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The politics of libraries under the Habsburg-Lorraines

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In the eighteenth century, the intervention, for the benefit of the general public, of the public authorities in the way in which libraries were run met with broad support. A few months after Grand Duke Peter Leopold’s decision to merge the Pitti Palace Library and the Magliabechiana (Florence’s public library), the *Novelle Letterarie di Firenze* of 3 January 1772 stated that “This scholarly prince knows how much happiness his subject’s general education brings to the states and how much public libraries can contribute to this”¹. This kind of argument, which was spreading across Europe at the time, clearly shows the influence of the prince’s education treaties and German natural law and of the resulting injunctions to protect scholars and the arts. However, these classical recommendations were gradually replaced by other concerns that were closely related to the contemporary debates on social wellbeing, the education of the people and the economic prosperity of the states. In 1787, comments made by the Tuscan agronomist Marco Lastri shed light on the development of this discourse. Reporting in the *Novelle letterarie* on the opening of the Macerata public library, which was located within the Papal States, Lastri said he was “so convinced of the utility of public libraries in terms of increasing the population’s knowledge [...] that instead of just having them in cities, we would also like to have one in every town and village, specializing in commerce, agriculture or crafts depending on the area’s particular needs”². We can see the library shifting away here from the scholarly world and locating itself among the population as a solution to the people’s ignorance and an essential vehicle of knowledge for agricultural reform and the development of rural industry.

The history of eighteenth-century libraries must therefore be seen as an entirely political one. Libraries contributed to the way in which public authorities delimited their fields of expertise, defined the remits of their legitimacy, negotiated their relations with the ecclesiastical powers and organized the governance of their territories³. The Grand Duchy of Tuscany offers a particularly rich field of enquiry in this study. The library landscape was radically transformed under the Habsburg-Lorraines, who succeeded the Medicis in 1737.

¹ *Novelle letterarie pubblicate in Firenze*, III, 1, January 3, 1772.

² *Novelle letterarie pubblicate in Firenze*, XVIII, 25, June 22, 1787, 388-389.

³ See the theoretical proposals of: Mario De Gregorio, “Prima di Bandini. Tentativi di biblioteca universitaria a Siena nel Settecento”, *Società e storia* (19) 1996, 253-281; Frédéric Barbier, “Représentation, contrôle, identité: les pouvoirs politiques et les bibliothèques centrales en Europe, xv^e-xix^e siècles”, *Francia* (26) 1999, 1-22; and Wayne A. Wiegand, “American Library History Literature, 1947-1997: Theoretical Perspectives?”, *Libraries & Culture* (35) 2000, 4-34.

These changes were particularly marked in Florence. Two libraries were opened to the Florentine public around the middle of the century after several decades of preparation. One was the library founded by Antonio Magliabechi (the grand dukes' librarian), which was opened to the public in 1747, and the other was Marucelli family's library, opened to the public in 1752. The Palatine Library, which brought together the Medici and Lorraine libraries, was opened to the public in 1760 within the Pitti Palace and was subsequently merged with the Magliabechiana in 1771. Special libraries were established during the second half of the century within several grand-ducal institutions: the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital, the Uffizi Gallery, the *Archivio diplomatico* and the new Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History. Dozens of ecclesiastical libraries were seized and redistributed following the suppression of the convents and monasteries at the beginning of the 1780s. Finally, the demographic and financial vicissitudes of the Florentine nobility threatened a number of renowned libraries (such as those belonging to the Strozzi and the Gaddi families) and led to the adoption of one of the first heritage laws in the Italian Peninsula, which explicitly protected book collections other than those focused purely on art and antiquities.

Studies published since the 1990s on the political history of the Grand Duchy have transformed our understanding of the *Settecento Riformatore* in Tuscany. The reforms process is clarified in these studies, not just in relation to its chronology and administrative dynamics but also in terms of the ambiguity of a political project that constantly fluctuated between, on the one hand, an authoritarian tendency and obsession with the *città regolata* and, on the other, the enlightened ideal of a public education that aimed to transform subjects into sympathetic partners in a total reform of the Grand Duchy's social, economic and religious foundations⁴. These studies allowed us, at the turn of the twenty-first century, to envisage the library as a space for such politics at a time when other Florentine cultural institutions—censorship, scholarly academies, the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History, the Uffizi Gallery, the Magliabechiana Library—were also being re-examined from the same angle⁵. The aim of this paper is not to present a complete history of the Grand Duchy's libraries under the Habsburg-Lorraines but to show how libraries were both the laboratory and echo chamber of the changes that were underway in the Tuscan political culture. From this perspective, we will focus on four types of libraries, namely the public, the princely, the scientific and the ecclesiastical libraries⁶.

THE OPENING OF LIBRARIES TO THE PUBLIC

Libraries occupy a prominent place in the accounts of travelers crossing Italy in the eighteenth century. While they may have been seeking traces of the golden age of the

⁴ This expression comes from “La città regolata: polizia e amministrazione nella Firenze leopoldina (1777-1782)”, in *Istituzione e società in Toscana nell'età moderna* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato), 1994, I, 426-508.

⁵ Some representative studies from this particularly dense historiographic context: Miriam Fileti Mazza, Bruna Tomasello, *Galleria degli Uffizi, 1758-1775: la politica museale di Raimondo Cocchi* (Modena: Panini, 1999); Sandro Landi, *Il governo delle opinioni. Censura e formazione del consenso nella Toscana del Settecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000); Maria Mannelli Goggioli, *La biblioteca Magliabechiana. Libri, uomini, idee per la prima biblioteca pubblica a Firenze* (Firenze: Olschki, 2000); and Simone Contardi, *La Casa di Salomone a Firenze. L'Imperiale e Reale Museo di Fisica e Storia Naturale (1755-1801)* (Firenze: Olschki, 2002).

⁶ For a comprehensive review, please see Emmanuelle Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica. Politique des bibliothèques et pratiques du livre à Florence au XVIII^e siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 2009).

Renaissance, there were also new emergent preoccupations. The travelers were aware of the public nature and utility of the libraries they visited, which they measured on the basis of practical elements, such as the extension of opening hours and the presence of easily searchable catalogs. Their observations contributed to the appraisal of the educational policies implemented by the various Italian states. Taking good care of libraries was a sign of an enlightened government, one that was attentive to progress in the arts and sciences⁷. For example, the erudite Florentine Angelo Maria Bandini complained in 1781 that Rome's government, which would not open the library bequeathed to the public by Cardinal Imperiali and which was neglecting the ex-Jesuits library, had little interest in "public service", while the Palatine Library in Parma was, according to the Swedish professor Jacob Jonas Bjoernstahl, an example of "what a meritorious librarian can do if they are supported and encouraged by a generous prince"⁸. For many travelers, the library at the University of Pavia, in Austrian Lombardy, was a paragon of the Enlightenment. According to Jean Bernoulli, the fact that this library was to become "one of the most prominent in Italy, especially where the intrinsic value and genuine utility of the books were concerned" could have been predicted because of the financial resources and support that the imperial court made available to its librarian Gregorio Fontana⁹. The travelers' accounts thus combine two very different dimensions of the evolution of libraries in the eighteenth century, and these correspond to both senses of the adjective "public". On the one hand, there was the injunction to open them up beyond the scholarly social enclaves to an undifferentiated general public and, on the other, there was the propensity of the political power to become involved in the running of the establishments.

The history of libraries in the Grand Duchy can, to a certain extent, be understood by pursuing this dual theme. On the whole, the chronology of the libraries corroborates the idea of an individual initiative gradually being replaced by a political initiative. Privately founded public libraries emerged relatively early in Tuscany, and there were many of them up until the early eighteenth century. There was an increasing moral imperative for people to give their private library over to the public rather than to just have it sold off, and practical foundation models were circulated through wills, scholarly correspondences and opening ceremony speeches. Like dozens of other foundations that were planned or created in Italy between the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, the majority of Tuscan foundations adopted the Roman canonical foundation model. Books and annuities were handed over to a pre-existing legal entity (usually a religious institution or the town's administrative body but sometimes a friary or hospital) that was responsible for running the public library. In Arezzo in 1603, the grand-ducal medical doctor and reader at the University of Pisa, Girolamo Turini, bequeathed a collection of 2,850 volumes to the Lay Fraternity (who centralized the city's welfare structures) for them to be made available to learned scholars and students. Located in the Piazza Grande Palace, the library was opened in 1680 after funding was released to pay

⁷ Emmanuelle Chapron, "Voyageurs et bibliothèques dans l'Italie du XVIII^e siècle: des *mirabilia* au débat sur l'utilité publique", *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* (162) 2004, p. 305-332.

