatis, cui parem in Italia difficile invenias» (i.e., “in the Archbishopric Archive of Lucca, that is a very large storage area of venerable antiquity, of which it is difficult to find an equal one in Italian peninsula”; Muratori, 1738). This heritage has therefore been used for important studies in the fields of history of law, language, economy, agriculture, religion, civic institutions, and social sciences, as well as for toponymy and palaeography research (Guidi, 1927). These documents are faithful witnesses of both people and society that produced them, as well as of no longer existing sacred places (e.g., churches, convents, and chaplaincies): for instance, the ancient church of San Giorgio di Feruniano near Camaiore (Rossi, 2017a), or the monastery of Santa Maria Ursimanni outside the walls of Lucca (Stoffella, 2007). The first attestation of the existence of the Archive itself is mentioned in a stored document: it is the testament of Bishop Peredeo (755-779), drawn on March 16th, 778, in which the prelate declares that one of the two originals must be preserved in the archives of the Bishopric (Nicolaj, 1990). Today, both originals produced by the notary are preserved in the Archive⁵.

The majority of the scrolls dating back to the early Middle Ages is now available in a complete edition thanks to the publication of the *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores. Facsimile-edition of the Latin Chartes*, an ambitious publishing project that has produced more than 100 volumes since 1954 (i.e., 11 for the 1st series exclusively dedicated to Lucca maps of the 7th-8th centuries and 16 to the 2nd series of Lucca's documents of the 9th century; Concioni, 2010; Magistrale, 2010). The editions in the five volumes of the series *Memorie e documenti per servire all'istoria del Ducato di Lucca* by the *Reale Accademia Lucchese di Scienze, Lettere e Arti* (i.e., “Memories and documents to serve the history of the Duchy of Lucca” by the Royal Lucchese Academy of Sciences, Literature and Arts) published during 19th century by Domenico Bertini and Domenico Barsocchini (Barsocchini, 1844-1851; Bertini, 1818-1846) are also worthy of note, along with the *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* (i.e., “Lombard Diplomatic Code”) by Luigi Schiaparelli (Schiaparelli, 1929-1933). Furthermore, three volumes with the transcriptions of 312 documents from the year 1018 to the year 1055 have been published over the years (Angelini, 1987, Ghilarducci, 1990, Ghilarducci 1995).

A special mention have to be paid to the diplomatic testimonies ascribable to Matilda of Tuscany. The Archive has 11 documents with Matilda's autographed and original signature. They have been several times loaned for international exhibitions and have proved to be precious study material for several diverse historical researches (Cappellini, 2016) in the fields of paleography and diplomatics (Goez & Goez, 1998; Santoro, 1953), archaeological localization (Romiti, 2016), and viability in the Middle Ages (Sabbatini, 2016). A considerable amount of information emerged from the systematic study of Matilda's documents; they were useful for the reconstruction of the history of Italian peninsula, and in particular of Lucca (e.g., the great donations made by Matilda to the city monasteries or to the Bishopric of Lucca; Savigni, 2016). **(Figure 4).**

