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Author(s): FRANCESCA BREGOLI

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“Two Jews walk into a Coffeehouse”: the “Jewish question,” utility, and political participation in late eighteenth-century Livorno

FRANCESCA BREGOLI

Department of History, Queens College of the City University of New York, New York, USA
E-mail: francesca.bregoli@qc.cuny.edu

Abstract This article examines the distinct ways in which the Jewish condition was perceived during the Enlightenment in the port city of Livorno, arguing that the privileged status of certain mercantile Jewish communities could be a force for conservatism and not necessarily a trigger of emancipation. On the basis of literary and governmental sources, including the little-known ironic philosophical dialogue *Les Juifs* (Livorno, 1786), and an analysis of Tuscan municipal reforms, it appears that Livorno offers an alternative model of integration to the better-known Prussian and French cases. The Tuscan government and intellectual elite did not consider the useful Livornese minority in need either “to be improved” or better “integrated into society,” and thus the Enlightenment critiques of Jewish society typical of French and Prussian reformers and the calls for Jewish self-improvement that characterized the Haskalah are not applicable to Livorno. However, the notion of utility that defined the Livornese community during the Old Regime was not a station on the road to emancipation. Jewish utility in Livorno did not bring about greater civil rights for individual Livornese Jews. Rather in both function and perception, it contributed to the arrested political integration of Livornese Jewry in the 1780s compared to events in all other Tuscan Jewish communities

After the publication of Christian Wilhelm Dohm’s work *On the Civil Improvement of the Jews* in 1781 and the promulgation of Joseph II’s *Toleranzpatent* in 1782, debates in Western European Enlightenment circles increasingly focused on concrete political questions regarding the integration of the Jews into the larger society—with the exception of the Tuscan state. Recent scholarship has emphasized that the Jewish condition did not represent a major theme of discussion in Tuscan public opinion in either Jewish or gentile circles. The absence of a public debate about the Jewish condition in Tuscany has been presented as a manifestation of the disinterest in the “Jewish question” on the part of the protagonists of the Tuscan Enlightenment.¹ Given the size and the importance of the Livornese Jewish community (commonly referred to as *Nazione Ebreica*), however, this lack of interest seems

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counter-intuitive. By the mid eighteenth century, Livorno hosted the second largest community in Western Europe, after that of Amsterdam, numbering approximately 4000 souls. The port counted a percentage of Jewish inhabitants (10% of the entire population) perhaps unequaled in any other urban center in Western Europe throughout the early modern period.²

In fact, as I will argue below, the specific situation of the Tuscan port of Livorno did raise a set of questions, but they differed from those that preoccupied Prussian reformers and Jewish enlighteners (*maskilim*). This essay takes a two-pronged approach to illuminate the perceptions and facts of the Jewish condition in late eighteenth-century Livorno and suggests that the Livornese example provides a significant alternative to prevalent models of Jewish integration.

The first part of the article concentrates on the little known pamphlet *Les Juifs* as an example of the peculiarities of Livornese Jewish integration vis-à-vis Prussian and maskilic models, claiming that the diffused perception of the Jews' utility and acculturation prevented the emergence of a debate over the Jewish condition in the port city. Moving from this consideration, the second part of the article addresses the concrete obstacles that the elite of the *Nazione Ebraica*, highly integrated from a socio-economic point of view, encountered along the path of political inclusion.

Les Juifs

Les Juifs, a curious pamphlet in French published in Livorno in 1786, provides important insights that allow a comparative view of the different Tuscan and Transalpine takes on the Jewish question in the 1780s.³ The action of *Les Juifs* takes place in a Livornese coffeehouse, the *Caffè del Greco*,⁴ managed by "an honest Greek" named Stephano, who would have reminded any lettered Italian reader of the character of Demetrio, the Greek manager of the fictional coffee shop immortalized in Pietro Verri's *Il Caffè* (1764–1766), the most influential voice of the Italian Enlightenment.⁵ Stephano's shop, just like Demetrio's café, is presented as the cosmopolitan, elegant and well-lit meeting place of all the foreigners in town, whose decorous interior and ambience of politesse invites learned discussions and political conversations among its diverse patrons.⁶

The work captures the fictional conversation between two learned Livornese Jews, Jeremie Pouf, *le pleureur* ("the whiny"), and Jonas Gay, *l'enjoué* ("the enthusiast"), who meet at the café and exchange literary and political opinions prompted by the recent Italian translation of *Die Juden* ("The Jews"), the earlier of the two Jewish plays by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781).⁷ The Italian translation of Lessing's play, entitled *Gli ebrei*,

Commedia in un atto del Sig. Lessing ("The Jews, comedy in one act by Mr. Lessing"), appeared in Livorno in 1786.⁸ It was published by Giovan Vincenzo Falorni and translated from the French edition by Luigi Migliaresi,⁹ a bookseller and publisher later known for his revolutionary sympathies.¹⁰ Considering Migliaresi's political leanings and the established Livornese tradition of Enlightenment printing,¹¹ it is not surprising that Lessing's play received its first Italian translation in the port city.

Soon after the appearance of Migliaresi's translation, the Falorni press published *Les Juifs, dialogue Entre M. Jérémie Pouf et M. Jonas Gay au Caffè de Grec, à l'occasion de la publication de la Comédie des Juifs originairement au Allemand per Monsieur Lessing Traduite en français, et dernièrement en Italien* ("The Jews, dialogue between Mr. Jeremie Pouf and Mr. Jonas Gay, on the occasion of the publication of the Comedy of the Jews, [written] originally in German by Mr. Lessing, translated into French, and recently into Italian").¹² The author claimed to be a certain François Gariel, "Citoyen de Paris, ci devant Caissier de Monsieur frère du Roi de France" (citizen of Paris, formerly cashier of the King of France's brother).¹³

The identity of Gariel remains somewhat of a mystery. We may never know whether he was in fact Parisian as the frontispiece of *Les Juifs* claims,¹⁴ or something completely different altogether, as I suspect.¹⁵ Needless to say, the identity of Gariel and his provenance ultimately bear on our interpretation of the pamphlet. Because of elements internal to the text and the historical circumstances of Livorno at the time, I suggest that this author was residing locally, although most likely he was not Jewish. Some precise references to Tuscan towns and Livornese topography in the text indicate that Gariel was familiar with the area. His familiarity with Migliaresi's milieu and his Italian translation of Lessing suggests that he must have sojourned in the port city some time in 1786, but there is no evidence to prove that Gariel had any personal involvement with the Livornese Jewish community. His treatment of Lessing's play and of its Italian translation was, however, informed, sympathetic, and above all distant from the contemporaneous Prussian and French discussions about the condition of the Jews.¹⁶

This approach fuels speculation that "François Gariel" may have been the pseudonym of a Livornese author in Migliaresi's circle. A likely candidate is the French-born poet, translator, and literary critic Salvatore Giovanni de Coureil, a man known for his (often biting) essays on Italian theater.¹⁷ Both Migliaresi and de Coureil were associated with the *Accademia dei Polentofagi* ("Academy of the polenta eaters"), a literary academy founded in Pisa in 1785 and later known for its Jacobin sympathies.¹⁸ De Coureil is known to have had a favorable opinion of Hebrew poetry and an admiration for Jewish contributions to commerce and education.¹⁹