⁸ Biblioteca Marucelliana, Firenze, B I 18, fol. 30 et 56. Jacob Jonas Bjoernstahl, *Lettere ne'suoi viaggi stranieri* (Poschiavo: Ambrosioni, 1782, 3 vols), III, 211.

⁹ Jean Bernoulli, *Lettres sur différents sujets, écrites pendant le cours d'un voyage par l'Allemagne, la Suisse, la France méridionale et l'Italie, en 1774 et 1775* (Berlin: Decker, 1777-1779, 3 vols), III, 57.

for new books and a librarian¹⁰. In Prato in 1676, Marco Roncioni left some annuities to the cathedral chapter for a book collection to be set up under the supervision of a canon¹¹. In Pistoia, a public library was opened in 1730 next to the Santi Filippo e Prospero Church following a donation from Cardinal Carlo Agostino Fabroni (1651-1727), which was managed by the Oratorian Fathers of San Filippo Neri.

There was no shortage of projects in Florence either. There were at least three planned in the seventeenth century—by Pier Antonio Guadagni (1579-1632), Cardinal Leopoldo di Medici (1617-1675) and Marquis Francesco Riccardi (1648-1719)— but they were all abandoned at various stages of their development¹². The emergence of what was probably the first institutional public library in Florence, the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital Library, can be traced back to a private initiative by the patrician Lorenzo Pucci. As the *spedalingo* Cappelli reported in 1716, this establishment's library was set up in 1679 from books scattered throughout the institution “upon the bequest of his own [library] by ill. sign. Lorenzo Pucci”¹³. While the collection was principally to be used by people at the hospital, that is, the clerics, students, doctors and surgeons, the library was explicitly designed as a public library, open to all Florentines and others passing through the city. This initiative by Lorenzo Pucci, who gave all his books “so that they would be gathered together in the public library that the hospital intended to set up”, was soon repeated in other private legacies, which reinforced its public nature. Among these were the bequests of Florentine bookseller Giovan Filippo Cecchi in 1687, who gave books “to the new library set up for the benefit of the public”, and, two years later, of Vincenzo Viviani, a disciple of Galileo, who left his library to the hospital so that it “should be preserved for the benefit of the public and the convenience of those who wanted to work there”¹⁴. Hence, while Francesco Marucelli's (1702) and Antonio Magliabechi's (1714) wills may have founded two new public libraries in Florence, they were just one part of an already dense picture. In contrast to the conventual and aristocratic libraries that were informally open to a select public, these foundations established the idea of regulated, institutionalized, controllable access.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the grand dukes' intervention in the sphere of libraries can be linked to broader political concerns, namely those of the *giurisdizionalismo*, a legal school of thought that endeavored to defend the interests of the state against anything deemed to be an insertion or excess of power on the part of the Church. Hence, a double “royal coup” placed the Magliabechiana under grand-ducal authority in the mid-1730s. In 1736, Grand Duke Gian Gastone ordered the *Magistrato supremo* (the highest jurisdiction in the Grand Duchy) to take possession of Antonio Magliabechi's library “in the name of the people of Florence”. In 1738, the new grand duke, Francis Stephen, appointed a

¹⁰ Andrea Andati, Ivo Biagianti, Giuseppe Centauro, Roberto G. Salvadori, Francesca Vannozzi, *Cultura e società nel Settecento fiorentino. Arezzo e la fraternità dei laici* (Firenze: Olschki, 1988), 143-144.

¹¹ Archivio di Stato, Firenze [ASF], Segretario del Regio diritto, 2030, fol. 585v-586: Roncioni's last will and testament, August 30, 1676.

¹² Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica* (cit. note 6), p. 101.

¹³ ASF, Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova, 587, *Lo Spedale di S. Maria Nuova, ovvero Informazione dell'essere, entrata, e governo del medesimo spedale data in luce, e dedicata all'A. R. di Cosimo Terzo Gran Duca di Toscana da Antonio Cappelli spedalingo dell'istesso spedale l'anno 1716*, p. 84.

¹⁴ ASF, Notarile moderno, protocol 16759, notary Noferi Calici, fol. 98, April 24, 1679; ASF, Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova, 53, fol. 262, November 1687; ASF, Notarile moderno, protocol 3388, notary Simone Mugnai, fol. 64v, December 7, 1689.

lay librarian at its helm, thus going against the testamentary wishes of Magliabechi, who had wanted the office entrusted to the Santa Maria Novella Dominicans. These two decisions were partly linked to the particular vicissitudes of the Magliabechiana, which its founder had—in a wholly original way compared with the standard Roman canonical foundation model—imagined to be an independent institution and which his executor believed would fall into the hands of the Dominicans. However, the full meaning of these decisions only becomes clear when examined alongside the contemporaneous hospital policy of the grand dukes and their *Regio Diritto* secretary, Giulio Rucellai. After centuries of collaboration, the direct confrontation between the grand ducal administration and the Roman Curia centered on the question of the Church's role in the management of the welfare institutions¹⁵. It was within this hospital policies context that new legal arguments developed (concerning the state's authority over the *luoghi pii*, or the possibility of overriding testamentary dispositions), which were then reused in the case of the Magliabechiana Library. Like the hospices and other charitable institutions, the public library became a symbol of the state's reinvestment in the Church's traditional spheres of influence.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the grand-ducal powers were generally limited to supporting community projects that sought to reorganize their old libraries or to found a new one if they did not have one. When a public library was established in Livorno in 1765 on the premises of the cathedral Works, Grand Duke Francis Stephen turned down the local authorities' request to have it officially placed under its protection, but he officially recognized its public character in order to obtain the Livorno printers' registration of copyright under the 1743 printing and censorship law¹⁶. Grand Duke Peter Leopold gave his consent for the Arezzo Lay Fraternity library to be moved to a more suitable premises (1771), and he approved the commune of Cortona's purchase of the library from Canon Orazio Maccari (1778). The library was then merged with the Etruscan Academy's library to form an open library “ad uso e comodo pubblico” under the shared responsibility of the commune and the academy¹⁷. Leopold backed the settlement proposal from the commune of Volterra after Historian and Archeologist Mario Guarnacci gifted his museum of Etruscan antiquities and library of seven thousand volumes (1786). The public libraries founded in the second half of the century were generally under the care of local communities, which facilitated their integration into the sphere of the prince's government. On the one hand, the 1751 and 1769 mortmain laws¹⁸ had dramatically reduced the possibility of donating to religious establishments, and, on the other, the founding of a public library as an independent legal entity, along the lines of the first Magliabechiana model, was no longer conceivable. This was what was behind Mario Guarnacci's intention, expressed in his will of May 26, 1774, to deny the city of Volterra any power over his museum and library for fear his collections would end up being dispersed. He appointed the people of the city (considered as one body) as the beneficiary of his bequest rather than the urban community governed by its elected

¹⁵ Carlo Fantappiè, *Il Monachesimo moderno tra ragion di Chiesa e ragion di Stato, il caso toscano (XVI-XIX)* (Firenze: Olschki, 1993), 201-206.

¹⁶ ASF, Consiglio di Reggenza, 627, ins. 18, Montauto à Galluzzi, Livorno, June 20, 1783. On the 1743 law, see Landi, *Il governo delle opinioni* (cit. note 5), p. 49-92.

¹⁷ Guerriera Guerrieri, Nicola Frusculoni, Vittore Cocchi, *La pubblica biblioteca del comune e dell'Accademia Etrusca di Cortona* (Cortona: Colosci, 1978), 45-50.