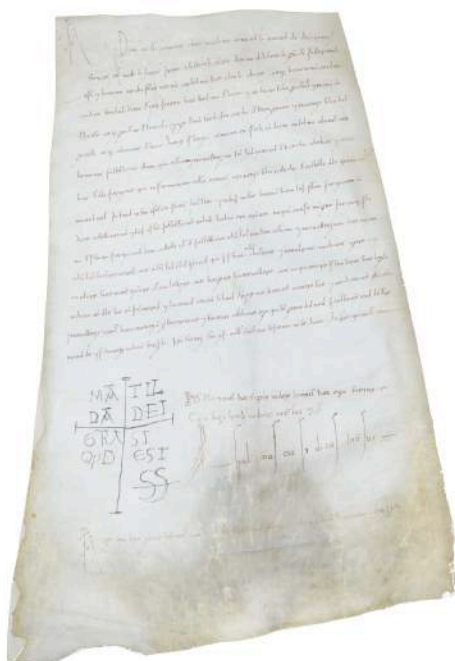


Figure 4: Placitum by Matilda of Tuscany

Source: A.S.D.Lu., A.A.Lu., Diplomatico, †† I 29: 1107 June, Prato

There are also several collections of membranous documents, like the Diplomatic Fund of the Archiepiscopal Archives (approximately 8,000 units), the Diplomatic Fund of the Chapter Archive (4020 units), or the Martini Collection (508 units). A number of parchments have to be mentioned, such as those from some parishes (about 250 units), from the Archive of the Beneficiati of the Cathedral of San Martino (549 units), and from the Deanery of San Michele in Foro (236 units), for a total of over 13,500 scrolls.

The high-medieval scrolls of the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca were included in the Unesco Memory of the World Register in 2011 (Cappellini, Rossi, & Unfer Verre, 2013). They added to the Library of Malatesta Novello (Cesena) and the codes from the Corviniana collection stored in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (Florence), the other two Italian collections included in the famous register before 2011. The scrolls of Lucca, therefore, were the first Italian ecclesiastical asset to be included in the register of the Memory of the World, which today has only eight items: the Codex purpureus Rossanensis stored in the the Diocesan Museum of Rossano (Cosenza), the Collection of the almanacs Barbanera in Spello (Perugia), the photographic archive of the LUCE National Institute (Rome), the documentation of the composer Antonio Carlos Gomes (in collaboration with Brazil), and the code of Frate Bernardino de Sahagún in the National Library of Florence (in collaboration with Mexico and Spain), in addition to the aforementioned ones⁶. On 12th October 2017, during the XIII LUBEC event named "Culture 4.0", the Managers of Italian heritage registered in the Unesco Memory of the World attended a round table session in order to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the UNESCO program⁷. The round table took place in the Royal College of Lucca (formerly a convent of the Congregation of Canons regular of the Laterans) and the "Lucca

Charter” was promulgated with the aims to preserve the documentary heritage and make it accessible. This document fits into the field of actions in line with the ONU objectives for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations, in the context of the 2030 Agenda which aims to protect and safeguard the documentary heritage of the world⁸.

2.2. The Archbishop Archive

In 1908, Paul Fridolin Kher wrote that «Lucani archiepiscopatus tabularium, adhuc locupletissimum et bene conservatum, inter Italiae archiva ecclesiastica et numero et antiquitate praeulget» (i.e., «The Archbishop Archive of Lucca is very rich and well preserved, and it shines among the other archive of the Church in Italy as for quantity and antiquity»; Kher, 1908). A few decades later, the prefect of the Vatican Secret Archives Monsignor Martino Giusti defined it as «one of the most ancient and important archives in Italy and in the world» (Giusti, 1973). In fact, the Archiepiscopal Archive of Lucca boasts a very ancient archival tradition (Osheim, 1973). Besides the aforementioned diplomatic fund, other very important funds are conserved, such as that of the Archiepiscopal Chancery, with over 4,500 volumes, began in 1256 with the series *Libri Antichi di Cancelleria* (i.e., “Old Books on Chancery”; Carratori, 1986), and the series of Pastoral visits.

Pastoral visits represents an important event for a parish or a village. In the past, when the bishops came to a community, a number of faithful were summoned in a *synodalia iudicia* and they swore to reveal all the crimes or sins of the members of the community of which they were aware. The bishop himself formulated the questions, and especially investigated about serious crimes or faults whose repression or acquittal directly competed to the bishop. In case of confession, a sentence was imposed. This synodal procedure was very useful in the work of parochial control exercised by the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and during time it was perfected to allow the bishop to act *ex officio*, without having to depend on the accusations of *testes*, in cases of manifest or known crime, on the basis of a simple public or private denunciation. The bishop then delegated to the Procurator Fiscal to prosecute the crimes that occurred within the Diocese. The practice of the pastoral visit was common in the early period of Christianity, after that it gradually fell into disuse until the Council of Trent officially highlighted its importance and reinstated the obligation (Prosperi, 2001). The pastoral visit must be personally conducted by the bishop as one of the founding moments of his episcopal ministry; in addition to the control of the clergy, the visit allows to ascertain the possible degradation of a place, both on a spiritual and on an architectural-patrimonial level. In particular, the bishop assisted by the chancellor and the vicar can inspect buildings intended for worship, realizing an accurate description. In the Archive of Lucca there are over 300 records of pastoral visits, starting from the acts of Berengario II (1354) up to the most recent visits by Monsignor Bruno Tommasi (1993). They constitute an indispensable source of knowledge of the material state of buildings of worship, of the religiosity of certain places, of the discipline of the clergy and of the presence or absence of certain companies and brotherhood. It is also