Lessing's *Die Juden*

The Livornese pamphlet could be aptly described as a critical review of Lessing's play, couched as an ironic, philosophical dialogue. G.E. Lessing wrote *Die Juden* in 1749 and revised it over the next four years before first publishing it in 1754.²⁰ This comedy in one act and twenty-two scenes takes place on the estate of a baron, whom a mysterious traveler, possibly a merchant, had just saved from the assault of two bearded highway robbers.²¹ At this point in Prussian history any man with a long beard was assumed to be Jewish. In the summer of 1748, Frederick the Great of Prussia had promulgated a law that prohibited Jews from shaving their beards; the law itself was designed to prevent Jews from passing as Christians and to facilitate the identification of Jewish thieves.²² Lessing's play does not refer explicitly to the "beard law," but the plot should be understood in light of that context. By alluding to their bearded chins, Lessing presented the highway robbers to the audience as presumably Jewish. We later discover that the two thieves are none other than Martin Krumm, the bailiff of the baron's estate, and Michael Stich, the village headman, who had disguised themselves as Jews by wearing fake beards.²³

The play moves along with a classic series of twists and turns. During the course of the action, the traveler engages in several conversations that display his generosity of spirit and enlightened views, while the baron and most other characters express harsh judgments about Jews and their alleged greed.²⁴ Eventually, the traveler catches Krumm with two fake "Jewish" beards in his pocket. Alerted by the stranger, the baron discovers the identity of his attackers and, overcome by gratitude, he decides to reward the traveler with property and with the hand of his daughter. At this point, the stranger is forced to reveal his identity. He is a Jew! When the baron insists that he at least accept his property as a gift, the Jewish traveler refuses, but asks the baron to be less sweeping in his judgment of Jews, adding that he always considered the friendship of another human being, be he Jewish or Christian, precious beyond measure.²⁵ As the play ends, the baron tells his new friend that Jews would be very worthy of respect if only they were all Jews like him; the traveler replies that Christians would be lovable, if only they all possessed the baron's qualities.²⁶

It has been repeatedly noted that Lessing's traveler was not only the first educated Jew in German literature, but also one who was thoroughly acquainted with the basic tenets of the Enlightenment.²⁷ An attentive eighteenth-century German audience might have recognized him as a traveling businessman, characterized by his affable manners and diplomatic skills and would have granted him the status of a hero because of his perspicacity and courage.²⁸ As a member of the middle-class, presented as rational, brave and literate, the mysterious Jewish traveler was the sole character in the play

with whom most contemporary German readers could have identified. The playwright cast him in better light than the baron, described by a critic as “ineffectual . . . and parochial,” or the other lower-class characters. Lessing’s novelty and daring in casting a Jewish character as the only role model are remarkable.²⁹

The Livornese critique of Lessing’s play

The author of *Les Juifs* introduces himself as the faithful spectator of a conversation of such philosophical worth that he could not help but publish it. Of particular interest is Gariel’s signature at the bottom of the preface: *Le Tolerant*.³⁰ Gariel also alludes to the fact that Livornese readers will find in the work “things that they know by heart,” but since sometimes a small “bagatelle” may have broader fortune than a “perfect work,” the dialogue might reach readers who have never been to the port and will find it entertaining. Gariel here hints at the conditions enjoyed by the corporate nations that lived in the port city of Livorno, as if to advise readers that the unique privileges of the eighteenth-century Livornese Jewish community are the filter through which the conversation between Jeremie and Jonas should be viewed.³¹ Finally, the ironic tone of *Les Juifs*, signaled from the beginning through a reference to Voltaire’s *Candide*, warns the reader that the dialogue abounds with semiserious twists and ambiguities.³²

In the course of their conversation, Jeremie and Jonas express several qualms about Lessing’s play, the first being its lack of credibility. This perspective evokes a well-known eighteenth-century reaction to *Die Juden*, published by J.D. Michaelis, orientalist and biblical scholar at the University of Göttingen, who had criticized Lessing’s characterization of the mysterious traveler as unbelievable; this Jewish character, said Michaelis, was too noble to be real.³³ Lessing rebutted the accusation, claiming that such nobility would be just as rare among Christians. Jeremie, however, takes a different tack: he is displeased that most of the Christian characters lack credibility. The two beard-wearing assaulters are especially troublesome, he observes, if one were looking for verisimilitude.³⁴ Jeremie does not believe that respectable officers like a bailiff and a village headman could ever behave as they do in the play. The fact that Lessing portrays two Christians as wicked in order to exalt the commonly oppressed Jewish nation is particularly bothersome.³⁵

The ironic twist of this statement is not lost on the reader. In Lessing’s play, the Jewish traveler expressed his love for all of humanity and demonstrated his noble nature by helping a fellow human being in trouble. Principles of universality and reason shaped the traveler’s behavior in *Die Juden*,

proving that the Jew was on a par with the Christian baron. Jeremie, however, questions Lessing's own understanding of the "law of nature" and the "rights of peoples." According to Jeremie, Lessing violates the sanctity of religion by having his characters behave as they do, for whether the characters of the play are "Calviniste, ou Luthérienne," Christianity has the same principles as Judaism.³⁶

Jeremie's perspective is that of a Jewish humanist who believes that all faiths have the same principles: the wrong done by Lessing to Protestantism horrifies him. Evidently, Jeremie speaks from a place of entitlement and safety, and in this sense, he is quite different from Lessing's traveler, who hid his identity knowing of the baron's aversion to Jews.³⁷ For Jeremie that Judaism is a rational religion is taken for granted, and he underscores his assumption with a poignant comparison. Unlike the bailiff and the village headman in Lessing's play, he asserts, the not-so-savage indigenous inhabitants of Canada never violate natural law or offend against the rules of hospitality.³⁸

The second large thematic area addressed critically in *Les Juifs* is the depiction and treatment of Jews. The interlocutors begin with a jibe at the fake beards that allowed the two villains to pass as Jews.³⁹ Jonas points out that he has just shaved his beard to Jeremie's initial surprise, and makes a case for shedding this alien sign of Jewishness, recommending that "all our brethren in Germany, Holland, Alsace, Lorraine, Poland and Prussia" do the same. After all, he states ironically, there is always the option to paste on a fake one, should one miss his facial hair! Only the Levantine Jews do not have to worry, because everybody around them is bearded, and there is no risk that someone would wear a fake beard in order to pass as Jewish.⁴⁰ Toward the end of the conversation, Jeremie informs his friend that he, too, has decided to shave his beard.⁴¹ Indeed, research has emphasized that the beard was foreign to Italian Jews during the eighteenth century and that it carried a "very distinctly Oriental flavor" not only for Christians, but for Jews themselves.⁴²

Jeremie is also displeased by the numerous ostensibly anti-Jewish passages in the play, voiced by Krumm, the baron, and the traveler's servant, Christoph. At the beginning of *Die Juden*, Krumm complains that all Jews are crooks and thieves, a race worse than plague and cursed by God.⁴³ Jeremie describes this representation as "impertinent." Jonas acknowledges the existence of deep anti-Jewish prejudices among the populace, but prefers not to comment on the scene.⁴⁴ Jeremie agrees that it is impossible to uproot all ancient prejudice, noting that it is imbibed with mother's milk. He goes on to assert that one must be content with the protection and the privileges the rulers grant Jews. However much the rabble yell, Jews demonstrate their gratitude to rulers wholeheartedly, generously and with zeal, in both good

and bad times.⁴⁵ He also wonders whether the wish expressed by the baron at the end of the play that all Jews were like the mysterious traveler reflected a belief on Lessing's part that there are no honest people in the Jewish Nation.

