

Newsletter n°4

Project summary : 'A Tale of Two Twinned Cities: Corato and Grenoble'.

In 2016, the project began with genealogical research for a friend who wanted to find out about her birth parents. A DNA test indicated that they were originally from Corato. In 2024, our family tree, entitled *albero genealogico coratino*, includes over 27,000 interconnected people, coupled with a Google Drive database featuring over 20,000 photos of authentic records. This research revealed the importance of emigration for Coratini families, and our www.emigrazione-corato.org website was launched in November 2020.

A meeting with historian Catherine Virlouvet led to the creation of a scientific monitoring committee in 2022, chaired by Professor Biagio Salvemini of Bari's Aldo Moro University. In 2023, CRIAT (Centro di Ricerca Interuniversitario per l'Analisi del Territorio), a coalition of 4 *Pugliesi* universities, agreed to the creation of an international database on Apulian emigration, an idea suggested by Guido Bonsaver, professor of Italian cultural history at Oxford.

Our genealogical research led us not only to promote the writing of the history of emigration from Corato, but also to work with Greg Clarke, an application developer with Wikitree, a worldwide mutual help genealogical web-site. We explored the potential of X-matches in genetic genealogy for both reducing the confusion created by endogamy and identifying potential transnational relatives. In effect, the trajectory of X-chromosome transmission – from father to daughter and from mother to all her children – passes on a particular label from one generation to the next. Our cooperation led to the creation of Wikitree's '*X-friends*' application in January 2024, and we set up a '*Corato One Place Study*' to document the application's development process.

As a means to promote the writing of the history of Coratino emigration to France, and to Grenoble in particular, we are presently in the final stages of making 3 new panels on Corato for the 'Ciao Italia' exhibition of the Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration. The exhibition will be inaugurated in May 2025 in Grenoble, in French, and in Italian in Corato, the same month. However, the support of universities in the United States, where people are particularly interested in researching their roots, is desired.

Our voluntary digitization program was inaugurated in November 2023, when the mayor of Corato invited us to digitize the passport applications of would-be emigrants from 1920 to 1960. Then, in June 2024, thanks to cooperation with CRIAT, authorization was obtained to digitize Corato's civil registers from 1911 to 1938, held in Trani. The digitization inauguration took place from September 30 to October 3, 2024, with the voluntary participation of Pierre Marzocca. The latter is an archive digitization expert who not only digitized the baptism and marriage registers of Corato's parish archives in 2008, but also designed his own digitization equipment. He will resume the work in Trani on February 24, 2025, with the training of local volunteers.

During the mission to Trani in October 2024, we met the Vicar General of the diocese, don Sergio Pellegrini, to whom we handed a letter of support from the Bishop of Grenoble, Msgr Jean-Marc Eychenne. Don Sergio suggested that we write a letter to the archbishop of Trani, Msgr Leonardo d'Ascenzo, asking that Pierre Marzocca continue to provide information free

of charge to descendants of emigrants requesting records from the parish archives, while also requesting authorization to put the latter's indexes online.

Since 2021, the project has benefited from several new developments: the Pope's visit to Marseille to support the cause of today's migrants, the creation by CRIAT of an international database, and the launch of 'Roots Tourism' by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Combining genealogical research, digitization of archives and international collaboration, our project facilitates access to invaluable historical resources, while offering a unique opportunity to strengthen ties between emigrant communities and their place of origin.

Please support our digitization campaign : <https://www.emigrazione-corato.org/pages/support-the-digitization-of-corato-s-archives.html>

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