possible to verify the presence of a church in a given territory and to learn interesting statistical and social information about a community (Sodini, 2010).

The volumes also includes all documentation concerning marriage records, ordinations, assignment of priests and official deeds of the Diocesan Curia (collected in the series of *Collations*). The Archiepiscopal Secretariat, on the other hand, includes the series of the *Protocol*, of the *Episcopal Acts and Decrees*, of the *Pastoral Letters*, and of the *Pontifical Rescripts*. The analogous series are also traceable in the fund of the General Vicariate, for a total of over 600 archival items, starting from the 15th century. The fund of the Ecclesiastical Court is also extremely important; it is divided into two sections (i.e., civil and criminal) for a total of 5,000 volumes starting from 1340 (Geltner, 2010, Meek, 2010). The criminal section of the Court represents the only evidence of ecclesiastical justice in Lucca, and it is still completely to be studied. The Republic of Lucca, in fact, was formally in a neutral position; nevertheless, it strongly contrasted the entry in the city of the Society of Jesus and the establishment of a tribunal of the Sacred Inquisition. On the contrary, the Republic created a special judiciary to fight and prosecute crimes against the faith: the so called *Offizio Sopra la Religione* (i.e., “Office about Religion”; Berengo, 1962). The Pope, however, assured the *pro tempore* bishop of Lucca the task and powers in inquisitorial matters. The *Processes for the causes of beatification* are also part of this office. Although the martyrologists include numerous saints from Lucca, the series of the causes of beatification begins only in 1719 with the documentation of Maria Caterina Brondi, a virgin from Sarzana (Molina Egea, 2016). Further, there is the fund of the Archbishop’s Mensa, the office delegated to control all the bishop’s property with over 1,550 items starting from 1257, and the fund of the Bursar’s Office that was constituted for the proper administration of the parishes with 400 volumes starting from 1412.

Finally, the fund of the Administration of Suppressed Religious Institutes is worthy of note. It is divided into three large series: the *Demanio* of Principality of Lucca and Piombino (i.e., 700 volumes, from 1804 to 1814), the *Ecclesiastical Commission* of the Duchy of Lucca (i.e., 500 volumes, from 1817 to 1835) and the series of *Suppressed Religious Institutes* (i.e., 3,600 volumes, from the 13th century to 1808). **(Figure 5)**

This is an anomalous case in the history of ecclesiastical archives. The fund originates from the Napoleonic suppressions that took place in Lucca from 1808. The material, originally intended for the State Archives, was first deposited in the Dominican church of San Romano pertaining to the Principality and then, following various political-institutional events, it was returned to the Archbishopric by the will of Maria Luisa Bourbon, the Duchess of Lucca (Bongi, 1880). It is the largest collection of original volumes from all the churches, brotherhoods, convents and monasteries present in the territory of the Lucchese Principality and suppressed between 1808 and 1812. Registers of contracts, lenders, book of financial statements, wills, and “terrilogi” are preserved there. **(Figure 6)**