Finally, he thinks Christoph's disrespectful comment (likewise toward the end of the play) simply absurd. Once the traveler reveals his identity, Christoph is shocked to learn he had been serving a Jew. He accuses the traveler of having offended the whole of Christianity by taking "an honest Christian" as his servant, although eventually, touched by the traveler's generosity, Christoph decides to continue staying with him.⁴⁶ After all, notes Jeremie, in Livorno there is no Jewish house without Christian domestic help, wet-nurses, or teachers, all of whom are very well treated. Besides, Jeremie adds, what is common in Livorno is common elsewhere, because the Jews cannot use Jewish help during the Sabbath.⁴⁷

Jeremie's comment about Christian domestic help in Jewish households highlights Livorno's situation as it points to a passage in the *Livornina* charter of 1591–1593. Chapter XLII of this edict allowed Jewish settlers in the port city to hire "Christian servants and wet-nurses, as need occurs, to feed [their] children" and permitted them "to keep them in [their] homes, freely in the same way as it is practiced in Ancona, Rome, and Bologna," all centers located within the Papal state.⁴⁸ Canon law, however, had always prohibited Jews from hiring Christian domestic help.⁴⁹ It is thus ironic that Jeremie's comments, by calling attention to the unique privileges of Livornese Jewry, might also remind readers of the Jews' alleged power over Christians in the port city.⁵⁰

The conversation concludes with praise of the Livornese Jewish community, which Jonas articulates on several levels. First, the notion that there could be such a thing as a Jewish highwayman is mistaken. The Jewish community takes care of its poor; Jews also give alms to poor Christians, because, rich or poor, they regard gentiles as their brothers. Moreover, their industriousness has put Livornese Jews at the head of the commercial elite, not only in the Levant but in the rest of the world, and it has caused their wealth to accumulate in the commercial capitals of Europe and the Levant ("à Londres, à Paris, à Amsterdam, à Strasbourg, à Metz en Prusse,⁵¹ à Constantinople, à Smyrne, etc., etc., etc."). The rulers who benefit from this commerce allow Jews to practice their trade widely and peacefully and treat them in the same way as their other subjects. Finally, Jews are grateful for the esteem that honest people show them and do not care that the rabble does not love and even despises them. They do not despise anybody and always forgive those who offend them.⁵² On this note, the two men decide to leave the coffee shop and go for dinner in the countryside in order to "philosophize" together. Gariel, "le Tolerant," watches the two friends as they exit, not before having ordered two lemon sorbets.

Perceptions of the Jewish condition in Livorno at the time of the Enlightenment

Les Juifs' ironic commentary highlights the diversity of the Livornese Jewish model compared to the tropes of discrimination and toleration familiar to us through German Enlightenment literature. Remarkably, Jeremie and Jonas find *Die Juden* disturbing in its discussion of Jews and they cannot relate to Lessing's ideological goals. The two friends' displeasure at Lessing's negative observations about Jews demonstrates a radically different understanding of Jewish status and condition from that of Prussian thinkers. Indeed, that the interlocutors focus on negative details and anti-Jewish comments underscores the stipulation of European bureaucrats such as C.W. Dohm that Jews could be considered equal human beings and citizens only if they underwent a process of civil and moral improvement. The exceptionality of the Livornese situation contrasts with the perceived inferiority of Ashkenazi Jews in German lands.⁵³

The sense that Jews are inferior to Christians or that their social and moral condition needs to be improved is nowhere to be found in the dialogue. In fact, Jeremie and Jonas do not dwell at all on the overall message of toleration that Lessing meant to convey in *Die Juden*. Though the author of the work signs his introduction as "Le Tolerant," it is evident that the two Jewish protagonists do not conceive of themselves as members of a tolerated community even though they acknowledge that the populace may be hostile to Jews.

Thus, *Les Juifs* does not promote Jewish emancipation. Rather, it proceeds from the assumption that the authorities under which Livornese Jews live treat them exactly like all their other subjects because of their crucial contribution to the state's economic growth. To borrow a concept introduced by Lois Dubin, the two friends see themselves as participating in a condition of privileged "subjecthood."⁵⁴ The status of the Livornese community is a matter of pride for Jonas, who rhetorically links Jewish economic importance and the privileges bestowed on the *Nazione Ebreja* by the Tuscan authorities.⁵⁵ The observation is grounded in real facts. Unlike the other foreign corporate bodies that resided in Livorno, the Jewish community was legally recognized as a "subject nation" by the Tuscan authorities because of its economic merits, and, hence, it was treated as a special political body, autonomous yet dependent on the Government of the city.⁵⁶

As mentioned at the beginning, the Jewish condition did not represent a major theme of discussion for the Tuscan Enlightenment. Even after the promulgation of the *Toleranzpatent* by Joseph II in 1782, which fostered an international debate over the concession of civil rights to Jews,⁵⁷ Florentine periodicals published only few notices of Jewish interest.⁵⁸ *Les Juifs* helps

shed light on the reasons for such difference with contemporary Transalpine preoccupations. The silence of Tuscan reformers and ideologues concerning the Jewish status in the Grand Duchy, I would argue, had nothing to do with an alleged lack of interest in the Jewish condition. Rather, very possibly the Tuscan intellectual elite did not consider the Jewish minority or at least the large Livornese community in need of reform or of better integration into civil society. The utility of Livornese Jewry, like that of the port Jews of Trieste examined by Lois Dubin, was evident to non-Jewish observers in late eighteenth-century Tuscany.

The usefulness of the Livornese *Nazione Ebreica* appears to be a rhetorical constant not only of government policies and secret reports, but also of literature in the public domain, such as the pamphlet *Les Juifs*. The Livornese perspective thus appears radically different from that of both Prussian ideologues like Lessing and Dohm and of the *maskilim*, who likewise championed a message of self-reformation. This factor, and not political disinterest, needs to be taken into account to explain the absence of a public debate about the Jewish condition in Tuscany during the 1780s. Because of their perceived utility, the Enlightenment critiques of Jewish society typical of Prussian reformers and the calls for Jewish self-improvement that characterized the *Haskalah* did not apply to the Tuscan case.

Livornese Jews and economic utility

Les Juifs could be thus understood as a late-eighteenth-century variation on the rich discourse about Jewish utility that had emerged in the previous century.⁵⁹ The argument for the toleration of the Jews on the grounds of their commercial, and hence social, usefulness was first employed by two seventeenth-century Jewish apologists, the Venetian Simone Luzzatto (1583–1663) in his *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei et in particolare dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (“Discourse concerning the status of the Jews, particularly those dwelling in the noble city of Venice”) (1638) and the Dutch Menasseh ben Israel (1604–1657) in his *Humble Addresses to the Lord Protector* (1655), concerning the readmission of the Jews to England.⁶⁰ Luzzatto’s views were later echoed by John Toland in his *Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland* (1714).⁶¹ Luzzatto was the first Jewish thinker to invoke economic utilitarianism as a framework for Jewish toleration. In his view, the *doge* and the Venetian government should allow Venetian Jews, then threatened by a decree of expulsion, to remain in the city, because they performed mercantile tasks that did not undermine the socio-political status quo and, in fact, greatly benefited the Venetian economy. Jewish enterprise was morally justified and necessary within the broader context of the state’s development and economic growth.

