



Research - Education – Preservation

Newsletter no: 26 Winter 2024 - 25

Welcome to our latest newsletter where we reflect on our upcoming campaign to find a secure and accessible home to the Levantine library whose core was provided by the late Jacques Caporal. If you would like to know more, assist us financially or through depositions to build this resource of over 1,600 volumes, please get in touch. More details below.

Our activities

Upcoming LHF Events

12 February 2025, 6 pm

In-person presentation: 'The "Second Phanar": Constantinople Greeks and Ottoman Sultans, 1821 to 1914', Philip Mansel, co-hosted with the Centre for Hellenic Studies and the Anglo-Hellenic League – venue: King's Great Hall, KCL Strand campus, London – [flyer](#): - [registration](#):

11 March 2025, 6 pm (UK time)

Online presentation: 'Revisiting George Bethune English in the Ottoman World', Eric Covey – [flyer](#): - [registration](#):

18 March 2025, 6 pm (UK time)

Hybrid presentation: 'Thomas Burgon in Smyrna: A Merchant's Tale of Travel and Classical Collecting in the Early Nineteenth Century', Dr Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis, co-hosted with the Anglo-Turkish Society – venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, London – [flyer](#): - [registration](#):

1 April 2025, 6 pm (UK time)

Online presentation: '"A Permanent Danger to All Her Neighbours": Persia and the Cultural Politics of Cholera', Erik Blackthorne-O'Barr – [flyer](#): - [registration](#):

15 April 2025, 6 pm (UK time)

Online presentation: 'Pera/Galata: Neighbourhoods and Churches of late medieval Genoese city', Selma Somer – details coming up

22 April 2025, 6 pm

Online presentation: 'Émigré Artists from the Former Russian Empire in Istanbul: Myths and Realities', Ekaterina Aygün, co-hosted with the Anglo-Turkish Society – [flyer](#): - [registration](#):

24 April 2025, 6.30 pm

Hybrid presentation: 'Silent Teachers: Turkish Books and Oriental Learning in Early Modern Europe', Dr Nil Palabiyik, co-hosted with the Royal Asiatic Society – [flyer](#): - [registration](#):

Current research

If you are seeking help with research, please write to Craig Encer who will endeavour to point you to sources of material or connect you with people in the LHF network who may be able to help. Additionally, we can post requests for assistance in our newsletter.

Request for information by Ann Hudson on Samuel Crawley, British Consul at Smyrna 1742-62.

Having written the article on my ancestor Samuel Crawley for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/109573>), I am now working on a more detailed biography, particularly featuring his time in Smyrna and his family. He married Marie Dunant, from Constantinople, who after his death married the Dutch Consul, Daniel Jean, Comte de Hochepeid. Several of the children of both marriages intermarried with other prominent Smyrna families. I have information from the Levant Company archives in the National Archives, from the Dutch State Archives, and from many other printed and manuscript sources including the documents on the Levantine Heritage website, and I have visited the old Dutch graveyard in Izmir. But there is always more to find out, and I would be interested to make contact and share information with anyone who is working in this area. Please contact me at annhudson84@gmail.com.

Request for information by John Birchenough on the involvement of the Peacock family with the Smyrna Cassaba Railway

Recently I discovered an unexpected family connection between my great great grandfather Richard Peacock, MP and locomotive manufacturer and the city of Smyrna. Following the chance find of a reference to a 'half cousin' living in Smyrna in the 1928 will of Richard's eldest son, I cross-checked this with a family bible and other sources including the Levantine Foundation website. The picture evolved of an extended family with interests that stretched from the early years of railway construction in Leeds to locomotive manufacturing in Manchester and the Smyrna to Cassaba Railway. If anyone else has additional information to add on the involvement of the Peacock family with the Smyrna Cassaba Railway I would be interested in hearing from them. The attached is a [presentation](#) which I prepared of my own research. Yours sincerely, John Birchenough; [Birchenough@rocketmail.com](mailto:birchenough@rocketmail.com)

Request for information by Dr Sumner Braund on the provenance of astrolabes via two Parisian antiques dealerships, owned and operated by Ottoman emigrants

I am the Curator of Founding Collections at the History of Science Museum in Oxford. I have been working to reconstruct the full provenance history of the Lewis Evans Collection of scientific instruments, donated to the university in 1924. This has proven a fascinating, winding endeavour and I am writing to ask for your help and insights in regards to two dealers from whom Lewis Evans purchased five astrolabes.