These volumes, which in Italy and in other countries are called “cabrei” or “platee”, were commissioned by noble families, ecclesiastical institutions, or public agencies such as the Municipalities. The great registers of the terrilogi differ from the state cadasters for their commission that has always been of private nature and which also includes the ecclesiastical institutions. They were realized by experts (e.g. quantity or land surveyors) with the task of accurately detecting the boundaries and the extension

of each property. The importance of this documentary typology is also evidenced by the presence of numerous treatises on the correct compilation of these registers, including the volume on the cadastre by Francesco Antonio Filonzi, in which there is a part dedicated to best practices for the realization of a *cabreo* (Filonzi, 1775). Lucca played a major role in the realization of these volumes. The iconography of Tuscan patrimonial books, with axonometric or bird's-eye plan representation of real estate properties, is attributable to the experience of Lucca in compiling its own martilogi and terrilogi. More than 700 volumes of terrilogi can be found in the repositories of the Historical Diocesan Archive, most of which are watercolored and decorated, with the reconstruction of numerous in scale buildings (Rossi, 2015b). Between 2013 and 2014, during the 500th anniversary of the construction of the Renaissance walls of Lucca, the Historical Diocesan Archive organized an exhibition at the State Library in order to reconstruct the iconography of the city through the terrilogi of churches and monasteries located inside the walls between the 15th and the 18th century (Cappellini, Rossi, & Unfer Verre, 2015). **(Figure 7)**



Figure 5: Registers of contracts, lenders, book of financial statements

Source: A.S.D.Lu. A.A.Lu., Enti Religiosi Soppressi



Figure 6: Terrilogio of Chapter of Lucca Cathedral

Source: A.S.D.Lu. A.A.Lu., Enti Religiosi Soppressi, 3032, c. 3r



Figure 7: Terrilogo of Monastery of San Ponziano (1564-1573)

Source: A.S.D.Lu. A.A.Lu., *Enti Religiosi Soppressi*, 2, c. VIr

2.3. The Chapter Archive

The Archive of the Canons of the Cathedral of Lucca is stored in eight large wardrobes specifically built for the documentation produced by the Chapter of San Martino; they were transported from the Cathedral of Lucca Sacristy to the Archbishopric in the early decades of the 20th century. The Archive presents more than 2,000 records of acts starting in 1220 with the “imbreviature” of Lucca's notaries who worked for the Chapter, along with 4,020 scrolls produced from the year 774 to the year 1494 (Guidi & Parenti, 1910-1939). They constitute a fundamental source for the reconstruction of social and economic history and for the study of the topography of a medieval city (Meyer, 2010). The most ancient volumes (i.e., also called *Liber rogitorum*) contain credit operations, purchase and sale contracts, wills, *sponsali*, donations, lease contracts and land level, judgments concerning civil and criminal proceedings, etc. (Meyer, 2005). The extent to which Lucca spread beyond the confines of its own state can be understood through the reading of these registers: the people of Lucca were bankers and merchants in various parts of Europe, such as Arezzo, Bologna, Bordeaux, Bruges, Dublin, London, Montpellier, Paris, and Perugia (Galoppini, 2011, Meyer, 2000). The history of the “Jura” (i.e., the set of properties that the Chapter possessed in the various territories of the diocese, and in particular in Massarosa) can be understood from the many volumes produced for the management and administration of the property of the Canons. The donation of the monarchs Hugh of Italy and Lothair II to the Chapter of the Lucca Cathedral dates back to the 10th century. The donation concerned the *curtis* of “Massagrausi”, a huge *villa* located in the “Plebes de Irice” in Versilia: land that went from the hills of Val Freddana to the sea (Dinelli, 1955). Hugh of Italy and his son Lothair II, by donating this *villa* «pro remedio animae» of Bertha of

Lotharingia and Adalbert II, Margrave of Tuscany, gave life to the greatest property owned by a group of ecclesiastics (Moneta, 2013). (Figure 8)