¹⁸ The legal status of lands or tenements held inalienably by an ecclesiastical or other institution.

representatives. On his death, however, the magistrates had no qualms about proposing their ruling, which stated that in principle “the public imagined by the testator to be something other than the community can only in substance be legitimately represented by the community magistrates of Volterra”¹⁹. This likening of the reading public to a governed political body also justified the transfer of the Marucelliana into the grand-ducal administration’s control following the extinction of the family line in 1783 since it “was not right that an institution given for the benefit of the public remains independent”²⁰.

The integration of libraries into the space governed by the prince came about as a result of the belief that access to education contributed to properly functioning societies, the policing of territories, the improvement of the population’s living standards and an increase in the state’s wealth. This idea was not exclusive to the Enlightenment, although the second half of the eighteenth century reoriented it in a new utilitarian direction. The injunction to protect scholars and the importance of public education were classic themes in the German natural law treaties at the end of the seventeenth century, such as Samuel von Pufendorff’s *De jure naturae et gentium*²¹. In a number of German states that had gone through the Reformation, such as the Electorate of Saxony (which is where the jurist originated from), the princes had taken control of the domains traditionally held by the Church, including the libraries²². The same preoccupations appeared in the prince’s education treaties, such as in the one written by Jansenist Joseph Duguet for the young duke of Savoy, Victor-Amadeus II, which became bedtime reading for all of the Empress Maria Theresa’s children²³. The protection of scholars and penniless students was a moral economy issue before it ever became an Enlightenment project. In 1778, as the Cortona authorities were negotiating with Canon Maccari over the sale of his library, they stressed to the grand duke that “with a public library, we will be able to remedy the sad stream of disorder that inevitably results from not having one, and we will be able to provide for the easy and convenient education of our poor young folk, who have been and always will be the principal focus of royal care and attention”²⁴.

In this sense, it is not possible to directly extend interpretations put forward from the study of censorship or academies to public libraries. They were not places where opinions were fabricated in the way that they more directly were in the *Stampe alla Macchia*, which were intended to educate enlightened public opinion and make it supportive of the government’s reforms²⁵. It is not possible either to see them as a body intended to revive the culture of the Tuscan social elites in the light of new political demands, as the reformed academies were. The materials in the public libraries of the second half of the century offered

¹⁹ ASF, Segreteria di Stato, 450, protocollo 8, n° 28, fol. 5r.

²⁰ Biblioteca Marucelliana, Firenze, Archivio storico 51, fasc. 100, Vincenzo degli Alberti to Angelo Maria Bandini, August 11, 1783.

²¹ Samuel von Pufendorff, *De jure naturae et gentium libri octo* (Lund: Junghans, 1672), lib. VII, chap. 9, § 4.

²² Frédéric Barbier, “Les bibliothèques et la guerre de Trente ans”, in *Bibliothèques et lecteurs dans l’Europe moderne (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, Gilles Bertrand, Anne Cayuela, Christian Del Vento, Raphaële Mouren (eds) (Geneva: Droz, 2016).

²³ Jacques Joseph Duguet, *Institution d’un prince, ou Traité des qualités, des vertus et des devoirs d’un souverain* (London: Nourse, 1739), vol. 2, chap. XVIII: *Le prince doit protéger les sciences et les arts, s’opposer à l’ignorance* [...]. On this book, see Mario Rosa, “‘Il cuore del re’. L’‘Institution d’un prince’ del giansenista Duguet”, in *Il Granducato di Toscana e i Lorena nel secolo XVIII, Incontro internazionale di studio, Firenze, 22-24 sett. 1994*, Alessandra Contini, Maria Grazia Parri (eds) (Firenze: Olschki, 1999), 385-416.

²⁴ Guerrieri, Frusculoni, Cocchi, *La pubblica biblioteca* (cit. note 6), 48.

²⁵ Landi, *Il governo delle opinioni* (cit. note 5).

a rather canonic knowledge that excluded public debate and the most enlightened positions²⁶. Even so, they were well frequented (in 1772, Magliabechiana's librarian requested a dozen additional stools to accommodate the 60 to 70 people that came to read every day²⁷). The records from the 1750s of people taking books out on loan from the Magliabechiana also show their utility for a whole range of urban readers, including local pupils from the Jesuit schools and the *scuole pie*, students at the seminary or the *Studio fiorentino*, young doctors of theology or law awaiting a position in the grand ducal administration, scholars and aging poets, penniless secular clergy and monks from monasteries poorly equipped in terms of a library and high-level bureaucrats borrowing popular scientific books and entertaining reading materials²⁸. Despite the obvious weaknesses of the two libraries' procurement policies, particularly in the scientific domain, this attendance evidence allows us to put into perspective Grand Duke Peter Leopold's very harsh judgment on the state of public libraries in his Grand Duchy. In the *Relazioni sul governo della Toscana*, he stated that the Magliabechiana and the Marucelliana were "little frequented and extremely deprived of modern books" and that it would be better to merge them within a new building, sell the duplicated books "and, with the money, buy good modern books to bring the library up to date". He also said of the Arezzo library that "the building has cost a lot of money, it is worthless and no-one uses it"²⁹. Nevertheless, such a judgment explains why the political plan to fabricate public opinion was turning toward other types of libraries.

AT THE HEART OF POWER: THE PRINCELY LIBRARY

The princely libraries were another lever of library politics deployed in the Italian Peninsula in the eighteenth century. Their books were either used to set up new libraries, as in the case of Duke of Savoy Victor-Amadeus II, who transferred the majority of his family library into the university's new library holdings in 1723, or they were opened to the urban public, which is what Duke of Modena Francesco III did in 1750 with the Estense's private library³⁰. These two examples plus the major reforms that affected the Palatine Library in Florence are striking illustrations of the evolution in the ways in which power was being legitimized. Only a brief reminder of the different stages will suffice here³¹. In 1666, there was Prince Cosimo's development of a library, which was to be the showcase of patron power and which contributed to transforming the Pitti Palace into a performance space, a "royal

²⁶ On the Florentine libraries' procurement policies, see Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica* (cit. note 6), p. 305-327.

²⁷ BNCF, Archivio Magliabechiano IX, fol. 289-304: G. Targioni Tozzetti to A. Tavanti, June 16, 1772.

²⁸ See a detailed analysis of this in Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica* (cit. note 6), p. 266-272.

²⁹ Peter Leopold of Habsburg-Lorraine, *Relazioni sul governo della Toscana*, Arnaldo Salvestrini (ed) (Firenze: Olschki, 1969-1974, 3 vols), I, p. 232 and II, p. 46.

³⁰ Andrea De Pasquale, *Il sapere per tutti: la politica bibliotecaria a Torino tra XVII e XIX secolo* (Savigliano: L'Artistica, 2006). Paola di Pietro Lombardi, "Riflessioni nell'opinione pubblica modenese dell'apertura della biblioteca privata degli Estensi, a metà Settecento", in *Formazione e controllo dell'opinione pubblica a Modena nel '700*, Albano Biondi (ed) (Modena: Mucchi, 1986), p. 119-128.

³¹ The most recent, relatively complementary syntheses are referred to here: Renato Pasta, "La biblioteca aulica e le letture dei principi lorenese", in *Vivere a Pitti. Una reggia dai Medici ai Savoia*, Sergio Bertelli, Renato Pasta (eds) (Firenze: Olschki, 2003), p. 351-387 and Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica* (cit. note 6), p. 72-82, 136-149, 152-158.

public space”³². In 1737, the Family Pact was introduced whereby the last Medici heir ceded the library to the new grand duke, Francis Stephen, by adding an inalienability clause, which made the Medici Palatine an ornament of the state and a public entity. In 1738, the Lunéville Library was installed alongside the Medici collection as a tool directly fashioned by Viennese tropisms, administrative and political requirements and the absolutist experiments of the Dukes of Lorraine. There was also the opening of the library to the public sometime between 1760 and 1765, and, finally, the merger in 1771 of the Palatine Library with the Magliabechiana as well as Peter Leopold’s reconstitution of a much smaller library for family use. The two last stages in the evolution warrant further discussion.

