

records management inspection service is undergoing a period of evolution during which it will be “forced” to adapt.

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The Archive of Taranto Meteorological and Geophysical Observatory

The Meteorological and Geophysical Observatory “Luigi Ferrajolo¹” is located in Taranto, in the South of Italy. Even today, it is one of the most ancient observatories in Italy and abroad. In 2011 this institute celebrated 120 years of scientific life in the country.

The history of this institute is related to Luigi Ferrajolo’s life, its founder and first director between 1891 and 1968, when he decided to retire and to leave the management to the present director, Vittorio Semeraro.

According to a Ferrajolo’s interesting essay, *Profili di climatologia Tarantina* (Profiles of Taranto Climatology)², various meteorological observations in Taranto began on April 1, 1866 at the Royal Coast Guard, after the establishment of the meteorological service of Italian Navy for weather forecasting.

At the beginning, Taranto thermo-pluviometric station started working in 1878 at the city hall, but the activity was stopped in 1884³.

Luigi Ferrajolo, when he was only 13 years old, installed in his house at Via S. Martino 31 a small thermo-pluviometric station, using some rudimentary instruments that he himself built although he was very young. The observations were so accurate that impressed Cosimo De Giorgi⁴, director of Lecce Observatory and founder of *Rete*

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¹ Luigi Ferrajolo (Taranto, 1878-1971). After studying Physics of the Earth in Naples, he was the founder and first director of Taranto Meteorological and Geophysical Observatory; this institute, recognized by the Italian Ministry of Air Force, entered in the international circuit of European observatories. Later he became also a geophysicist in the Italian Royal Air Force. He was a member of several scientific associations in Italy and abroad. He also invented a simple horizontal pendulum seismograph. Among his scientific publications: *Per l'emissione di un bollettino meteorologico internazionale radiotelegrafico dall'Italia*, “La Meteorologia Pratica” 5 (1924), 4, p. 141-143; *Osservazioni meteorologiche del 1927*, Taranto, 1928; *L'andamento del clima in terra jonica nel 1928*, “Risveglio Agricolo di Taranto” 7 (1929), 4, p. 109-113; *Saggio di Climatologia aeronautica dell'isola di Rodi*, “Rivista di Meteorologia Aeronautica” 1 (1937), 3 and 4.

² Luigi Ferrajolo, *Profili di climatologia Tarantina*, “Terra Ionica”, 1926, 11-12, p. 1-14.

³ Cosimo De Giorgi, *Studi sul Clima di Lecce e della Penisola Salentina - Dal 1874 al 1892 - Relazione al Consiglio Provinciale di Terra d'Otranto, al Consiglio Municipale di Lecce ed al Comizio Agrario del Circondario di Lecce*, Lecce, 1892, p. 28.

⁴ Cosimo De Giorgi (Lizzanello, 1842-Lecce, 1922). He studied Medical Science and Surgery in Pisa and Florence. He devoted himself to study seismology, meteorology, geology, paleontology, geography, history, archeology and agriculture. In 1874 he founded Lecce Meteorological Observatory and later Salento Meteorological Network. Among his scientific publications: *Note statistiche sul clima di Lecce e della regione salentina desunte dalle osservazioni eseguite nell'Osservatorio di Lecce dal 1875 al 1914*, Lecce, 1915; *La distribuzione della pioggia sulla*

Meteorica Salentina (Salento Meteorological Network)⁵; the young boy, in fact, was selected as the person in charge for the gathering of scientific data in the Town of Taranto. Therefore, this station, created with passion and sacrifice, entered in the national network of the sensing pluviometric centres.

In 1891, Taranto thermo-pluviometric station was back in service, under Luigi Ferrajolo's direction, nominated by Lecce Observatory, fulcrum of all Salento Meteorological Network, in cooperation with the Royal Central Office of Meteorology in Rome. Taranto station was also included in the national meteorological-agrarian service and its scientific data were published in *Rivista Meteorica Agraria* (Meteorological Agrarian Review).

In 1900, the Italian Ministry of Navy decided to include Taranto Observatory in the network of Italian meteorological observatories. From this moment on, the institute started the reading of data using some instruments given by the Italian Ministry of Navy, while the other ones were bought or built by Ferrajolo himself.

In 1905, the Town Council of Taranto contributed to the efficiency of the observatory, granting a decent seat in Palazzo degli Uffici (Corso Umberto n. 14).

In 1908, during the Congress of International Association of Seismology in Rome, the International Commission of Seismology complained about the lack of a seismological observation point on the Adriatic and Ionic sides. Therefore, in the same year, it was founded a new seismological centre in Taranto.