The documentation relating to the Company of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Face, or simply the Holy Face of Lucca (Rossi, 2017b), along with the documentations of the musical paleographer Raffaello Baralli and of the bibliophile Giuseppe Martini are aggregated to the Chapter Archive. The legacy of the priest Raffaello Baralli has 325 archival items, divided among books, manuscripts, photographs and other archival material. The entire library and archival documentation focuses his studies on musical paleography. In particular, the knowledge and diffusion of Gregorian chant in Lucca are due to his studies (Simonetti, 1963). Also the unpublished critical edition of the *Ordo Officiorum Ecclesiae S. Martini Lucensis* is present here (the original is preserved in the cod. 608 of the Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana)⁹. The fund donated by the antique dealer Giuseppe Martini is much more significant. Martini's donation to the Chapter of the Cathedral of San Martino takes place in 1944 and was about volumes that he owned in his house in Borgo a Mozzano and which were printed in Lucca, or relating to Lucca's history. His donation includes a collection of over 500 scrolls dated from 726 to 1793, and 20 boxes with 12 registers and 350 manuscripted or printed volumes (Barbieri, 2017, Martini, Rossi, & Unfer Verre, 2017). Documents go through a millennium of history and represent a peculiarity in the membranous collections of the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca, specifically due to the precious and well preserved seals that are still attached to the documents (Rossi, 2016; Unfer Verre, 2017).



Figure 8: Diploma for Earl of Hergies

Source: A.S.D.Lu., A.C.Lu., Collezione Martini, Diplomatico, 1358 March 25

2.4. Archives of parishes and religious brotherhoods

In the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca there are also many archives belonging to churches of Lucca and its diocese, as well as to Catholic lay associations that are now extinct or that have been suppressed in the past. There are also the archives of those personalities who have chosen the Diocesan Archives as a natural place for the conservation of their memoirs, along with the archives of the bishops of Lucca (e.g., Archives of the Cardinal Carlo Chiarlo has been added in 2017). Today, the deposited archival funds are about eighty. Among those of suppressed brotherhoods, there are the volumes belonged to the Lucchese Company of Mercy and Redemption that dealt with the redemption of slaves made by the Barbary pirates in the years of the Mediterranean wars (Lenci 1987, 2017), or the documents of the Lucchese Company of the Holy Trinity built by some devotees in 1562, with the task of welcoming pilgrims and assisting convalescents from the hospital of Saint Luca in Lucca for a maximum of three days (Barsotti, 1923).

Over time the archives of the following city churches have been collected: Santi Giovanni e Reparata, Santi Paolino e Donato, Sant’Alessandro Maggiore, Santa Maria Forisportam, San Leonardo in Borghi, San Martino, San Michele in Foro, San Pietro Somaldi. Moreover, there are the archives of the parishes of Lucca that were suppressed or closed to the cult during 19th and 20th centuries: Santi Anastasio e Vincenzo, Sant’Andrea, San Cristoforo, Crocifisso dei Bianchi, San Girolamo, Santa Giulia, San Giusto, Santi Simone e Giuda, etc. On the contrary, there are few archives of churches from the various communities of the rest of the Archdiocese: Boveglio, Dezza, Gugliano, Massa Pisana, Pontito, San Michele in Escheto, Torcigliano di Monsagrati, Tramonte, and Vitiana. This is partly due to problems of room within the Archives and partly to the decision of the Archdiocese to leave the parish archives in the churches where they were formed, if properly administered by the parish priests. This decision was allowed to guarantee the principle of unitariness of the archives with its own settling territory. In this case the Archdiocese has complied with the provisions of the Congregation for Bishops and the Italian Episcopal Conference (Rossi, 2015a).

During the reorganization of the Italian dioceses (implemented in September 1986) no explicit indications were given on the matter. Bishops have consequently had the possibility either to concentrate or to maintain *in loco* the archives, according to the circumstances of the different places. Moreover, the Code of Canon Law does not directly intervene on this aspect, giving the bishops the task of custody for parish archives. Paragraph 5 of canon 535 states: «libri paroeciales antiquiores quoque diligenter custodiantur, secundum praescripta iuris particularis» (i.e., «older parochial registers are also to be carefully protected according to the prescripts of particular law»). According to Monsignor Agostino Lauro, this indication suggests a multiplicity of possible solutions; nevertheless, it seems primarily convenient and opportune that ancient parish registers should remain on site, otherwise they can be transferred to the historical diocesan archive (Lauro, 1985-1986). This indication was sufficient to justify the action of some bishops who issued a special decree for the concentration of various

complex documentaries in the local historical diocesan archive. The Archdiocese of Lucca, for instance, adopted this decision by means of a special decree issued by Archbishop Giuliano Agresti in 1974: «all the documents kept in the archives of the parishes in which the parish priest is not permanently resident, and for whom it is expected that his absence will last for a long time, will be moved to our Archiepiscopal Archive where they will be placed in a new section called “Parish Archives” and where they will be stored as homogeneous and distinct funds, available and owned by the parish from which they come» (Agresti, 1974, translated by the Author)