The opening of the libraries to the public, which had been decided by Francis Stephen, happened at a time when he was not living in Florence and when his librarian, Valentin Jamerey-Duval, had also left the city to join him in Vienna. The German models, such as that of the Imperial Library in Vienna as well as the many princely libraries (both large and small) that opened to the public in the mid-eighteenth century in Munich, Gotha, Wernigerode and Dresden³³, undoubtedly had a greater influence on the grand duke than the Italian precedents, which shows the extent of the circulation of library models in the Italian Peninsula³⁴. Three elements distinguished the Palatine Library from the Italian models and anchored it in a broader political culture connected with the grand duke’s Lorrainian and Viennese background, namely the choice of assistant librarian, the bylaws and the procurement policy. The assistant librarian he appointed in 1758 was Giovan Gaspero Menabuoni, a Florentine who was living in Paris at the time. He was a protégé of the Duchess of Choiseul, the wife of the son of François-Joseph de Choiseul, who was one of Francis Stephen’s closest collaborators in the Duchy of Lorraine and a central figure in the powerful “Lorraine party” at the court of Louis XV. Within the context of the “de-Lorrainisation” of the political workforce that marked the 1750s, a Florentine assistant librarian was therefore being substituted for the Lorrainian Jamerey-Duval³⁵. However, of the many possible, representatives of Tuscan erudition that the grand duke had to choose from, he favored this cosmopolitan Florentine who was familiar with the Parisian book trade. Menabuoni’s correspondence with the erudite Giovanni Lami and Father Ximenès, who was an astronomer at the Jesuit College of San Giovannino, showed the role he played in the diffusion of news and the circulation of books between the Grand Duchy and the French capital.

In turn, the bylaws that were developed in the fall of 1759 show the influence of the Viennese model and the cameral sciences. For example, the external bylaw of the Imperial Library in Vienna, which was written around 1726, was simply reused for the Palatine Library. A fixed grant was allocated from the *Depositeria generale* for the running of the library, a provision that was not introduced until later in the other Italian princely libraries

³² Sergio Bertelli, “Palazzo Pitti dai Medici ai Savoia”, in *La Corte di Toscana dai Medici ai Lorena*, Anna Bellinazzi, Alessandra Contini (eds) (Rome: Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, 2002), p. 11-109, p. 15.

³³ *Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft*, Georg Leyh (ed) (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1952-1966, 5 vols), III, 1957.

³⁴ When he was preparing for the opening of the Estense, the librarian Zaccaria obtained the bylaws of the Casanatense, the Magliabechiana and the Marucelliana in Florence and the Ambrosienne in Milan (di Pietro Lombardi, “Riflessioni nell’opinione pubblica” (cit. note 26)).

³⁵ On the Lorrainians’ loss of influence in the 1750s, see Alessandra Contini, *La Reggenza lorenese tra Firenze e Vienna. Logiche dinastiche, uomini e governo (1737-1766)* (Firenze: Olschki, 2002).

(Modena in 1770, Parma in 1785). This showed a cameralist concern to rationalize state finances. Finally, Giovan Gaspero Menabuoni's purchases were quite notably different from those made during the same period in the city's two public libraries. The generous grant (300 *scudi* as compared with the 50 *scudi* provided for by Magliabechi and the 150 *scudi* that Angelo Maria Bandini had for the Marucelliana) meant a relatively large number of purchases could be made. Between 1761 and 1771, the library acquired nearly 900 predominantly French books (only 20% of the titles were Italian). A generation earlier, the composition of the Lunéville Palace Library had emphasized the primacy of legal, historical and geographic knowledge in the instruments made available to the Duke of Lorraine. It had to hold its ground between "the hammer of France and the anvil of Germany"³⁶. It also had to assert its identity, show the legitimacy of the Lorrainian dynasty and educate the Duchy's aristocracy and the pupils of the nobiliary academy of Lunéville. Menabuoni took an opposing view to these concerns. The improvements he made comprised very few legal (14 titles) and religious (28 titles) texts and only a small number of historical books (91 titles). The princely library established itself above all as a recreation space, with a strong focus on French literature (270 titles) and art books (70 titles). The purchases also show the role that the Palatine Library was able to play as a political laboratory. On the one hand, Menabuoni gathered together everything that was published on Jesuit matters. This amounted to almost 200 books, opuscles and law texts, which documented the reflections and the legal, economic, social and political solutions generated by the Society's expulsion from various European states. On the other, he assembled an economics library at the Palatine that was open to different schools of thought, from physiocracy to mercantilism, including many books relating to fiscal debates, agricultural improvements and the education of peasant farmers.

However, the quality and breadth of the princely library's readers remained a problematic issue. Although open to the public, the Palatine probably only attracted a small number of readers from government and court circles, who were used to walking the corridors of the Pitti Palace. Despite these reservations, it is important to highlight two points. First, the princely library participated fully in the evolution of the political culture in the 1760s. The discussions on the reorganization of state finances, fiscal reform, the Grand Duchy's agricultural vocation and the defense of manufacturing interests were all projects initiated under the Regency and pursued during the first years of Peter Leopold's reign in the wake of the food shortage crisis in 1764. In the 1760s, there was also the idea that reforms impacting the economic and social equilibrium should not remain the *arcana imperii* but should rather be the subject of a controlled discourse, aimed at forming public opinion that was favorable toward grand-ducal policies³⁷. The princely library, although public, was probably not where the urban readers educated themselves, but it did participate in gathering together the tools of this debate, which was conducted in public by the grand duke's ministers. The second important point is that there were links between the princely collection and the urban elites. Menabuoni had been an active member of the *Georgofili* academy since 1766, and the papers he presented to its learned audience fed into the books he was buying for the Pitti Palace at the same time as the academy was being remodeled in order both to facilitate relations

³⁶ Valentin Jamerey-Duval, *Œuvres... précédées de mémoires sur sa vie* (Saint-Petersbourg et se vend à Strasbourg: Treuttel, 1784), p. 275.

³⁷ Landi, *Il governo delle opinioni* (cit. note 5).

between the Tuscan elites and government circles and to turn it into a space for the discussion and development of the government's economic strategy³⁸.

The relocation of the books from the Pitti Palace to the Magliabechiana public library in 1771 was another watershed in the political use of the library. While it responded to very practical demands (reduction in expenditure and the search for new spaces within the palace), the transfer of the books from the court to the city also reflected long-lasting changes. The transformation of the dynastic collection into a state asset, which had been germinal since the Family Pact in 1737, was consolidated when the Palatine Library's budget was attached to the central financial machinery in 1760. Even though it was not accompanied by a transfer of property, the relocation of the books from the Palatine to Florence's public library participated in the process of separation between the prince's personal and familial estate, on the one hand, and state assets, on the other. Moreover, the transfer of the books reflected the shift toward new images of sovereignty in which the court was no longer the driving force of legitimization and representation. Under the reign of Peter Leopold, the palace space underwent a process of relative privatization, with reduced expenditure and fewer events and social venues linked to the court. The urban space became the theatre of sovereignty (as demonstrated by the official visits and journeys through the territory) and the place where the prince's social policies had to be practiced, including those relating to libraries. In Librarian Jamerey-Duval's opinion, the collections "sent forth from the palace" would henceforth be "more accessible and useful to the public than those that were perched at the top of the grand-ducal residence"³⁹.

The use of the smallest library reconstituted within the Pitti Palace for the princely family was *a priori* more personal. Jamerey-Duval explained that he had been tasked with creating a "private room full of books, where the mind and the heart would find something to satisfy them both equally; books that are enjoyable enough to please and sturdy enough to fill the considerable time they devote to reading"⁴⁰. Alongside this leisure dimension, the annotations on the catalog show the central role given to the young archdukes' education⁴¹. The break with the previous Palatine was significant. The collection was reduced (only 1,561 books in 1771), the books were lined up in a new space and a private librarian, Abbot Jacques de Rulle, succeeded the previous post-holders. While the *Catalogue des livres du cabinet particulier de LL. AA. RR.* was printed in 1771, the small number of known copies shows that the publication's aim was not to improve access to the library but rather to make it visible and easy to operate within a small circle⁴². There were nevertheless some elements of continuity between the old and the new Palatine. For example, there were some similarities between the

³⁸ Renato Pasta, "L'Accademia dei Georgofili e la riforma dell'agricoltura", *Rivista storica italiana* (105) 1993, p. 484-501.