The History of Science Museum at the University of Oxford holds a globally significant collection of medieval and early modern astrolabes and celestial globes. These exquisite astronomical instruments are a testament to the historic interconnectedness of science, art, and belief across cultures.

A significant number of these instruments were collected in the late 19th and early 20th century by an English businessman and independent scholar, Lewis Evans. He purchased medieval and early modern astrolabes and celestial globes from art and antiques dealers based in the prominent cities of Europe. He was a lifelong collector and acquired the majority of his collection in London and Paris.

Two Parisian antiques dealerships, owned and operated by Ottoman emigrants, are the focus of my current research, that of the Akchoté brothers and that of Vitali Franses. Between 1911 and 1913, the Akchoté brothers and Vitali Franses sold a total of five astrolabes to Lewis Evans. Astrolabes and celestial globes, of any origin, were rare and sought-after antiques (albeit by a select group of collectors) at the turn of the century. By this time, the Akchoté brothers and Vitali Franses had established successful dealerships in fashionable districts of Paris and, in the case of Franses, a second dealership in Algiers.

Solomon Akchoté, along with two of his brothers (Jacob and Isaac), and Vitali Franses successfully applied to become naturalised French citizens after the first World War. Their naturalisation case papers, held in the Archives Nationales in Paris, reveal that they were Ottoman Jews, born in Constantinople. These case papers have provided a valuable insight into certain aspects of their lives, including for example their wives' place of birth and the place and date of their marriages. It is clear from these details that the Akchoté brothers and Vitali Franses maintained strong ties to Constantinople after emigrating to Paris: their parents remained in Constantinople and they all, with the exception of Solomon, returned to the city to marry.

I am interested in further reconstructing the transnational familial, social and business networks of which these antiques dealers were a part. The case papers in the Archives Nationales and Parisian census data have provided wonderful insights, and I would be grateful to anyone who is able to point me in the direction of other archives or resources. I may be contacted by email at sumner.braund@hsm.ox.ac.uk

	<p>This astrolabe was purchased by Lewis Evans from the Akchoté brothers, 214 rue de Rivoli, Paris, c. 1913 CE</p> <p>Astrolabe, made by Mahdi al-Yazdi, Persia, 1650s CE Brass HSM Inv. 50143</p>
	<p>This astrolabe was purchased by Lewis Evans from Vitali Franses, 12, rue Bab-Azoun., Algiers,</p>



in 1911 CE.

Astrolabe, made by Diya ad-din Muhammad,
Lahore, 1658/9 CE

Brass

[HSM Inv. 53637](#)

Recent Events

29th October 2024, 6 pm (UK time)

Online presentation: 'Layered Levantine Identities: The Glavany Family's Networks and Built Legacy in the Ottoman Empire and Beyond', Efe Erünal & Alexandra Koumpouli - [flyer:](#) - [external review:](#) - [video:](#)

27th November 2024, 4.30 - 8 pm

Hybrid Symposium: 'Trieste and the Levant', Katia Pizzi, Richard Bassett, Philip Mansel, Michael Cottakis - Woburn Suite, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU - [information:](#) - [video:](#) - [alternative video:](#)



From left: [Katia Pizzi](#), [Michael Cottakis](#), [Philip Mansel](#), [Richard Bassett](#)

Recent Website additions

Submission:

From Swaledale to Smyrna: The descendants of Ralph Peacock - John Birchenough, 2024 - [link:](#)

Galleries:

Ottoman Bank photos – [link:](#)

Alumni of the Salesian school of Izmir – [link:](#)

Early tourists – [link:](#)

Buca houses map analysis, Arda Akaslan – [link:](#)

Community activities

Izmir Italian cuisine celebration



Presentation by Ingrid Braggiotti given at Casa Italia in Izmir on 19 November 2024 within the 9th edition of the celebration of the Week of Italian Cuisine in the World – [flyer:](#) - [gallery:](#)

Izmir Italian library inauguration



Images in the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of Italy to Turkey, Giorgio Marrapodi and the Consulate of Italy in Izmir Daniele Bianchi, the Casa Italia library in Izmir was inaugurated on 31 January 2025 – [gallery](#):

In Memoriam

[Listing](#) of those from the Izmir Levantine community who have passed away in 2024.

External activities

External Upcoming Events

31 January – 4 May 2025

Exhibition: 'Venice and the Ottoman Empire' – Jepson Center & Telfair Children's Art Museum, Savannah, Georgia, USA – [info](#):

27 February 2025, 7.15 pm

Film screening: Splendours and Miseries of the Camondo Family - Ciné Lumière, 17 Queensberry Place, London SW7 2DT – [info](#):

3 March 2025, 6 pm (UK time)

Online presentation: 'Pirates of Barbary: Corsairs, Conquests and Captivity in the 17th-Century Mediterranean', Adrian Tinniswood, Anglo-Turkish Society – [flyer](#):

Recent Publications

Οι πρόξενοι στα 25 προξενεία στη Θεσσαλονίκη 1685-1912 [The consuls in the 25 consulates in Thessaloniki 1685-1912], Giannis Megas, Kapon Editions, 2024 – [link](#):

Dangerous Gifts: Imperialism, Security, and Civil Wars in the Levant, 1798-1864 (paperback) - Ozan Ozavci, Oxford University Press, 2024 – [link](#):

Sarayın Gözleri: Osmanlı'nın İlk Fotoğrafçılarından Sébah & Joaillier'nin Hikâyesi [Eyes of the Palace: The Story of Sébah & Joaillier, One of the First Photographers of the Ottoman Empire] - Fabrizio Casaretto, Can Yayınları, 2025 – [link](#):

La Latinité de Constantinople: Gravée sur le marbre du Cimetière Latin-Catholique de Feriköy Istanbul – Rinaldo Marmara, Birzamanlar Yayıncılık, 2024 – [link](#):

Dominique Valéry et L'Information D'Orient - Rifat N. Bali, Libra Kitap, 2025 – [link](#):

Upcoming Publications

Venice, the Ottomans, and the Sea (1381–1517) - Stefan K. Stantchev, Oxford University Press, 2025 – [link:](#)

The Ambassador's Notebook: Western Merchants, French Diplomacy and Islamic Law in the Ottoman Mediterranean c.1600 - Viorel Panaite, Brill, 2025 – [link:](#)

Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire in Romantic and Victorian Culture: The Sultan's City, 1800-1876 - Piya Pal-Lapinski, Bloomsbury Academic, 2025 – [link:](#)

Constantinople occupée, 1918-1923. Une histoire Culturelle - Frédéric Hitzel & Timour Muhidine, Cnrs Eds, 2025 – [link:](#)

New External digitisations

The Italian Architects' Creations in Egypt, 2021 – urbanharmony.org – [link:](#)

Misplaced British Subjects: Balkan Maltese in Transit 1941 -1949 - Bridget Mary Deane, 2024 – [link:](#)

Constructing Ionian Identities: The Ionian Islands in British Official Discourses; 1815-1864 - Maria Paschalidi, 2009 – [link:](#)

Early nineteenth-century British views of the Levantines in the Ottoman Empire - Ufuk Özemer, 2024 – [link:](#)