The perceived usefulness of Jewish merchants was the reason why the Medici government had invited Ponentine and Levantine Jews to settle in Livorno and granted them extensive privileges with the so-called *Livornina* edict of 1591–1593, in the hope that their presence would boost the port's economy.⁶² It appears that by the mid-eighteenth century the concept of Jewish utility for the commercial development of Livorno was part and parcel not only of governmental memoranda, which never failed to reiterate the economic usefulness of the Livornese Jewish community and their long-standing privileges in the port, whenever the authorities were called upon to legislate on matters concerning this group – but also of public discourse.

The mid-eighteenth century was a time of general economic decline and desire for structural economic reforms on the part of the Tuscan government. Tuscan economic thinkers started focusing their attention increasingly on agriculture, land reform, and the export of agricultural produce.⁶³ For their part, Livornese journals of the 1750s launched a defense of commerce and the port's economic prerogatives and specificities. The two main Livornese periodicals of the middle of the eighteenth century, the *Magazzino Italiano* (1752–1754) and the *Magazzino Toscano* (1754–1757), modeled after English examples and aimed at a non-specialist public of merchants,⁶⁴ readily co-opted the figure of the Jewish merchant in support of their argumentations in favor of trade. Their positive comments about the Jewish presence in the city exemplify a Livornese variant of the “late mercantile philosemitism,” to use Jonathan Karp's apt definition, which characterized the 1750s in England, France and the German lands.⁶⁵ In the third volume of the *Magazzino Italiano*, a short note reported on the Purim celebrations in Livorno. The Jewish Nation of the port city was referred to as “meritorious. . . both because it promotes and increases trade, and because it brings benefits to the common people by creating jobs.”⁶⁶ A similar spirit, this time extended to all trading Nations and characterized by a remarkable cosmopolitan broadmindedness, infuses a praise of commerce, perceived as bringing happiness and wealth to all layers of society, which appeared in the same volume.⁶⁷

By the last decades of the eighteenth century, observers like the author of *Les Juifs* evidently took the commercial utility of Livornese Jews for granted. The pamphlet is remarkable, moreover, as it turns on its head the premise of Luzzatto's arguments. The text is a celebration of global Jewish wealth and commercial success facilitated by wise and benevolent rulers who treat Jews like all other subjects. The rhetorical emphasis is on Jewish industriousness and success demonstrated by widespread networks of trade, while the discourse of toleration is entirely absent.

Ironically, though, Jonas' statement at the end of the work could trigger Christian fears of excessive growth of Jewish wealth and power. Luzzatto, and Toland with him, had attempted to allay Christian suspicions of accumulation of riches by Jewish merchants by arguing that the latter were unable

to maintain their capital for more than three generations, since Christian law prevented them from acquiring real estate, and, therefore, they were likely to succumb to the adverse turns of fortune.⁶⁸ Moreover, as Jonathan Karp has noticed, the forfeiture of any claim by Jews to civic and political participation was a feature of both Simone Luzzatto's *Discorso* as well as the *Humble Adresses* of Menasseh ben Israel. According to Luzzatto, the Jews were not interested in politics and did not want to rule over gentiles through the acquisition of land, titles, or offices.⁶⁹

The situation of Livornese Jews, on the other hand, was radically different inasmuch as they could buy property, both in the port city and its countryside, and could thus safeguard their wealth. As will be seen momentarily, property ownership was indeed the crucial element in the discussion of political participation for Livornese Jews.

The "Flipside" of utility: communal reforms and Livornese Jews

Any investigation of developments in the conception of the Livornese Jewish status in the last decades of the eighteenth century should concentrate on the relationship between Jewish commercial usefulness and civic participation. Contrary to what one may surmise based on the comparable, well-known case study of Habsburg Trieste, the Livornese Jewish community's reputation for "utility" in the eyes of the authorities and external observers was not necessarily conducive to its social and political integration during the Old Regime. Rather, the perceived economic usefulness of the *Nazione Ebraica* contributed significantly to the Tuscan government's conservatism when it came to extending political rights to specific segments of Livornese Jewry. Indeed, the commercial success and privileged status of this community may explain the arrested political emancipation of the *Nazione Ebraica* of Livorno in the 1780s when compared to the rest of Tuscan Jewry. During that decade, both Jewish and Tuscan documents reflect a discourse of governmental protection and privileges that did not apply to Jewish communities elsewhere in Tuscany (such as Florence and Pisa). This may explain the different political fates of Livornese Jews as opposed to that of Jews who lived in the rest of Tuscany. The well-known Tuscan communal reforms of 1780 shed light on this problem.⁷⁰

Grand Duke Peter Leopold of Tuscany, aided by his advisor Francesco Maria Gianni, attempted to rationalize municipal governance as part of his program of administrative reforms in the late 1770s. New ideas of citizenship and political participation emerged, based on the notion that self-interested property-owners would be ideally suited to manage the *res publica* conceptualized as a business. The municipality was conceived as an organization

of property-owners sharing in the business of administration.⁷¹ All property-owners were considered active political participants and thus as candidates eligible for political representation. If elected, they should sit in the general councils and magistracies of their municipalities and cast their ballots to decide questions concerning public administration.⁷² On July 7, 1778 Peter Leopold asserted that if individual Jewish property-owners of Florence and Pisa were elected, they could sit in the general councils of their municipalities.⁷³

As Marcello Verga pointed out, the decision to extend civil rights to Jewish property owners of Florence and Pisa seems to have come about as an unexpected and indirect response to the changing notions of citizenship and political participation mentioned above. Similarly, the additional decision to include a Jewish representative on behalf of the proprietary interests of the *Nazione Ebraica* in the Livornese municipality, promulgated in March 1780, did not stem from a general plan on the part of the Tuscan administration. Rather, it originated from the lack thereof. In other words, the themes that animated contemporaneous European reflections on the civil and juridical condition of the Jews did not inform the thinking of the Tuscan officials.⁷⁴

The result of prolonged and difficult negotiations between the representatives of the Livornese governing class, the central authorities, and the *Nazione Ebraica*, the 1780 decision reflects an interpretation of political power informed by Old Regime principles and hierarchies.⁷⁵ Two issues emerged in particular: the right of the numerous non-Catholic property-owners to sit in the Livornese municipal councils and the threat that small-property owners, Catholic or not, would pose to the old governing class. The proposal drafted for the municipality of Livorno in August 1779 had devised a two-tiered system, composed of a *Magistrato comunitativo* (communal magistracy) and a *Consiglio generale* (general council) including sixteen members. Eligibility for the higher public offices was strictly regulated by census and social class, but everybody who owned real estate in the territory of the Commune was eligible to be elected to the position of councilor.⁷⁶ Jewish property-owners would be included among the eligible candidates, but if elected, a Jew would not be admitted to sit in the councils. Rather, he would appoint a Catholic substitute to sit in his place, or refuse the office altogether, albeit without being subject to the usual monetary penalty.