³⁹ Jamerey-Duval, *Œuvres* (cit. note 32), p. 185.

⁴⁰ *Catalogue des livres du cabinet particulier de LL. AA. RR.* (Florence: de l'Imprimerie grandducale, 1771), p. v.

⁴¹ Renato Pasta, "La biblioteca aulica e le letture dei principi lorenese", in *Vivere a Pitti. Una reggia dai Medici ai Savoia*, a cura di Sergio Bertelli e Renato Pasta (Firenze: Olschki, 2003), 351-387.

⁴² Three copies have been identified: the first in Florence, with annotations by Peter Leopold (BNCF, Palat. 1.5.1.6); the second in Newberry Library in Chicago, which belonged to Marie-Louise de Bourbon (Z491.C277); and the third in Dijon's public library (fonds patrimonial 75791). Another example of these catalogs printed for private use is the *Catalogue de la bibliothèque du château de Rambouillet, appartenant à Son Altesse Sérénissime monseigneur le comte de Toulouse*, no place, no name, 1708 [and supplement, 1716]; Paris, Martin, 1726 [and supplement, 1734].

original core of the holdings and Menabuoni's choices, with a predominance of French books (50% of the publications, according to Renato Pasta's calculation) and an emphasis on entertaining reading and useful knowledge, particularly natural history. While the library was not initially thought of as the grand duke's study, it became so as time went on and new books were added. In the decades that followed, it was supplemented with books on the reform of criminal legislation, the constitution and finance and the economy as well as with the classic authors of anti-curial literature, such as Paolo Sarpi and Pietro Giannone. The collection was amassed through specific orders from Florence as well as through suggestions from agents posted abroad, which indicates there was a "government culture" running between different European courts. In Paris, the resident Tuscan Raimondo Niccoli, close associate of the physiocrats and Louis XVI's ministers, selected the books to be sent to Florence. In Frankfurt, Friedrich Samuel Schmidt de Rossau, director of the Baden Princely Library, was responsible for selecting the books. One of the books he sent to the grand duke was *Table raisonnée des principes de l'économie politique* (Karlsruhe, 1775), written by the French economist Pierre-Samuel Dupont de Nemours for the margrave Charles Frederick of Baden, which inspired the latter's attempt to impose a unique property tax in his states. The speed—or urgency even—with which some of these books were sent to the grand duke (Necker's *Compte rendu*, published in February 1781, was sent from Paris to Florence by courier rather than the usual method of shipping) shows their status as a working tool and how highly topical the debates were⁴³. The books were not just for the exclusive use of the grand duke. They were accessible to a restricted circle of government officials and close associates. In his *Efemeridi* on October 28, 1786, the grand-ducal government official Giuseppe Pelli mentioned the former Oratorian Joseph-André Brun's publication *Triomphe du nouveau monde*, which had appeared in Paris at the beginning of 1785⁴⁴. The copy he was consulting belonged to the grand duke, who had marked the sections concerning the reform of the criminal code and the plan for an ecumenical council. There was nothing remarkable about this book, however. It owed its brief celebrity to a ruling by Paris's parliament, which suspended its printing privilege. Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire* gave an account of the book in July 1786 in response to this suspension, which emphasized the misguided ways of a book "that, among other follies, dares to suggest that the arsonist, the poisoner, the parricide and even the regicide must only be punished with a life sentence"⁴⁵. Without overestimating the impact this lecture had (the abolitionist arguments had already been circulating for several decades in Tuscany⁴⁶), it is important to point out that it took place at exactly the same moment as the criminal law abolishing the death penalty in the Grand Duchy was being drafted. This shows the intense concern for documenting that inspired the growth of the princely library.

AN INSTRUMENT IN THE REFORMS POLICIES: THE SCIENTIFIC LIBRARIES

⁴³ Nina Knieling, "Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli. Collezionismo librario e diffusione delle idee illuminate alla corte di Pietro Leopoldo", *Archivio Storico Italiano* (174), 2016, 107-140.

⁴⁴ BNCF, Nuovi Acquisti 1050, *Efemeridi*, série II, XIV, p. 2711v, October 28, 1786.

⁴⁵ *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique, critique, etc.* (Paris: Buisson, 1813, 4 vols), IV, July 1786, p. 6.

⁴⁶ Philippe Audegean, "Le plus ancien programme de l'abolitionnisme italien: le *Discorso della pena di morte* de Giuseppe Pelli (1760-1761)", *Corpus. Revue de philosophie* (62), 2012, 135-156.

Despite the shortcomings of the public libraries and the confinement of the instruments of political decision-making to less accessible spheres, libraries were still seen in the final decades of the century as an instrument in the reforms policies. This was particularly true in the field of scientific activities. Again, the evolution in this domain was not exclusive to Tuscany. Within the context of the development of science policies, which were intended to be an effective tool in land and population management, the majority of scientific institutions that had been founded or renovated during the eighteenth century had a special library⁴⁷. This was the case for the Santa Maria Hospital in Florence (1679), the Santo Spirito Hospital in Rome (1711), the observatories in Florence (1786), Milan (1764) and Palermo (1790), the agricultural academies in Florence (1753) and Turin (1785), the naval college in Livorno, the royal artillery schools in Turin (1739), the military college in Verona (1763) and the cadet's school in Naples (1774)⁴⁸.

There were multiple issues associated with these libraries. The first concerned the institutionalization of the instruments of scholarly work, which were becoming increasingly different from those used in the private sphere. For a long time, there had been a fairly non-institutionalized conception of scholarly work and its tools, which moved indifferently between the laboratory and the study and perpetuated a certain confusion between the sphere of the private library and the public institution. It was the transformation in administrative demands, particularly clear in the Viennese cameralism areas of influence in Lombardy and Tuscany, that gradually rendered this confusion unacceptable to the government and led to a clearer separation of the two spaces⁴⁹. This evolution was particularly visible in institutions with reduced workforces, where the director identified closely with the establishment's fate and where he himself had been able to gather together the tools needed for it to function. At the botanical garden in Pisa, for example, this clarification led to the loss of the establishment's small book collection, which was merged with the holdings at the University of Pisa Library in 1781. The books at the botanical garden had been collected since the sixteenth century. An inventory of the gardens, compiled in 1626, described a collection of one hundred and ten volumes conserved in the Galleria along with the natural specimen collections gathered by Ferdinando I⁵⁰. From the 1630s onward, however, the institution went into decline, and the purchases stopped. An inventory dated 1686, compiled by the director Michelangelo Tilli when he first took up his post, listed no more than 99 books. The

⁴⁷ On the scientific policies of the Italian states, see Giulio Barsanti, Vieri Becagli, Renato Pasta (eds), *La politica della scienza. Toscana e stati italiani nel tardo Settecento* (Firenze: Olschki, 1996). For a broader perspective, see James McClellan, "Scientific institutions and the organization of science", in *The Cambridge history of science. 4. Eighteenth-Century Science*, Roy Porter (ed.) (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 87-106.

⁴⁸ The dates shown indicate the institutional founding of the libraries. This list has principally been drawn from Alfredo Serrai, *Storia della bibliografia. X. Specializzazione e Pragmatismo: i nuovi cardini della attività bibliografica*, I (Roma: Bulzoni, 1999), p. 498-506, although some of the data taken from this publication have been corrected and supplemented.

⁴⁹ On Lombardy, see Emmanuelle Chapron, "Politique de la science et correspondances savantes au XVIII^e siècle. Les musées de physique et d'histoire naturelle de Pavie et Florence", in Jean Boutier, Sandro Landi, Olivier Rouchon (eds) (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2009), p. 275-291.