The waterfront and the cosmopolitan settlement: Spatial transformations in Smyrna between the 1688 earthquake and the development of the quay - Ege Gutay, 2023 – [link:](#)

Describing or distorting the "Turk"?: the *Relazioni* of the Venetian ambassadors in Constantinople as historical source - Eric R. Dursteler, 2010 – [link:](#)

Venetian Hosts and Ottoman Guests in the *Venedik Sarayı* in Constantinople (c. 1670-1681) - Maria Pia Pedani, Annali di Ca' Foscari. Serie orientale, 2018 – [link:](#)

Residual spaces of the informal empire: Rereading Smyrna as an incomplete colonial project – Işıl Y Tiarnagh Sheridan Gün, 2023 – [link:](#)

Near East Relief's Aid Campaign in Occupied Constantinople (1918-1923): Aid and Politics - Kemal Berkay Baştıjı, 2018 – [link:](#)

Seeking Redress at The Signoria: Ottoman merchants in dispute with the Republic of Venice in the early modern era - Tommaso Stefini, 2013 – [link:](#)

The British Ambassadors to Istanbul in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Sources of Intelligence and Political Reporting - Esin Yurdusev, Belleten, 2009 – [link:](#)

New Podcasts

The Venetian Empire – In Our Time, BBC Radio 4, 31 October 2024 – [link:](#)

An Organ for the Sultan – Sunday Feature, BBC Radio 3, 29 December 2024 – [link:](#)

New Videos

'Heritage and Roots' with Charles al-Hayek – Charles al-Hayek for Episode 270 of The Beirut Banyan, Jul 2021 – [link:](#)

Military Lecture: Canadians in the Turkish War of Independence, 1919-1922, Evren Altinkas - Guelph Museums, 2023 – [link:](#)

International Conference on the Fossati Brothers, Swiss architects from Morcote to İstanbul, St Pierre and St Paul Church, Galata, Istanbul, 1 - 3-10-2021 – [session 1](#), [session 2](#):

Pieux Carnets de Voyage : Les Dominicains en Anatolie et au Levant, Aysu Saban & Ahmet Deniz Altunbaş, St Pierre and St Paul Church, Galata, Istanbul, 17-1-2024 – [link:](#)

Some considerations on the linguistic variation in Dragomans' writings, Cristina Muru, SOAS University of London, 23 Mar 2016 – [link](#):

Dragomans without Borders, E. Natalie Rothman, BYU Kennedy Center, 18 Apr 2018 – [link](#):

Bellini, Bronze and Bombards, Antonia Gatward Cevizli, Qatar Museums, 2016 – [link](#):

Aubrey Herbert and the "Other" Britain: A Turkish Perspective, Vera Constantini, Anglo-Turkish Society, 10 Dec 2024 – [link](#):

New Web sites

Mapping Eastern Europe, Princeton University – [link](#):

The Memoirs of Antoine Köpe – [link](#):

Maps of Bournabat and Smyrna – [link](#):

Ephemera

Le Mondain Egyptien / The Egyptian Who's Who, 1939 – [link](#):

Egypt's Belle Époque architecture – Samir W. Raafat, greategypt.org, 2017 – [link](#):

Islamic 'altar tent' discovery: A 13th-century fresco rediscovered in Ferrara, Italy, puts Islamic art at the heart of medieval Christianity - Tom Almeroth-Williams, University of Cambridge, 2025 – [link](#):

Exploring Jerusalem's history of the dragoman – Rachel Mairs, CBRL, 2024 – [link](#):

New Digital Exhibitions

The 'Han's of Galata: based on Sadettin Fidan collection which explores the emergence and development of the han as a modern commercial space in Galata between 1850 and 1950 – [link](#):

Picturing the Sultan from the 16th to 19th Centuries: Discover a variety of ways in which rulers of the Ottoman Empire were represented by local artists and foreign visitors – [link](#):

Ottoman Bank Museum - A New Balance and Epilogue: "A chronological selection from the archives of the Ottoman Bank" – [link](#):

News of upcoming events by partners

Projected exhibition |: 'Levantines of Istanbul, Istanbul of Levantines' – LKMKD, 2026

We would like to inform you about the next initiative of the Association Levanten Kültür ve Mirasını Koruma Derneği (LKMKD), the 'Levantines of Istanbul, Istanbul of Levantines' Exhibition that will take place in the second quarter of year 2026 in the district of Beyoğlu / Pera.