Unsatisfied with this initial plan, both the *Nazione Ebraica* and the representatives of the local Livornese government, though motivated by radically different reasons, came up with correctives. Livornese nobles tried to keep all non-Catholic and small property owners from attaining political rights, out of fear that the sizeable Jewish community and the petty proprietors would take control of the city's administration.⁷⁷ The deputies of the Livornese government Pompeo Baldasseroni and Ferdinando Sproni objected to the admission of *individual* Jews to the general council and magistracy. However,

they “found it right that such a respectable body of property-owners should have an influence in the administration of those affairs that concern it.”⁷⁸ They suggested that three Catholic procurators paid by the Jewish community (one in the magistracy and two in the general council) should represent the interests of the entire *Nazione Ebraica*, emphasizing that if Jews “wanted to be considered as a body,” they could not enjoy individual rights.⁷⁹

This striking observation in Baldasseroni’s and Sproni’s memorandum, which has yet to be emphasized by historians, epitomizes a completely corporate understanding of the Jewish condition.⁸⁰ In pitting individual and corporate rights against each other, the memorandum brings to mind the famous statement to the opposite effect, uttered by Count Clermont-Tonnerre at the French National Assembly in December 1789: “One should deny the Jews as a nation everything and grant them everything as individuals; they must not be either a political entity or a caste in the state.”⁸¹

For their part, Livornese Jews insisted that the 1778 decision that granted representation to elected Jewish individuals in Florence and Pisa, be valid in Livorno as well. After all, “because of its size and its wide commerce [the port] always deserved the sovereign’s benefits and privileges more than the other [Jewish communities] of the Grand Duchy.” Therefore, Livornese Jewry should not be discriminated against and treated less well than the communities of Florence and Pisa.⁸²

The memorandum that the Livornese Jewish community sent the Grand Duke demonstrated a keen understanding of, and support for, the burgeoning concept of political participation based on self-interest and property-ownership. Livornese Jews insisted that the presence of individual Jews in the new magistracies was necessary, because the *Nazione Ebraica* owned not only a sizable quantity of buildings in the countryside, but more than one-quarter of the city’s real estate and “except for public buildings, it own[ed] certainly more real estate than all other Livornese and foreign nationals together.”⁸³ Excluding Jews from voting in support of their own interests in town would mean to place them “under the perpetual care and government of the Livornese nationals and other property-owners, which not only the *Nazione* reckons as a great prejudice to its own interest, but also as a cause of great dishonor.” Such a decision was absolutely contrary to the intentions and spirit of the new communal regulations. The Commune, conceptualized as a business, was to be administered by people involved in it with individual interests, who would therefore be accountable for its management.⁸⁴

The final governmental resolution, issued on March 20, 1780, combined both views, yet it reduced Jewish representation and strongly reinforced the notion of Livornese Jewry as a separate corporate entity.⁸⁵ Chapter XI regulated the relationship between the new city’s administration and the Jewish community by reserving a fixed seat in the general council for one Jewish

deputy in representation of the *Nazione Ebraica*, to be selected by the Grand Duke among ten names submitted by the Jewish lay leaders (*Massari*).⁸⁶

Although scholarship on Jewish civil inclusion and political emancipation has interpreted the inclusion of a Jewish representative into the general council of Livorno as a positive step along the path of emancipation,⁸⁷ the actual significance of the Livornese regulations of March 1780 is more nuanced. The importance of Livornese property-ownership was officially recognized by the government, which guaranteed a constant Jewish presence in the communal administration, beating the odds of random elections. Paradoxically, however, the size and commercial importance of the Jewish minority in Livorno, seen by the old Livornese aristocracy as a threat to its established power, hindered the political emancipation of its individual members.

In contrast to Florentine or Pisan Jews, the Tuscan authorities preferred to continue regarding Livornese Jews as a cohesive, corporate body, even when the administration attempted to dismantle the privileges of all other corporate groups. On April 20 1789, as the Hapsburg-Lorraine authorities made the first attempts at civil integration of Tuscan Jews, Peter Leopold rendered non-Catholics and Jews politically equal to all other subjects in Tuscany—with the exception of the Jews of Livorno, where the regulation explicitly prohibited any modification to the decision passed nine years earlier. Thus, while in the rest of the Grand Duchy individual Jews were admitted to all public offices, in Livorno, which hosted the largest, wealthiest and most conspicuous Jewish community of the Tuscan state, they could only rely on their single national representative. This situation persisted until Tuscany was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy in 1859.⁸⁸

A plausible explanation for the 1780 and 1789 governmental decisions is that the notion of Livornese Jewry's commercial utility encapsulated in the *Livornina* in 1591 and routinely reiterated in the course of two centuries in administrative memoranda and public discourse strengthened the government's inclination to preserve the corporate status of the community out of concerns for social and political stability and out of the fear for potential economic loss.

While the emphasis on their utility and economic worth gave the *Nazione Ebraica* a distinct standing among other Jewish communities during the early modern period and fueled its sense of safety, entitlement, and identification with its Tuscan motherland and its "benevolent Ruler," these liberties ultimately failed to translate into greater political rights. Further evidence suggests a considerable divide between the interests and goals of the Jewish mercantile elite and the position of the local government. Although Jewish property-owners in Livorno demonstrated a strong sense of entitlement on several occasions, the Livornese authorities did not recognize the inclusion of a Jewish representative in the general council of the Livornese community as a major step in the direction of civic equality and kept relating to the

Jewish minority in a spirit of benevolent protection.⁸⁹ At a time when European absolutist states began to dismantle corporate interests and groups, the Tuscan government was invested in maintaining the corporate nature of the Jewish community.

In sum, the paradox of the arrested political development of such an influential and “useful” community is rich of implications for our understanding of processes of Jewish integration and complicates current historiographical assumptions. In a suggestive scheme on regions of emancipation, David Sorkin has proposed that “port Jews,” that is the social group of acculturated Jews living in Mediterranean cities, such as Livorno or Trieste, or the Atlantic seaboard, such as Bordeaux, experienced a smoother progress to emancipation compared to Jewish communities in the German states and the Hapsburg Empire.⁹⁰ The ports where these Jewish individuals settled were built upon the importance of commerce and pragmatism and as a result these Jews, reputed to be commercially useful and productive, often gained liberties and rights that Jews elsewhere did not possess and transitioned directly from civil inclusion to full political emancipation.

Without any doubt the dense population, relative security and commercial success of Livornese Jews point to a different model from that prevalent in Central European centers where relatively smaller and poorer Jewish communities were perceived as an alienated minority in need of moral and socio-economic amelioration. Unlike French or Prussian Askhenazim, Livornese Jewry was viewed, and viewed itself, as essential for the economic development of the Tuscan state. The Livornese may be accurately defined as acculturated Jews who were granted special privileges on the grounds of their economic usefulness. In this sense they were “port Jews”.

This factor, however, was not sufficient to bring about substantial political change. Unlike the rest of Tuscan Jewry, the *Nazione Ebraica* did *not* make the transition from civil inclusion to full political emancipation as a direct result of its mercantile, “port Jewish” status. Hence the Livornese case study casts doubts on the analytic value of the “port Jewish” model when this category is stretched beyond its otherwise helpful original meaning and employed to describe a specific process of political integration. The privileged status of certain mercantile Jewish communities, it turns out, could be a force for conservatism and stagnation in the long run and was not, necessarily, a trigger of emancipation.