⁵⁰ Ciro Sbrana, Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, "Una biblioteca scientifica a Pisa durante il granducato mediceo: i libri del Giardino dei Semplici", in *Livorno e Pisa: due città e un territorio nella politica dei Medici* (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi e Pacini Editori, 1980), p. 554-555 and Ciro Sbrana, "Per una ricostruzione dell'antica biblioteca del Giardino dei Semplici di Pisa. Nuovi elementi", *Physis* (24), 1982, p. 423-435.

permanent presence of the Tilli family as directors of the gardens fostered a fairly opaque style of management at the institution, which manifested most notably in the near total absence of any stocktaking⁵¹. When Angelo Attilio Tilli disappeared in 1781, the books that belonged to the gardens were found mixed in with the directors' personal library ("confusi ed incorporati con la libreria della casa Tilli"), and there was no possibility of identifying accurately what had come from the institution. The only exceptions to this were the volumes inventoried in the seventeenth century, which Peter Leopold had, as an administrative adjustment measure, arranged to be deposited in the university library. Conversely, at the Jesuit College of San Giovannino observatory in Florence, the institutionalization of the library proceeded with the appropriation of the private collection of its director, the Jesuit father, Leonardo Ximenès (1717-1786). He had built up a collection of physics and astronomy instruments as well as a library that was supplied by a vast network of contacts extending as far as the Parisian booksellers Barrois and the Jesuit astronomer Esprit Pézenas in Marseille⁵². The expulsion of the Jesuits from Tuscany in 1773 allowed the resource to be consolidated for the benefit of the institution. Ximenès was then given the power to retain the use of his accommodation and observatory in return for a promise that he would leave all his instruments and books to the state on his death, which he did in 1786.

In institutions founded during the eighteenth century, the installation of a library was very often envisaged from the outset. Such an investment was not just a façade. The libraries played an important role in promoting scientific knowledge among those socio-professional classes that often found themselves, privately at least, lacking in book resources or whose relationship with the book culture was still conflictual in the eighteenth century. The second issue with these institutional libraries therefore came about as a result of the intellectual education of the sometimes very low-level professional categories who were responsible for updating the science policies. At the *guardie marine* school in Livorno, which was founded in 1766, a small library specializing in mathematics, history, architecture and military and naval engineering was set up in 1772. The collection was amassed from an ensemble of books donated by the officers plus a sum of 10 *zecchini* from each of the *guardie marine*. Between 1772 and 1777, 50 *lire* a month was saved on subsistence costs and assigned to book purchases. This "reciprocal union" allowed everyone to benefit from books that were useful to their profession, "particularly the pilots and more junior officers, who enjoyed less preferential treatment" and who would not have been able to buy these books⁵³. As Secretary of State Francesco Seratti noted,

The utility of the Livorno Marine Library is clear because, on the one hand, it is made up almost entirely of professional books and, on the other, there is a regulation that allows the officers, *guardie marine* and junior officers to not only come and work in

⁵¹ Tiziano Arrigoni, "Per una storia delle istituzioni scientifiche nella Toscana del Settecento", *Atti e memorie dell'accademia toscana di scienze e lettere la Colombaria* (53), 1988, p. 115-218, p. 184-190.

⁵² Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Firenze, Fondo principale, II.-.297-302 (inventoried by C. Triarico in *Nuncius* (13), 1998, p. 209-245). Danilo Barsanti, Leonardo Rombai, *Leonardo Ximenes. Uno scienziato nella Toscana lorenese del Settecento* (Firenze: Edizioni Medicea, 1987). Danilo Barsanti, *La biblioteca di Leonardo Ximenès: la cultura di uno scienziato del 18. sec.* (Firenze: Osservatorio Ximeniano, 1988).

⁵³ ASF, Scrittoio delle fortezze e fabbriche, 207, memorandum n.d.

the library but also to borrow, for a limited time, the books they need for their work and for acquiring the necessary knowledge.⁵⁴

Obviously, these institutional libraries extended the experience of scientific writing to professional categories that would not have been familiar with them before. The same applies to other professions working “on the ground”, such as surgeons. During the first years of Peter Leopold’s reign, when a new reform of hospital institutions was envisaged, Doctor Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti suggested the installation of a library at the hospital in Pistoia. He advised “that the hospital will be supplied with books that are absolutely essential for the young people studying to become surgeons, who do not have the means to buy them since they come from poor families”. These books were to remain the property of the institution and were to be entrusted to the nurse, who would periodically hand them over to one of the young people⁵⁵. A small list was appended to the proposal, and, in 1768, the bookseller Giuseppe Rigacci was paid “for books on surgery and the anatomy for the young people to study”, including Platner’s *Institutiones chirurgiae* and Heister’s *Anatomia*⁵⁶.

As the examples above have shown, the third issue in relation to these institutional libraries concerned the definition of professional, strictly specialized areas of knowledge that formed the basis of individuals’ expertise. The process of demarcating different areas of knowledge was particularly visible in the case of old collections that had been re-formed to be more in keeping with a utilitarian conception of science. This was the case in two institutions that played a central role in Grand Duke Peter Leopold’s science policy, namely the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History, opened in 1775, and the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital, whose library was re-formed in 1778. These two libraries allow us to follow the process of selecting areas of knowledge considered to be “scientific”, because both libraries were formed from a choice made from pre-existing collections. The Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History was formed in 1771 from a selection of books from the Palatine Library when the Palatine had been combined with the Magliabechiana. The Santa Maria Nuova Hospital Library resulted from a radical purge in 1778 of all the books that had been collected by the institution since the seventeenth century, where only a sixth of the books were ultimately conserved. This sorting was, in fact, the final outcome of a much longer process. The redefining of the hospital library’s contents was part of the reforms process that the establishment had undergone throughout the eighteenth century. The first stage had begun in 1740 when a commission of doctors was tasked with putting forward proposals to improve the care and teaching at the hospital. To make the library a real working tool for the students and professors, Doctor Antonio Cocchi suggested “excluding the least useful books” and classifying the others into four sectors (grammar- and logic-related disciplines, scientific subjects, medical sciences, law and history), each comprising five classes⁵⁷. This classification was not, however, the one that was ultimately implemented. Cocchi’s student Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti proposed the classification that was eventually used, and he was

⁵⁴ ASF, Segreteria di Stato, 275, protocol 53 n° 21.

⁵⁵ ASF, Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova, 91: Deliberazioni per il nuovo regolamento, 1763-1768: memorandum from G. Targioni Tozzetti about the hospital in Pistoia, September 16, 1767.

⁵⁶ ASF, Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova, 2300, n° 14 (7 July, 1768).

⁵⁷ Antonio Cocchi, *Relazione dello Spedale di Santa Maria Nuova di Firenze*, Maria Mannelli Goggioli (ed.), (Firenze: Le lettere, 2000), p. 135.

tasked with drawing up the library's catalog a few years later. The rules set by Targioni Tozzetti were "to group all the books that may be suitable for a hospital library in the first twelve classes and to put all the remaining books into the other seven classes so that if we decide to use it, it will be easy to separate the useful from the superfluous books"⁵⁸. The first twelve classes gathered together logic, geometry, cosmography, physics, anatomy, theoretical and practical medicine, surgery, pharmacy, natural history and miscellaneous. The next seven included history, theology, law and erudition. If they wanted to reduce the library to only those books that were relevant to hospital use, they just had to truncate these latter classes. The utility criterion had already evolved. Whereas Cocchi had placed the sciences of language at the top, as being foundational to all intellectual learning, they were downgraded in this classification. The notion of "useful knowledge" eliminated the literary and historical elements that were still closely associated with scientific knowledge, not just in Tuscan culture but in the suggested reading programs given to doctors at the time.