To date, the Archive of Lucca have collected almost 10,000 archival items from the year 1202. The parish archives, with the books of the sacraments, represent the only available resource in relation to the population (including data regarding births and deaths). The registers containing the meetings of the brotherhoods, of the chapters of the collegiate churches, and of the ecclesiastical works, are indispensable tools for the reconstruction of the social life of the Early Modern Period. Similarly, the ancient *terrilogi* and the yields of parish benefits and chaplaincies are the only data that can be used to know the distribution of properties and lands, as well as the unique elements to verify the patrimonial status of families and churches.

2.5. Book collections

Prior to conclude, a special attention have to be paid to book collections stored in the Archbishopric and directly under the control of the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca. The most important of these is the Chapter Library, called “Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana”. Founded by the Lombard bishop Jacopo (801-818), the Library derives its name from the bishop Felino Sandei (1499-1503), who donated his collection of 450 volumes, manuscripts, and incunabula, despite the quarrels he repeatedly had with the Chapter of the Lucca Cathedral (Ghilarducci, 1969). Felino was a lawyer and auditor of the Roman Rota, the referendary of the two sections of Apostolic Signatura, vice Auditor-General of the Apostolic Camera. His collection grew significantly and he often bound together manuscript codices and incunabula, in order to realize an unique work, most often commissioned to copyists (Montorzi, 1984). Sandei also commissioned the printing of some works: an example is represented by the *editio princeps* of the *Consilia* by Francesco Zabarella (1360-1417), edited by himself. In the Chapter Library there are both the manuscript with annotations by Felino, which later became the text used by the typographer for the composition of the work, and the copy probably pressed in Pescia (Murano & Barbieri, 2017). **(Figure 9)**

Considering the original nucleus of the Chapter Library, it includes manuscripts of exceptional beauty and extraordinary value: noteworthy, the code 490, a miscellaneous manuscript whose formation can be traced back between the late 8th century and the first decades of the 9th century (Schiaparelli, 1924). The complex physical structure of the manuscript and the articulated distribution of texts, as well as the nature of miniatures, makes very difficult the task of reconstructing its origins. Many experts and scholars have studied this code that contains, among other works, the procedure for the production of parchment (Unfer Verre, 2013). Other noteworthy

examples are incunabula and manuscripted volumes extraordinarily and richly decorated with full-page miniatures, such as the code 124 containing the *Decretum* by Burchard of Worms (950-1025). This precious manuscript dating back to the second half of the 11th century shows and contains, within the guards, a list of the first 15 bishops of Lucca and other significant news. On page 4v, there is a full-page miniature depicting the First Council of Nicaea, at the center of which there are three characters representing the Holy Trinity, alluding to the condemnation of Arian controversy (Pomaro, 2015). **(Figure 10)**

There are also codes showing refined coats of arms and initials: for instance, the manuscript 449 with the coat of arms of the Bishop Felino Sandei (i.e., silver with blue red tongued lion) **(Figure 11)** and the splendid Bolognese-matrix miniature to page 1r of code 427: the author Antonio Mincucci (1380-1464) offers his collection of laws to the two dedicatees of the work: the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III of Habsburg (1415-1493) and the cardinal Bessarione (1403-1472).

The miniature is completed by the coats of arms of the three characters (Pomaro, 2015). **(Figure 12)**

The Archiepiscopal Library, composed of about 2,000 volumes, is located in front of the refined "little study" of the archbishop, now used as the director's office. Decorated with grotesques in late Renaissance style, it was commissioned by one of the three bishops coming from House of Guidiccioni (i.e., Bartolomeo, Alessandro I, and Alessandro II) who ruled the Diocese from 1546 to 1637 **(Figures 13-14)**.