Notes

1. Ulrich Wyrwa, *Juden in der Toskana und in Preußen im Vergleich. Aufklärung und Emanzipation in Florenz, Livorno, Berlin und Königsberg i. Pr.* (Tübingen, 2003), pp. 43–66; and an English translation in Id. “Berlin and Florence in the Age of Enlightenment:

- Jewish Experience in Comparative Perspective,” in *German History* 21 (2003), pp. 1–28. This study shows that the approach of Tuscan scholars to the issue of Jews and Judaism was primarily framed in theological and religious terms up to and throughout the 1770s.
2. There is a rich literature on Livornese Jews during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, see Renzo Toaff, *La Nazione ebrea a Livorno e a Pisa (1591–1700)* (Florence, 1990); Jean Pierre Filippini, “La nazione ebrea di Livorno,” in Corrado Vivanti ed., *Storia d’Italia. Annali 11. Gli ebrei in Italia, vol. 2. Dall’emancipazione a oggi* (Turin, 1997), pp. 1047–1066; Francesca Trivellato, “The Port Jews of Livorno and their Global Networks of Trade in the Early Modern Period,” in *Jewish Culture and History* 7 (2004), pp. 31–48, and now ead., *The Familiarity of Strangers. The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, 2009).
 3. François Gariel, *Les Juifs, dialogue Entre M. Jérémie Pouf et M. Jonas Gay au Caffè de Grec, à l’occasion de la publication de la Comédie des Juifs originairement au Allemand per Monsieur Lessing Traduite en français, et dernièrement en Italien* (Livorno, 1786). I am grateful to Prof. Andrea Addobbati of the University of Pisa who alerted me to the existence of this source. I consulted a copy in the *Biblioteca Labronica F.D. Guerrazzi* in Livorno.
 4. There is no evidence that an actual *Caffè Greco* existed in Livorno in 1786. However, the Greek Stefano Brecci managed the *Caffè del Nettuno* in the port city at the time this pamphlet was published; see Archivio di Stato di Livorno, Dogana, f. 21, affare 53. It is possible that the pamphlet’s author wished to pay homage to Brecci’s establishment.
 5. On Pietro Verri, his collaborators, and the Milanese environment of *Il Caffè*, see Franco Venturi, *Settecento Riformatore* (Turin, 1967), pp. 645–747; Dino Carpanetto and Giuseppe Ricuperati, eds., *L’Italia del Settecento. Crisi, trasformazioni, lumi* (Bari, 1986), pp. 341–353; and Sergio Romagnoli, “‘Il Caffè’ tra Milano e l’Europa,” in Gianni Francioni and Sergio Romagnoli, eds., “*Il Caffè*,” 1764–1766 (Turin, 1993), pp. xiii–lxxix.
 6. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 28.
 7. The later and more famous “Jewish play” by Lessing is of course *Nathan the Wise* (1779).
 8. Lea Ritter-Santini, “Die Erfahrung der Toleranz. Melchisedech in Livorno,” in *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift*, 47 (1997), pp. 317–362, esp. p. 340. Santini was able to locate a very rare copy of this play in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Rome. See also Renzo De Felice, “Per una storia del problema ebraico in Italia alla fine del XVIII secolo e all’inizio del XIX,” in *Movimento Operaio* 5 (1955), pp. 681–727, esp. pp. 687–688.
 9. Lessing’s play was translated into French twice before 1789: once in 1772 by Junker and Liébault (this edition was reissued in 1785); and once in 1781 by Jean Henri Eberts. See François Genton, “La comédie *Die Juden* (1749) de Lessing et le rôle de la littérature allemande dans le mouvement d’émancipation des juifs en France au 18e siècle,” in *Revue de littérature comparée* 1 (1988), p. 5–22.
 10. Migliaresi maintained reading rooms in Pisa and Livorno. He sold French journals as soon as 1795. See Carlo Mangio, *Politica toscana e rivoluzione. Momenti di storia livornese. 1790–1801* (Pisa 1974), p. 98; Flora Vicentini, “Notizie sulle stamperie pisane dalle origini al 1860,” in *Bollettino storico pisano*, 8 (1939), pp. 33–63, esp. p. 47.
 11. On Livorno’s printers and imprints during the Enlightenment, see Susanna Corrieri, *Il torchio fra “Palco” e “Tromba.” Uomini e libri a Livorno del Settecento* (Modena, 2000); Adriana Lay, “Un editore illuminista: Giuseppe Aubert nel carteggio con Beccaria e Verri,” in *Accademia delle Scienze* (Turin, 1973); Carlo Mangio, “Censura granducale, potere ecclesiastico ed editoria in Toscana: l’edizione livornese dell’*Encyclopédie*,” in *Studi settecenteschi* 16 (1996), pp. 191–219; Id, “Le autorità ecclesiastiche e l’edizione

- livornese dell'Encyclopédie," in Paolo Alatri, ed. *L'Europa tra Illuminismo e Restaurazione. Scritti in onore di Furio Diaz* (Rome, 1993), pp. 103–114; Maria Augusta Morelli Timpanaro, *A Livorno nel Settecento. Medici, mercanti, abati, stampatori: Giovanni Gentili (1704–1784) e il suo ambiente* (Livorno, 1997); Renato Pasta, "L'editoria e la circolazione del pensiero a Livorno nel Settecento" in *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* 10 (2003–2004), pp. 15–30.
12. The work is also mentioned in Genton, "La comédie 'Die Juden'," pp. 15–17. As Genton was unaware of the 1786 Italian translation of *Die Juden*, he assumed that the dialogue's Livornese imprint must be fictitious, and connected the pamphlet to the French debates over Jewish emancipation.
 13. In the same year, Gariel also published a drama in two short acts at Falorni's press, entitled *Les esclaves livournois [sic] a Alger*; this was meant to be bound together with *Les Juifs. Les esclaves livournois a Alger: comédie en deux petits actes par l'auteur [sic] du dialogue au Caffè du Grec*. A Livourne chez Jean Vincent Falorni, 1786.
 14. Several spelling singularities (such as "Caffè" instead of "Cafè") and the numerous wrong accents suggest that the author was Italian—although they could be typos due to the ignorance of the printing press workers.
 15. The name François Gariel also appears on a pamphlet published in Venice in 1783, "Remerciement d'un bon piemontais a monsieur *** [...] par M. Fois Gariel, Citoyen de Turin, Membre d'aucune Académie, qui prend pour devise celle si connue... avec la description de la réception des comtes du nord a Turin, de l'opera donné a cette occasion, & du séjour & depart de ces princes pour la France." A copy of this pamphlet is in the Library of the *Soprintendenza per i beni artistici e storici del Piemonte*, Turin. I am grateful to Dr. Giorgio Sacchi of the *Biblioteca della Soprintendenza*, who provided me with a photocopy of the pamphlet's frontispiece. The definition "Citoyen de Turin" reminds of "Citoyen de Paris" and suggests deliberate irony.
 16. For an overview of the issue, see David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780–1840* (New York, 1987) and Ronald Schechter, *Obstinate Hebrews: Representations of the Jews in France, 1715–1815* (Berkeley, 2003), and the references therein.
 17. De Coureil was born in France and moved to Italy as a boy; he studied in Pisa and later moved to Livorno, where he established his home. In 1818 he published five volumes of collected works, including much literary criticism, see Francesco Pera, *Ricordi e biografie livornesi* (Livorno, 1868), pp. 31–33.
 18. The *Accademia dei Polentofagi* gathered at the house of Francesco Masi in Pisa. Other participants were the printers Tommaso and Glauco Masi; Giovanni Anguillesi; Tito Manzi; and Domenico Luigi Batacchi, see Carlo Mangio, *I patrioti toscani fra "Repubblica Etrusca" e Restaurazione* (Florence, 1991), p. 81. The academy was disbanded in 1793 by the authorities who feared the "revolutionary" spirit of its members.
 19. De Coureil dedicated the fifth volume of his complete works to his Jewish friend Cesare Monselles. In a letter to the dedicatee, De Coureil extolled the Jewish nation and Hebrew poetry. He praised the Jews as the creators of the bills of exchange and "a Jew by the name of Pereira" (Jacob Rodrigues Pereira, 1715–1780) as the inventor of the deaf-mute sign language in 1749, before the Abbé Epée and Sicard: Giovanni Salvatore de-Coureil, *Opere*, vol. 5 (Livorno, 1819), pp. 3–8. Another, albeit more remote, possibility is that "Gariel" was a pseudonym of the Livornese Jewish merchant and poet Salomone Michell, who traveled in the same literary circles as several members of the *Accademia dei Polentofagi* and is known for his Jacobin activity at the end of the century. On Michell, see Francesco Pera, *Curiosità livornesi inedite o rare* (Livorno, 1888), pp. 436–438; Alfredo Toaff, "Vita artistico-letteraria degli ebrei a Livorno nel '700," in *La Rassegna Mensile di*