However, it was another thirty years before the sorting was really implemented. At the end of the 1770s, the great hospital reform introduced by Grand Duke Peter Leopold led to a rethink of the material place and functions of the library within the establishment. The task of sorting was entrusted to the secretary of the reform commission, Doctor Giovanni Luigi Targioni, who retained the partitioning method defined by Targioni Tozzetti. He selected the books in the first twelve classes and added some more from the next seven (such as legal books for criminology reports)⁵⁹. As far as the sorting was concerned, the definitive partitioning was, in reality, a lot stricter than he had envisaged. The library was truncated from these seven latter classes as well as from the first three (logic, geometry, cosmography) even though they were judged to be useful by the two doctors. This obsession with narrowing the contents solely around useful knowledge was also in evidence at the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History. The books that had been selected for the library from the Palatine were already relatively specialized, but it seems the successive directors all reiterated the need to rid the library of any books that may have slipped in by mistake or "per puro lusso", "not leaving any books other than those on physics, chemistry, natural history and other related sciences"⁶⁰.

The final issue associated with these scientific libraries was their public. As we have already seen, certain members of the *Georgofili* academy defended the idea of educating the Tuscan population in agronomic and technical matters through adapted publications and the creation of small, well-put-together libraries in the towns and villages. However, the way in which the libraries operated demonstrated an ambiguity that had still not been fully resolved in relation to this plan for knowledge diffusion. On the one hand, those involved in the logics of professionalization had to transform them into effective educational instruments. On the other, the institutions that hosted them were sometimes mobilized in a policy of popularizing scientific knowledge, aimed at modernizing Tuscan cultural references. This conflict was particularly acute at the Royal Museum of Physics, where the library's status remained

⁵⁸ ASF, Presidenza del Buon governo, 512, ins. 9: L. G. Targioni to the medical deputation, November 18, 1778, reporting Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti's intentions.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ ASF, Segreteria di finanze, 1137: R. Cocchi to A. Tavanti, January 20, 1774 and ASF, Scrittoio delle fortezze e fabbriche, 207.

undecided for a long time. In 1783, in the middle of a major phase of reconfiguring the landscape of the capital's cultural institutions, Grand Duke Peter Leopold ordered its director, Felice Fontana, to organize botany and chemistry lectures for the public and to open the library to all. The library's successive directors put up a passive but effective resistance to this plan, arguing that the library was above all a working tool for the museum staff and that the books had to remain available and in good condition. The museum's archives show how the library was used on a daily basis for the development and staging of collections. The meticulously updated medicine collection was used for producing the anatomical wax models that made the museum famous. Other books were used to organize and label the exhibited collections. In 1794, Fabbroni requested the purchase of Bloch's *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière des poissons*, which "would be very useful in the distribution and denomination of the individuals that make up the tethyological class in this royal museum"⁶¹. Behind the material arguments, the concern underpinning the refusal to open to the public was that a separation should be maintained between a small group of readers authorized to access the books and a wider public, whose education had to be confined to the autodidactic layout of the museum's artefacts.

While they refused an official and expanded opening, the museum's directors nevertheless arranged for a public space to be made available with limited access. They never declined the opportunity to grant an in-situ consultation to "a studious, scholarly or known person who requested one"⁶². In the absence of any official regulation, the museum library's operations aligned themselves with the regime of collusion that was observable in the erudite, aristocratic collections, and it participated in the formation of a local community of scientific readers, land administrators, engineers, academicians and university professors, who sometimes obtained permission to borrow books using public utility as their argument. Hence, a forestry administrator in the province of Siena borrowed Duhamel du Monceau's *Traité des arbres et arbustes* "to use it to find woods in Maremma", the royal mathematician Pietro Ferroni took out Brussels Academy's annals "to confront certain theories relating to the curve of bridge arches" and a chemistry professor from the University of Pisa borrowed books that he intended to use to reorganize his own shell collection as well as that in the university's exhibition room⁶³.

This temptation to be a closed library also presented itself at the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital. It was all the more obvious here because, as we have seen, this hospital library had a long tradition of opening to the public. The hospital reform of the 1770s led to a rethink of the library's uses when five-sixths of its historical collection were withdrawn. Under the new regulation of 1783, the library seems to have been closely linked to the pedagogical activities at the hospital. Opening hours were redefined in line with lesson times, and the management of the library was given over to the superintendent of studies. Encouraging the librarian to organize medical, chemistry and surgical exercises that might "make book reading more productive", the drafters of the regulation even suggested the modalities of "good scientific

⁶¹ Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza [IMSS], Affari 1794, fol. 331-332: G. Fabbroni to L. Bartolini, November 26, 1794.

⁶² ASF, Fabbroni, 13, ins. 159.

⁶³ IMSS, Affari 1792, fol. 173-174, 176; IMSS, Affari 1797, fol. 4-9.

reading”, together with observation and experimentation⁶⁴. The 1783 regulation stipulated that students and professors were the library’s prioritized and preferential users but that it could also admit “strangers with authorization from the president of studies”. In other words, its setup was probably very similar to that of the museum⁶⁵.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL SUPPRESSIONS: A TERRITORIAL LABORATORY?

The constitution of the capital’s two main scientific libraries shows how the principle of an optimal, reasoned distribution of book resources was gradually established as the main instrument of the government’s libraries policy⁶⁶. The distribution of books from the Palatine Library in 1771 was the first manifestation of this policy. While most of the books went to the the Magliabechiana, duplicate copies were sent to the University of Pisa Library. The manuscripts were sent to the Laurentian Library and books on physics and natural history went to the Royal Museum of Physics. The two episodes of ecclesiastical suppression were an opportunity to increase the power of this redistributive practice. In 1773, the suppressions involved the nine Jesuit houses and, at the beginning of the 1780s, almost half of the Tuscan convents, which were closed down with the aim of rationalizing the monastic network, disciplining the religious and reorienting their activities toward socially useful activities. Again, an examination of these two episodes allows us to compare the policy solutions adopted in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with those found in other states in both the Italian Peninsula and more widely in Catholic Europe⁶⁷. Liberating collections that were sometimes ancient and valuable but were most often mediocre in terms of quality meant the authorities had to put in place procedures both locally and more centrally to inventory, sort and reallocate books.

The measures taken in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany reveal a tendency to turn the ecclesiastical libraries into instruments of local policy rather than instruments of the reorganization of resources across the Grand Duchy. In 1773, the fate of the old Jesuit libraries was settled in line with local institutional contexts. If there was a public library in the city, it was encouraged to buy the books it lacked. If there was no public library or if it refused to take the books, they were offered to the teaching community that had taken over the establishment. The rest were sold off by auction, often at a low price⁶⁸. In Pistoia, most of the college’s books were bought by the Pia Casa della Sapienza, which housed a public

⁶⁴ ASF, Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova, 1309, Affari, I, 1782, affare 20, *Regolamento per la Libreria del Regio Spedale di Santa Maria Nuova approvato con Lettera della R. Segreteria di Stato del di 27 Dicembre 1780*.

⁶⁵ *Regolamento del Regio Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova di Firenze* (Firenze: Cambiagi, 1783).

⁶⁶ The question of financial grants for purchases was much more thorny. The largest funding amounts were regularly claimed by the Magliabechiana and the University of Pisa libraries. Conversely, the generous grant that allowed Felice Fontana to dedicate almost 200 *scudi* a year to book purchases for the Royal Museum of Physics demonstrates the importance that the grand duke accorded the institution (Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica* (cit. note 6), p. 306-310).

⁶⁷ See *How the Secularization of Religious Houses Transformed the Libraries of Europe, 16th-19th Centuries*, Cristina Dondi, Dorit Raines, Richard Sharpe (eds) (Turnhout: Brepols, in press).