This exhibition will showcase the Levantine community's cultural, social, and economic impact between 1850 and 1950, offering the first holistic narrative of its heritage. The exhibition will highlight key contributions to the community in the fields such as architecture, art, commerce, and diplomacy, culminating in a meaningful historical story.

This exhibition also lays the groundwork for the next project, the "Levantine Library & Museum".

The association is in the phase of inventory collection. Anyone who is interested in sharing information about documents, photographs, objects, etc. that can contribute to this exhibition, either in digital or physical form, can contact the exhibition project team by sending an e-mail to levanten@levanten.org.

The Testa family of Constantinople reliquary ceremony for its permanent display at the Co-Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Amsterdam, 30 March 2025 – [details](#):

Latest (Spring / Autumn 2024) issue of the 'Ledger', the Bulletin for *The Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative* – [link](#):

Mystery image



This appears to be a [Jean Weiberg](#) (?) photo taken in 1927 (from the writing on the [back](#)), probably in Istanbul, of a ceremony of sorts attended by Westerners and local Catholic clergy.

Please provide your insights by getting back to us.

Our messages

The Levantine Heritage Library & Archive

The groundwork to identify a permanent physical location for the Levantine Heritage Library and Archive is underway. It is not a simple exercise as, in an ideal situation, we seek a location and space with Levantine connections, accessible to researchers and which is largely funded by benefactors and grants. In the event that we cannot achieve the ideal, the alternatives include finding a host-library for our collection and outsourcing digitisation work for the archive. We welcome the experience and advice of our readers in helping us shape a practical strategy and implementation plan.

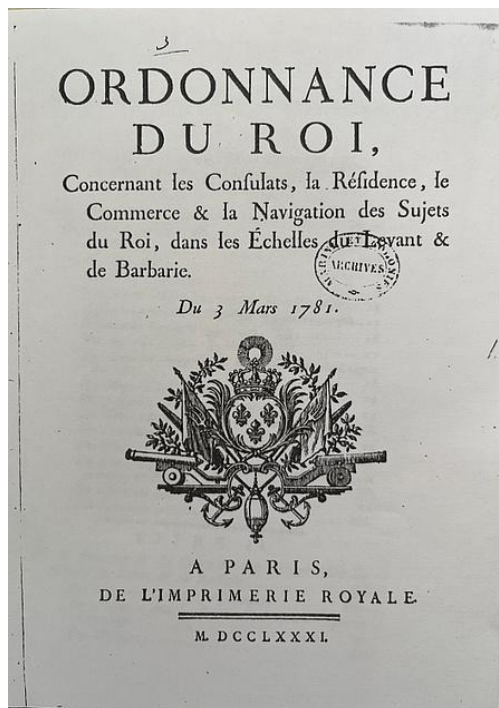
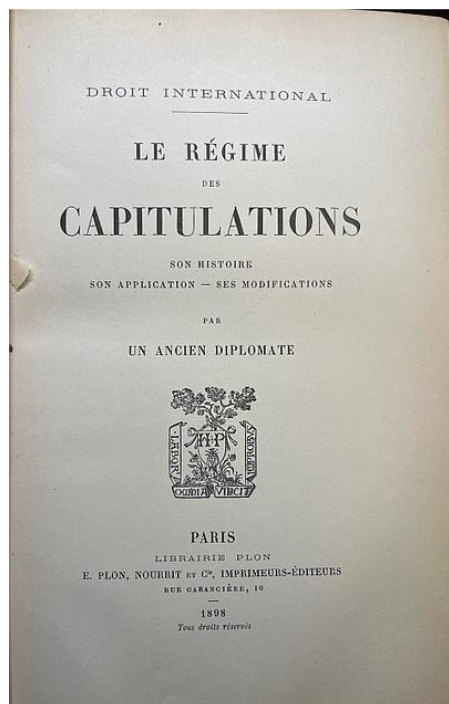
Meanwhile, we invite to browse our online catalogue. It consists primarily of the Jacques Caporal Collection of books and genealogical records and we are adding other books donated or loaned as they become available.