- Israel* 8 (1933), pp. 370–378, esp. pp. 375–377; Mangio, *Politica toscana e rivoluzione*, pp. 200–203. Michell met Salvatore de Coureil and the two carried on a literate epistolary exchange in 1793, see Andrea Rubbi, *L'epistolario, ossia scelte di lettere inedite, famigliari, curiose, erudite, storiche, galanti, ecc. Di donne e d'uomini celebri morti o viventi nel secolo XVIII*, 2 vols. (Venice 1795–1796), vol. 2, pp. 215–216, 222–223, 232, 239–240, 254–256, 268–269, 277–278, 285, 294, 325, 343.
20. Charlene A. Lea, "Tolerance Unlimited: "The Noble Jew" on the German and Austrian Stage (1750–1805)," in *The German Quarterly* 64 (1991), pp. 166–177; Gunnar Och, "Lessings Lustspiel "Die Juden" im 18. Jahrhundert. Rezeption und Reproduktion," in Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer ed., *Thetralia Judaica. Emanzipation und Antisemitismus als Momente der Theatergeschichte. Von des Lessing-Zeit zur Shoah*, Tübingen 1992, pp. 42–63.
 21. John W. Van Cleve, *The Merchant in German Literature of the Enlightenment* (Chapel Hill and London, 1986), pp. 109–136.
 22. Willi Goetschel, "Lessing's "Jewish" Questions," in *The Germanic Review* 78 (2003), pp. 62–73, esp. pp. 64–67; Heimann Jolowicz, *Geschichte der Juden in Königsberg in Provinz Posen* (Posen, 1867), p. 75, quoted in Elliott Horowitz, "Early Eighteenth Century Confronts the Beard: Kabbalah and Jewish Self-Fashioning," in *Jewish History* 8 (1994), pp. 95–115, p. 109.
 23. Gotthold E. Lessing, *Two Jewish Plays. The Jews, Nathan the Wise*, translated by Noel Clark (London, 2002), pp. 22–23.
 24. *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
 27. Van Cleve, *The Merchant in German Literature*, pp. 122–123.
 28. *Ibid.*, p. 127.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 128–129.
 30. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 6.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
 32. *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.
 33. Lea, "Tolerance Unlimited," p. 170.
 34. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 10.
 35. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
 37. Lessing, *Two Jewish Plays*, p. 52.
 38. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 13.
 39. This is the first reference in the dialogue to the fact that Jeremie and Jonas are Jewish. Until that moment, they could have been just as easily two learned Catholic men of letters.
 40. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 14.
 41. *Ibid.* p. 27.
 42. Horowitz, "The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Beard," p. 108. Additionally, very few Western Sephardi Jews were bearded, as the Amsterdam Sephardi Isaac de Pinto (1717–1787) observed in his *Apologie pour la Nation Juive, ou Réflexions Critiques* ("Apology for the Jewish Nation, or Critical Reflections") (1762). In this reply to the negative observations about the Jews that Voltaire had expressed in his *Philosophical Dictionary*, de Pinto pointed to the beardless chin of his brethren as an indication of their fundamental distance from unrefined Ashkenazim, *ibid.* p. 110.
 43. Lessing, *Two Jewish Plays*, p. 23.
 44. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 15.
 45. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

46. Lessing, *Two Jewish Plays*, p. 52.
47. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, pp. 24–26.
48. Toaff, *La Nazione ebrea*, p. 431. The chapter was confirmed in 1683 and again in 1751, under the proviso that the Christian wet-nurses receive a certificate of faith and religious education from the ecclesiastic authorities: see Francesco Pera, *Nuove curiosità livornesi inedite o rare* (Florence, 1899), p. 293.
49. Bernard Cooperman, *Trade and Settlement. The Establishment and Early Development of the Jewish Communities in Leghorn and Pisa (1591–1626)*, PhD Thesis (Cambridge, MA 1976), pp. 298–299, notes that in reality already in the sixteenth century Jews were not allowed to keep Christian servants in their homes and points out the puzzling nature of the wordings in the *Livornina*'s article. In fact, the ruling is complex—and the reality more complex still. On paper, Jews were not allowed to have Christian servants from early in the Middle Ages. Yet there were exceptions to the rule granted by Episcopal license. More puzzling is that by the time of the *Livornina*, the Jews of Ancona and Rome were ghettoized and surely had few Christian servants, if any. The Jews of Bologna had been expelled in 1569, and even if some possibly returned unofficially, they were all out by 1593. One must assume that the *Livornina* in these clauses is being disingenuous, acting as though theory reflected reality; see Kenneth Stow, *Catholic Thought and Papal Jewry Policy, 1555–1593* (New York, 1977), passim on all these rules; and Amnon Linder, *The Jews in the Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages* (Jerusalem and Detroit, 1997).
50. This controversial motif was echoed with some hostility by French observers, see Carlo Mangio, “Testimonianze di viaggiatori francesi su Livorno fra Seicento e Settecento” in *Atti del Convegno Livorno e il Mediterraneo nell'età medicea* (Livorno, 1978), pp. 306–318, esp. pp. 315–318. English travelers to the port, on the other hand, were not as shocked by the freedom of Livornese Jews, see Mario Curreli, “Scrittori inglesi a Livorno fra Sei e Settecento,” in *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* 11 (2004), pp. 53–82.
51. It is curious that the city of Metz is mistakenly taken for Prussian; while close to the Prussian border, Metz was in the French province of Lorraine at the time.
52. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, pp. 28–30.
53. It remains a matter of speculation whether the author of the pamphlet was familiar with the situation of late eighteenth-century Jews in other parts of Italy, where their conditions ranged from the miserable squalor of the ghetto of Rome to the culturally vibrant, but still ghettoized, life in the communities of Modena and Mantua. If he was, there is no mention of that in the work.
54. Lois Dubin, “Subjects into Citizens. Jewish Autonomy and Inclusion in Early Modern Livorno and Trieste,” in *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts*, 5 (2006), pp. 51–81.
55. Gariel, *Les Juifs*, p. 30: “Les Princes sous la domination de qui nous avons le bonheur d'exercer paisiblement le Commerce les plus étendu, nous traitent de la même manière que leurs autres sujets.”
56. This status was recapitulated in the secret instructions sent from the central authorities to the Governor of Livorno on April 26, 1774, see Toaff, *La Nazione ebrea*, p. 47; Dubin, “Subjects into Citizens,” pp. 53–54.
57. On the Italian debates over the granting of the rights of citizenship to Jews, see Renzo de Felice, “Per una storia del problema ebraico in Italia alla fine del XVIII secolo e all'inizio del XIX. La prima emancipazione (1792–1814),” in *Movimento operaio* 5 (1955), pp. 681–727; Gadi Luzzatto Voghera, *Il prezzo dell'eguaglianza. Il dibattito sull'emancipazione degli ebrei in Italia (1781–1848)* (Milan, 1998), esp. pp. 37–63, 113–133.
58. Wyrwa, *Juden in der Toskana*, p. 63: as early as October 1781, the Florentine periodical *Gazzetta universale* reported on the promulgation of the first patent of tolerance in