Ferrajolo bought a Wiechert seismograph and a marine chronometer, while the Central Office of Meteorology sent a Vicentini seismograph. Therefore, Taranto Observatory entered in the international network of the meteorological and geophysical observatories.

In 1911, aerological observations began in Italy using the pilot-balloon method: Taranto observatory was the first institute in Italy to enter in the network of aerological stations installed by Engineer Corps for aerological studies and researches⁶.

During the First World War, it carried out an important signal and weather forecasting service in the Gulf of Taranto and on the Adriatic side, useful for air navigation in the war operations. In 1919 this kind of activity continued and for this it was established in the observatory the aerological centre of Low Adriatic and Ionian Seas, the first centre of regional forecasting in Italy.

penisola salentina, Lecce, 1908; *Studi sul clima di Lecce e della penisola salentina dal 1874 al 1892*, Lecce, 1892; *Cenni autobiografici*, Lecce, 1914.

⁵ It was an efficient monitoring network which, as from 1877, extended the observations to the whole province of *Terra d'Otranto* (Land of Otranto), through the work of five observatories and 32 thermopluviometrical stations, located in Brindisi, Lecce and Taranto.

⁶ The project, established by the Italian Thalassographic Committee, for the study of air flows at altitude, was composed by the main aerological station in Vigna di Valle; the first-order aerological stations in Genoa, Pavia e Stra (Veneto); the second-order aerological stations in Moncalieri, Monte Rosa (Capanna Margherita), Lesa (Lake Maggiore), Milan, Bergamo, Verona, Udine, Treviso, Mantua, Modena, Ferrara, Piacenza, Livorno, Florence, Spezia, Perugia, Rieti, Montecassino, Sassari, Mileto, Taranto, Messina, Catania, Ischia and Trapani. Taranto began to work officially on October 1, 1913.

In the same year, Taranto Observatory, along with four Italian observatories, carried out the international meteorological radiotelegraphic service, whose landmark was Paris Observatory⁷.

In 1924, this institute controlled the thermo-pluviometric network of Taranto province, giving a great contribution to the study of meteorology applied to agriculture.

In 1926, on a proposal by Ferrajolo, local government installed on Palazzo degli Uffici a Siemens electric clock per minute activated by the observatory chronometers, through the way of current inversion relays. That provided the speaking clock per second for the town.

In 1934, Taranto Observatory was ceded to Italian Air Force, while in 1943 the seismological station was ceded to Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica, entering in this way in the Italian geophysical net.

In the second half of the 30s, the institute began to be interested in Dodecanese area and particularly in the East Mediterranean region. Several studies and researches of Aegean Isles climatic data were undertaken, where Italian military, air and naval bases were established. Studies about Leros and Rhodes islands were published⁸.

Since 1891 Taranto Observatory, with its historical series of data, represents in fact a valued heritage for the study of Taranto climatology; in fact, it is more and more useful to agriculture, industry and local authorities which have the necessity to know the climatic situation of Taranto⁹.

The Meteorological and Geophysical Observatory "Luigi Ferrajolo" possesses an important collection of historical scientific instruments, a library and an archive. The study of the records and books allowed to gather some interesting information and then to present in 2003 my graduation thesis in Archival Science for the degree in Cultural Assets – Archival and Library Heritage (supervisor Professor Francesco de Luca, University of Salento), entitled *L'Osservatorio Meteorologico e Geofisico "Luigi Ferrajolo" di Taranto e il suo archivio*, aimed to give some historical information about this institute, about its founder and first director Luigi Ferrajolo, about relationships this Observatory had with other institutes and organizations in national and international territory, by means of the examination of the archives document, that is the written memory; this work gave the chance to write an historical and scientific reconstruction of juridical, administrative and social relations during the years, but also to obtain a list showing sketchily the documentation of the non arranged fond.

Later, in 2006, a project promoted by Soprintendenza Archivistica per la Puglia (works supervisor Angela Muscedra, archivist Marianna Capozza) and sponsored by Italian Ministry of Cultural Activities and Heritage, within the national project *Specola 2000: Apulia scientific observatories*, brought to an operation of restoration of original order of the historical archive, produced and acquired by Taranto Observatory, data processing and archival description according to the General International Standard

⁷ Other observatories were in Genoa, Florence, Messina and Rome (Centocelle).

⁸ Antonio Serra, *Su alcuni elementi meteorologici interessanti nella navigazione aerea rilevati nell'isola di Lero*, "Rivista di Meteorologia Aeronautica" 1 (1937) and 2 (1938), 1; Luigi Ferrajolo, *Saggio di Climatologia aeronautica dell'isola di Rodi*, "Rivista di Meteorologia Aeronautica" 1 (1937), 3-4; M. Vinciguerra, *Vento medio a Lero*, "Rivista di Meteorologia Aeronautica", 2 (1938), 1.