⁶⁸ For more details on the arrangements, see Emmanuelle Chapron, “Il patrimonio ricomposto. Biblioteche e soppressioni ecclesiastiche in Toscana da Pietro Leopoldo a Napoleone”, *Archivio Storico Italiano* (167) 2009, p. 299-345.

library. The rest were sold to booksellers or private individuals⁶⁹. In Arezzo, the Vallombrosians, who had taken over the college, bought the books for the sum of 800 *lire*⁷⁰. In Livorno, the Jesuit collection was sold at auction in 1775 to a Florentine bookseller⁷¹. The Tuscan approach thus differed markedly from the Lombardian policy, which built a highly coordinated and hierarchized network of local libraries on the vestiges of the Jesuit libraries. The Mantua and Cremona public libraries were formed from Jesuits cores with the addition of other collections (ecclesiastical, private, duplicates from other Lombardian libraries). The plan to found public libraries in the smaller cities that did not already have one (Como, Casalmaggiore, Lodi) highlights the territorial challenges of the reform, which aimed at a homogenous division of access to knowledge throughout the territory. The suppression of the dense network of Jesuit colleges thus appeared, in the Habsburg domains, to be the lever to implement a genuine network of lay, public libraries, whose coherence lay both in the practical arrangements (the hierarchized circulation of duplicate books, the directives aimed at homogenizing the cataloging of the collections) and in the belief that the diffusion of education effectively contributed to the good policing of territories and the loyalty of readers (or subjects) to enlightened despotism⁷².

The arrangements in Tuscany were also differentiated by the absence of a central library, which would have been the principal beneficiary of the redistributions. The Magliabechiana, which the Palatine Library was merged with, was not very favored. Its prerogatives were quite inferior to those enjoyed by the Imperial Library in Vienna and the princely libraries in other Italian states, such as the Estense Library in Modena, the Royal Library in Naples and the Palatine Library in Parma, which all obtained the preemptive right to the Jesuit collections in their states⁷³. In the Grand Duchy itself, this privilege was only afforded to the Uffizi Gallery, whose director was given the task of visiting all the Jesuit houses to remove interesting works of art. He also managed to collect some books on antiquities and fine arts, which was a discreet extension of his original mission. These some one hundred and forty books, which represented the primary core of the Uffizi Gallery Library, were the only centralized proceeds from this first wave of suppressions⁷⁴.

The suppressions of the 1780s marked a certain continuity with the Jesuit episode of 1773. There was no general directive drawn up to organize the collection and distribution of these book collections, whereas other states (particularly the Habsburgs' hereditary domains) had, at the same time, decided on a centralized management⁷⁵. The difference between the Tuscan and Austrian policies can be explained in part by the very progressive nature of the

⁶⁹ ASF, Reggenza, 371, ins. 15, p. 43. Maria Camilla Pagnini, *Domus Sapientiae. Il palazzo della Sapienza e la biblioteca Forteguerriana a Pistoia* (Firenze: Edifir, 2005).

⁷⁰ ASF, Compagnie religiose sopresse da Pietro Leopoldo, 1142, ins. 644, fasc. A, ins. 10, n° 459.

⁷¹ ASF, Compagnie religiose..., 1150, ins. 671, fasc. B.

⁷² Silvio Furlani, "Maria Teresa fondatrice di biblioteche", *Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia* (50), 1982, p. 459-474.

⁷³ Vincenzo Trombetta, *Storia e cultura delle biblioteche napoletane. Librerie private, istituzioni francesi e borboniche, strutture postunitarie* (Napoli: Vivarium, 2002), p. 144-151. *Notizie e documenti per una storia della Biblioteca palatina di Parma* (Parma: Biblioteca Palatina, 1962), p. 63. P. Di Pietro Lombardi, *Girolamo Tiraboschi* (Rimini: Luisè, 1996), p. 71.

⁷⁴ On this library, see Chapron, *Ad utilità pubblica* (cit. note 6), p. 213-220.

⁷⁵ Gerhard Winner, *Die Klosteraufhebungen in Niederösterreich und Wien* (Vienna, Munich: Verlag Herold, 1967), p. 91-95.

Leopoldian suppressions. Conversely, when Peter Leopold ordered the suppression of all the Companies of Lay Piety in 1785, there was a general provision involving at least the works of art, the parchments and the most valuable books⁷⁶. As far as the religious establishments were concerned, the lack of any organizational plan gave free reign to the demands of the institutions, who made use of their connections in ecclesiastical and administrative circles.

Throughout each of the suppressions, however, the most obvious phenomenon was the evolution in political priorities. In 1773, at the time of the Jesuit suppression, the foremost issue was that of public education. That same year, Peter Leopold wrote his *Notes sur l'Éducation*, developing his idea of a lay, public education system⁷⁷. In the 1780s, the seminaries and new ecclesiastical academies seemed to be given priority over schools and public libraries when it came to receiving the books that had not been sold. This decision shows the importance accorded in the 1780s to the education of the secular clergy, who were expected to become representatives of the government in the maintenance of social order and the smooth rollout of the reforms⁷⁸. Hence, in 1785, the Arezzo Dominicans' library (which had just received volumes from the Foiano and Pistoia convents) was distributed between the ecclesiastical academy and the archiepiscopal seminary, "which was relevant to public utility and the education of the clergy", following a proposal by the bishop, supported by Vincenzo Martini, secretary of the *Regio Diritto*⁷⁹. The Cortona Augustines' library was not returned to the city's public library in 1787 but rather to its seminary⁸⁰. Two decades later, the Napoleonic suppressions were to mark a clean break with the Leopoldian experimentations. They drew inspiration, with their centralizing tendency, their creation of centralized commissions and their introduction of large *dépôts littéraires*, from procedures in revolutionary France and from those in other Italian states under Napoleonic control.

In eighteenth-century Italy, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany occupied the middle ground between two extreme situations. On the one hand, there were the states in which the library policy was minimal, such as in the Republic of Venice. For example, the Marciana was left in a flagrant state of decline, the patrician libraries were entrusted with the job of creating "a kind of private virtual library extending to the whole urban territory" and public libraries were created from the terra firma of private initiatives, which the Venetian Republic controlled without interfering⁸¹. On the other were the states in which the issue of the libraries was a primary aspect in policies on professional training, public education and political land

⁷⁶ *Bandi e Ordini da osservarsi nel granducato di Toscana, stampati in Firenze e pubblicati dal di 12 luglio 1737 [al di otto febbraio 1790]* (Firenze: Stamperia imperiale, 1747-1790), n° CL, July 30, 1785, art. XXVI.

⁷⁷ Peter Leopold of Habsburg-Lorraine, *Scritti inediti sull'educazione*, Luciana Bellatalla (ed) (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 1990) and Luciana Bellatalla, *Pietro Leopoldo di Toscana granduca-educatore: teoria e pratica di un despota illuminato* (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 1984). Carlo Fantappiè, "Giuridizionalismo e politica scolastica nel Settecento: la soppressione della Compagnia di Gesù in Toscana", in *Studi in onore di Italo Mancini*, G. Pansini (ed) (Napoli: ESI, 1999), p. 207-237. Teresa Calogero, "Scuole e comunità. La riforma dell'istruzione pubblica nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo", *Rassegna storica toscana* (46), 2000, p. 3-42.

⁷⁸ Carlo Fantappiè, "Promozione e controllo del clero nell'età leopoldina", in *La Toscana dei Lorena. Riforme, territorio, società*, Zeffiro Ciuffoletti, Leonardo Rombai (eds) (Firenze: Olschki, 1989), p. 233-250.

⁷⁹ ASF, Segretario del Regio Diritto, 5373: V. Martini to Pierre Léopold, December 3, 1784.

⁸⁰ ASF, Segreteria di Stato, 487, protocol 4 n° 11, November 29, 1787.

⁸¹ Dorit Raines, "La cultura libraria della Repubblica di Venezia nel Settecento", in *Un'istituzione dei Lumi: la biblioteca. Teoria, gestione e pratiche biblioteconomiche nell'Europa dei Lumi*, Frédéric Barbier, Andrea De Pasquale (eds) (Parma: Museo Bodoniano, 2012), p. 85-104.

management, such as in the extensively discussed Austrian Lombardy. In Tuscany, books participated fully in the “government of opinions”, to borrow Sandro Landi’s felicitous expression. However, libraries were inconsistently represented in Tuscany. The dynasty’s modernization project, on the one hand, and the priority given to the most economical allocation of resources, the scientific collections and the clergy’s education, on the other, are in fact one and the same shared story.