The largest part of the books are in print, but there are also 100 incunabula and manuscripts. The genesis of this collection is due to the personal legacies of the bishops of Lucca. The library was used by the bishops themselves to administrate the Church in Lucca (Ghilarducci, 1969). There are numerous books included in the *Index librorum prohibitorum* prepared by the congregation of the same name: for instance, there is a valuable example of the *Institutio christianae religionis* (i.e., *Institutes of the Christian Religion*) by John Calvin, printed in Geneva in 1596 with the bookbinding in marbled leather. Over time, the personal library of monsignor Orsetti was added, with about 1,000 volumes from the 16th to the 20th century. Finally, there are preserved the *Chorales* of the Cathedral, that are great musical texts produced and decorated with splendid miniatures between the 14th and 19th centuries, along with over 300 printed liturgical books (14th-20th centuries) taken from the parishes of the Diocese, now in disuse following of the liturgical reform carried out by the Second Vatican Council.



Figure 9: Chapter Library

Source: A.S.D.Lu.



Figure 10: BURCARDUS WORMATENSIS, Decretum

Source: A.S.D.Lu., B.C.F., 124, f. 4v



Figure 11: Coat of arms of Felino Sandei
Source: A.S.D.Lu., B.C.F., 449, f. 1r



Figure 12: ANTONIUS MINUCCIUS DE PRATO VETERI, De Feudis
Source: A.S.D.Lu., B.C.F., 427, f. 1r



Figure 13: Archiepiscopal Library

Source: A.S.D.Lu.



Figure 14: Archbishop's Study

Source: A.S.D.Lu.

Conclusions

The precious documentary heritage stored in the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca represents only a part of the historical memory of the Archdiocese. Looking to the parishes in the territory (about 360) more than 90% of the archives are still there. The problem rising is the location where the documentation is to be physically deposited.

The concentration into only one archive has been wanted as a remedy more and more times by scholars and clerics. On the 3rd Italian National Archival Congress Franco Bartoloni expressed the hope that also the archives of parishes, of seminaries, of chaplains and religious brotherhoods suppressed, could find all of them place within the diocesan archives (Bartoloni, 1951). In 1957 Pope John XXIII firstly and in 1958 cardinal John Baptiste Montini, the future Pope Paul VI thought the same solutions as the only possible one (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1957; Montini 1981-1982). According to Arnaldo D'Addario, the concentration should be taken only in cases of extreme difficulty in the management of documents (D'Addario, 1987-1988). Adolfo Longhitano pointed out the numerous complications rising for preserving and utilizing the peripheral ecclesiastical archives because of the lack of qualified clerks, difficult to be found but in central institutions. If a Christian community can not guarantee conservation and consultation of archives it is necessary they are transferred to more suitable locations (Longhitano, 1987-1988).

From a comparison between the data available in the Guide of the diocesan archives of Italy (Monachino et alii, 1990-1998) and the information available online on database of the Cultural Ecclesiastical Institutes (i.e., A.I.C.E. "Anagrafe degli Istituti Culturali Ecclesiastici) it can be see that there are numerous diocesan archives currently retaining records from parishes and other institutions. The Historical Diocesan Archive in Rome, for example, following a precise regulation, takes all the archives coming from the parishes of the Rome Vicariate, becoming in effect an institute of concentration. The same is in progress in more diocese of Southern Italy, especially in Trani-Barletta, Bari, Naples and Reggio Calabria-Bova. Northern Italy goes to an opposite way. For example, the Diocese of Bergamo about the parishes' archives in its territory has established the are law entities, creating an archival network involving all these institutions.

Most institutions are located in historic buildings. Milan, on the other hand, has a new headquarters for the Diocesan Archive, where it was also possible to arrange documentation in the repositories in a more correct manner. In any case, the problem of the physical disposition of the documentation joins and also affects the archive inventory activities. BeWeb, the new portal of the Italian Episcopal Conference for the ecclesiastical cultural heritage, allows to browse through the funds of the various archives that have transferred their inventories into the database; there is also the obligation to insert an explanatory photo of the fund, which also takes into page the physical arrangement of the archive itself¹⁰.