- the Hapsburg Empire, aimed at Christian minorities and the Jews of Bohemia. The journal *Novelle letterarie* informed its readers about the printing of the speech that Rabbi Elia Morpurgo of Gradisca gave to celebrate the edict on December 20, 1782. Morpurgo claimed that the main result of the new policy would be to encourage cultural progress within Judaism, introducing Jews into social life and thereby reducing prejudice and superstitious notions; commenting on Dohm's essay, the Florentine journalist noted that Dohm had drawn attention to the Jews as a part of civil society that had been previously ignored. The same periodical reported briefly on the publication of Christian Wilhelm Dohm's *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden* ("On the Civil Improvement of the Jews") (1781), on October 17, 1783. Other articles about the toleration of the Jews appeared in 1784 in the Florentine journals *Lo spirito dell'Europa* and *Il corriere Europeo*.
59. For a recent treatment of the complex discourse on Jewish economic utility, see Jonathan Karp, *The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe, 1638–1848* (New York, 2008), pp. 12–93.
 60. Benjamin C. Ravid, "'How profitable the nation of the Jewes are': the 'Humble Addresses' of Menasseh ben Israel and the 'Discorso' of Simone Luzzatto," in Jehuda Reinharz and Daniel Swetschinski, eds. *Mystics, Philosophers, and Politicians. Essays in Jewish Intellectual History in Honor of Alexander Altmann* (Durham, NC, 1982), pp. 159–180; Id. *Economics and Toleration in Seventeenth-century Venice: The Background and Context of the Discorso of Simone Luzzatto* (Jerusalem, 1978); Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, pp. 12–42.
 61. Isaac E. Barzilay, "John Toland's Borrowings from Simone Luzzatto," in *Jewish Social Studies* 31 (1969), pp. 75–81; Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, pp. 43–66.
 62. Benjamin C. Ravid, "A tale of three cities and their 'raison d'état': Ancona, Venice, Livorno, and the competition for Jewish merchants in the sixteenth century," in *Mediterranean Historical Review* 6 (1991), pp. 138–162.
 63. Till Wahnbaeck, *Luxury and Public Happiness. Political Economy in the Italian Enlightenment* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 83–88, 92.
 64. On the Livornese periodical press see Elena Gremigni, "Periodici e almanacchi livornesi secoli XVII–XVIII," in *Quaderni della Labronica* 69 (1996). Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Giornali e società nell'Italia dell'Ancien Régime (1668–1789)," in Carlo Capra, Valerio Castronovo, Giuseppe Ricuperati, *La stampa italiana dal Conquencento all'Ottocento* (Bari, 1976), p. 296. Livorno was also the center of a business information network: a commodity price current and an exchange rate current dated from as early as 1627, see John J. McCusker and Cora Gravesteyn, *The Beginnings of Commercial and Financial Journalism. The Commodity Price Currents, Exchange Rate Currents and Money Currents of Early Modern Europe* (Amsterdam, 1991), pp. 253–263.
 65. Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, pp. 92–93.
 66. *Magazzino Italiano*, vol. 3, March 25, 1753, p. 9: "benemerita... sì per il Commercio, che promuove, ed accresce, sì per gli vantaggi che reca al minuto Popolo per mezzo del lavoro."
 67. *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.
 68. Barzilay, "John Toland's Borrowings," pp. 80–81.
 69. Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, p. 22.
 70. For an English overview of the Livornese reforms, see Dubin, "Subjects into Citizens," pp. 65–67.
 71. Marcello Verga, "Proprietà e cittadinanza. Ebrei e riforme delle comunità nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo," in Henry Méchoulan, Richard H. Popkin, Giuseppe Ricuperati, Luisa Simonutti eds, *La formazione storica della alterità. Studi sulla storia della tolleranza*

nell'età moderna offerti a Antonio Rotondò (Florence, 2001), vol. 3, pp. 1047–1067, esp. p. 1049.

72. For a study of the communal reforms in Livorno see Carlo Mangio, "La riforma municipale a Livorno," in *L'ordine di Santo Stefano e la nobiltà toscana nelle riforme municipali settecentesche* (Pisa, 1995), pp. 85–120. On the admission of a Jewish deputy, see Francesca Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso del deputato della "Nazione" ebrea nella comunità di Livorno, lettere e memorie," in *Nuovi studi livornesi* 3 (1995), pp. 251–271; Verga, "Proprietà e cittadinanza"; Dubin, "Subjects into Citizens," pp. 64–67.
73. For the text of the Grand Duke's *motuproprio* see Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso," p. 262. The 1778 *motuproprio* corrected an opposite decision previously issued on December 26, 1774, which prevented Jews from sitting in either the magistracies or the general council.
74. Verga, "Proprietà e cittadinanza," p. 1053, 1057.
75. Mangio, "La riforma municipale," pp. 92–107 provides a detailed reconstruction of the negotiations.
76. Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso," p. 252.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 254, 270–271.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 264: "Quanto i deputati infrascritti trovano inconveniente la personale residenza degli Ebrei nel Magistrato quanto nel Consiglio generale altrettanto trovano giusto che un corpo di possessori così rispettabile debba avere un [sic] influenza nella amministrazione di quelli affari che lo interessano." The memorandum was dated October 11, 1779.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 265: "perché se vogliono considerarsi come corpo non possono più considerarsi come individui."
80. Technically, in *ius commune*, a Jewish community could not be invested as a corporation, although de facto, the Livorno community certainly functioned as one. I am grateful to Kenneth Stow for pointing this out to me.
81. Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews. The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1968), p. 360.
82. Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso," p. 266 (*Memoria della Nazione ebrea di Livorno*, Chap. I); Dubin, "Subjects into Citizens," p. 65.
83. Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso," p. 267 (*Memoria della Nazione ebrea di Livorno*, Chap. III).
84. *Ibid.* (*Memoria della Nazione ebrea di Livorno*, Chap. IV).
85. Dubin, "Subjects into Citizens," p. 67.
86. Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso," p. 257. In addition, no Jewish representatives were included in the *magistrato comunitativo*.
87. Dubin, "Subjects into Citizens," pp. 66–67. See also Verga, "Proprietà e cittadinanza," p. 1067, who highlights the significant difference between the status of Livornese Jews and those of the rest of the Grand Duchy.
88. Gavi, "La disputa sull'ingresso," p. 251. The Grand Duke Leopold II promulgated a new constitution (*statuto*) in 1848, guaranteeing the legal and political emancipation of all Tuscan Jews, which was however abolished in 1852.
89. Francesca Bregoli, *Mediterranean Enlightenment: Jewish Acculturation in Livorno, 1737–1790* (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 2007), pp. 275–283.
90. David Sorkin, "The Port Jew: Notes toward a Social Type," in *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50 (1999), pp. 87–97.