

The Levantine Heritage Foundation

Advancing research, education and preservation of the heritage, arts and culture of the communities of the Levant region



View of Smyrna (Izmir). Ottoman officials receiving the Dutch Consul and merchants (Anonymous c.1720). Known as “the eye of Asia”, Smyrna was one of the busiest ports in the Mediterranean.

The Levantine Heritage Foundation has built a global network of family descendants and independent and academic researchers who are piecing together the economic, social and cultural history of the multi-ethnic, multi-faith communities of the wider Levant region in the former Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Levant covered much of Greece, the Balkans, Turkey, Syria, the Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt and its influence extended far beyond. The peoples and communities who traded and settled in the area included the Venetians, Genoese, Greeks, Turks, Persians, Armenians, Arabs, Jews, French, Italians, British, many other Europeans and Americans. With the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, many of these Levantine communities scattered around the globe.

Discover your Levantine past

The Levantine Heritage Foundation (LHF) has a unique collection of personal histories contributed by Levantine descendants on its website. These provide an excellent start if you are researching your Levantine ancestors. The LHF also organises conferences and events in London, Istanbul, Athens, Genoa and elsewhere where Levantine studies are presented and you can meet the researchers. Informal networking is at the heart of these events and LHF Members sometimes discover distant cousins. Membership of the LHF gives privileged access to LHF events and publications and to research interest groups on topics ranging from Levantine genealogy and businesses to architecture and the arts. Our website and newsletter lists other events and publications of potential interest.

Access new research sources

Membership of the LHF gives researchers access to people in its network who own private collections of valuable research material and who can provide personal insights and validation. The LHF is working with descendants of Levantine families to secure and digitise these records to preserve them for posterity and make them available. It provides small travel grants for early career researchers to support their studies. It also publicises papers and other publications on its website.

Join the LHF

Our website www.levantineheritage.com provides free access to the family histories of old Levantine families and many other records. Joining the LHF as a Member puts you at the centre of our expanding global network and helps support our website and core activities. Please visit <http://www.levantineheritage.com/join-us.html> or complete and return the application form overleaf.

Trustees: Dr Kalliopi Amygdalou, Jonathan Beard, Zeynep Cebeci Suvari, Achilleas Chatziconstantinou, Nuri Çolakoğlu, Quentin Compton-Bishop, Dr Axel Çorlu, Dr Philip Mansel FRHS. General Secretary: Craig Encer.

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Contact permission: We wish to write to you occasionally to keep you updated on current LHF projects, newsletters and appeals. We will not pass on your details to other organisations. Please let us know if you would like us to contact you by selecting one of the options:

YES, you may contact me for these purposes. NO, I do not wish to hear from you.

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