These few examples are enough to put in evidence why Church gives so growing importance to the archives as producers of cultural progress maintaining the memory

and promoting historical researches. The digital age has brought various changes in organizing archival activity so that to promote the interpretation of cultural heritage as a way to knowledge in humanities, favouring the attention and the utilization of this means in collaboration with public institutes and research center. The example of the Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca can be a model for numerous ecclesiastical archives that still require the reordering and inventorying of archival material, with a view for opening up to the world of academic and local research.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.A.Lu. = Archiepiscopal Archive of Lucca

A.C.Lu. = Chapter Archive of Lucca

A.S.D.Lu. = Historical Diocesan Archive of Lucca

¹*Code of Canon Law*, Can. 535: «§1. Each parish is to have parochial registers, that is, those of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and others as prescribed by the conference of bishops or the diocesan bishop. The pastor is to see to it that these registers are accurately inscribed and carefully preserved. §2. In the baptismal register are also to be noted confirmation and those things which pertain to the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1133, of adoption, of the reception of sacred orders, of perpetual profession made in a religious institute, and of change of rite. These notations are always to be noted on a baptismal certificate. §3. Each parish is to have its own seal. Documents regarding the canonical status of the Christian faithful and all acts which can have juridic importance are to be signed by the pastor or his delegate and sealed with the parochial seal. §4. In each parish there is to be a storage area, or archive, in which the parochial registers are protected along with letters of bishops and other documents which are to be preserved for reason of necessity or advantage. The pastor is to take care that all of these things, which are to be inspected by the diocesan bishop or his delegate at the time of visitation or at some other opportune time, do not come into the hands of outsiders. §5. Older parochial registers are also to be carefully protected according to the prescripts of particular law».

²During this last century the Papal Magisterium has issued significant documents on Church archives: the Circular Letter of the Secretary of State to Italian Bishops (September 30, 1902); the Letter of the Secretary of State to Italian Bishops (December 12, 1907); the Circular Letter of the Secretary of State (April 15, 1923); the establishment of a course in Archive Science at the Pontifical School of Paleography (November 6, 1923); Pius XI, Address to the Schools of Archive and Library Science (June 15, 1942); the Circular Letter of the Librarian and Archivist of the Holy Roman Church (November 1, 1942); the Instructions issued by the Librarian and Archivist of the Holy Roman Church (November 1942); Letter of the Congregation of the Council (December 30, 1952); Pius XII Address to 1st Congress of the Association of Church Archives (December 5, 1956); Instructions for archive administration issued by the Pontifical Commission for Church Archives of Italy (December 5, 1960); the Letter issued by the Congregation for Seminaries and Universities (May 27, 1963); Apostolic Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (December 7, 1965) nn. 56-62.

³A.S.D.Lu., A.A.Lu., *Diplomatico*, * O 27: 685 January 20.

⁴A.S.D.Lu., A.A.Lu., *Diplomatico*, † M 61: 723 January.

⁵A.S.D.Lu., A.A.Lu., *Diplomatico*, † G 51 e †† O 60: 778 March 16: «actum in domo Sanctae Lucensis ecclesiae, de quas una esse decrevimus in arcivo huius sanctae ecclesiae, alia vero dedimus suprascriptae ecclesiae Sancti Fridiani in Valeriana» (Written in the bishop's palace of Lucca, we have established that an original copy is to be preserved in this archive, the other original one is to give to the above-mentioned church of San Frediano in Valleriana).

⁶<<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-region-and-country/it/>> (last visit: February 2018).

⁷<<https://www.lubec.it/lubec-2017/incontri-givoedi-12-10-2017.html>> (last visit: February 2018).

⁸<<http://www.clubunescolucca.it/2017/10/14/1373/>> (last visit: February 2018).

⁹<<http://siosa.archivi.beniculturali.it/cgi-bin/pagina.pl?TipoPag=comparc&Chiave=416601>> (last visit: February 2018).

¹⁰<<http://beweb.chiesacattolica.it>> (last visit: February 2018).