To access the catalogue, just click on this link [Levantine Heritage Library](#) which has a search box. Type in a key word and a list of items tagged with that word will appear. Much of the collection is in French, so some keywords are French.

Jacques Caporal had a particular interest in the history of France and the Levant. This is reflected in the quantity and breadth of books in the Jacques Caporal Collection gifted to the Levantine Heritage Library in 2022. Over a third of the books relate to history (570+ items) and about half of those concern France and its overseas interests.

In 1535, Suleiman the Magnificent granted a “capitulation” to France conferring rights and privileges to French subjects resident in or trading with the Ottoman Empire. This capitulation was added to and updated in later years. These “ententes commerciales” helped France build a dominant position in the Levant trade up to the mid-18th century.

There are several volumes on the subject, one enigmatically written by “Un ancien diplomate” and published in 1898 (below). The “former diplomat” was in fact Gustave Cirilli (1848-1928), French Vice-Consul in Smyrna, and husband to Grace van Lennep, whose father, Richard Jacob van Lennep (1811-1890), was a Dutch Levantine and Consul-General of the Low Countries in Smyrna.



The regulations (“ordonnance”) for the conduct of French diplomats in the key ports and cities (“échelles”) of the Levant covered by the capitulations was first set out in the reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715). While France’s Levant trade grew to its greatest extent in the 18th century, it began to decline for various political and commercial reasons.

In an attempt to protect it, the Ordonnance was revised in 1776 creating a more hierarchical structure of diplomatic posts in the échelles and placing certain strictures on commercial activities and introducing duties on the Levant trade. Following a review, the 1781 revision (above) established free trade, allowing foreign ships to trade between France and the échelles without paying a 20% tax. Not long afterwards, the Revolution proved very disruptive to France’s Levant trade, to the benefit of the British in particular.

If you have a collection, records, images or other items you wish to gift or leave as a legacy in your will to the Levantine Heritage Library & Archive, or if you wish to make a financial donation to support our work, please contact Quentin Compton-Bishop, chairman@levantineheritage.com.

Subscription to this newsletter and other LHF communications

If you wish to no longer receive our future newsletters and communications please let us know by writing to contact@levantineheritage.com. We hold your personal data securely for the purpose of providing you with information on LHF research, events, publications and membership. We will not share your personal data with 3rd parties.

Contribute to our newsletter

These newsletters are published every 3-4 months; contact us if you wish to contribute an article or place an entry / announcement. Newsletters [archive page](#):

Craig Encer

General Secretary – secretary@levantineheritage.com

The Levantine Heritage Foundation - www.levantineheritage.com

[Our Facebook page](#): (3.2K followers) | [Our Youtube channel](#): (861 subscribers) | [Our Twitter channel](#): (871 followers) | [Instagram](#): (686 followers)

The Levantine Heritage Foundation is a non-profit association with a constitution prepared and adopted according to the guidelines of The Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Trustees: Quentin Compton-Bishop, Dr Philip Mansel FRHS, Dr Vera Constantini, Dr Axel Corlu, Zeynep Cebeci Süvari, Jonathan Beard, Nuri Çolakoğlu, Achilleas Chatziconstantinou, Dr Michael Cottakis, Miguel Selvelli