⁹ Marianna Capozza, *L'Osservatorio Meteorologico e Geofisico "Luigi Ferrajolo" di Taranto*, "Cenacolo – Rivista della Società di Storia Patria – Sezione di Taranto", Taranto, 2005, p. 151-168.

Archival Description (ISAD-G) and International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (ISAAR-CPF), with a final drafting of a finding aid (analytic description of the archival units which create the archival fond, including an historical essay about the history of the institute, index and bibliography).

The documents retained represent the sedimentation of papers produced by this institute during its evolutionary phases, when the meteorological station changes into a complete observatory, with the consequent increase of its scientific activity and tasks, carried out in a large time span.

The fond is composed by registers, notebooks, files, correspondence and letters, certificates, handwritten and typewritten notes, tables, graphs, diagrams of instruments (anemograph, actinograph, barograph, barometrograph, sunshine recorder, hygrograph, microbarograph, pluviograph, thermograph, thermohygrograph) and seismographs, weather and seismic bulletins, photographs and postcards. The archive is an important heritage which emphasizes the considerable activity of this institute in the field of meteorology, climatology and seismology. Ferrajolo's correspondence and personal papers are very interesting because they prove the scientific fervour which animated scientists in the 19th-20th centuries. This archive retains also some registers of Taranto Royal Coast Guard (1885-1893), some registers of Potenza Provincial Geodynamic Observatory "Emilio Fittipaldi" (1878-1933) and a file of Taranto pluviometrical station (1878). In this project only the documents produced by the first director Luigi Ferrajolo between 1891 and 1968 were considered.

Before starting this operation of archive restoration, another project, named "SISMOS" and promoted by *Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia* (INGV), was in progress; it was about the cataloguing and digitalization of seismograms possessed by Taranto Observatory and other Italian historical observatories.

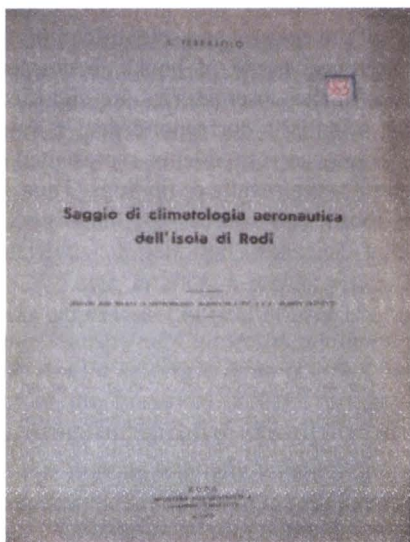
The historical research is a reconstruction of the cultural and scientific climate in which institutions and scientists worked; a background made of books, instruments, notes, cooperation among colleagues. The archives of the observatories are significant, not only for scientific observations, but also for scientist's correspondence, a valued documentary source. In the 19th and 20th century, in fact, correspondence represented one of the few ways to inform scientific community about some results or findings. Thus, it is clear the importance of historical archives and libraries as sources for the history of meteorology, seismology, geophysics and similar sciences, but also to understand scientific thinking and social changes.



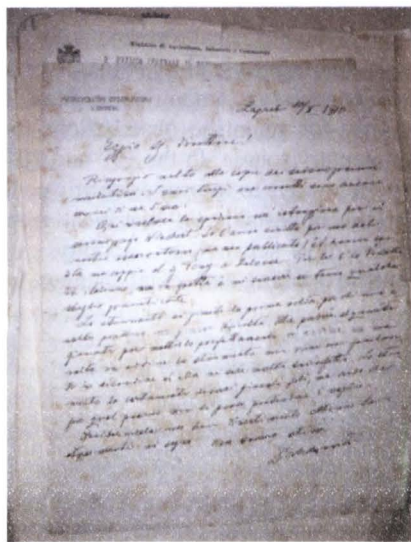
Luigi Ferrajolo (Taranto, 1878-1971)



The Wiechert horizontal component seismograph (c. 1908)



L. Ferrajolo, *Saggio di climatologia aeronautica dell'isola di Rodi*, "Rivista di Meteorologia Aeronautica" 1 (1937). 3 and 4



Letter from Zagreb Meteorological Observatory (dated October 10, 1910)



Present seat of Taranto Observatory at Via Duomo 181

*Marianna Capozza**

Integración y proyección para proteger el patrimonio documental de la provincia del Chubut, Argentina

La provincia del Chubut, en la República Argentina, es una de las que conforman el territorio conocido como Patagonia Argentina. Creada en 1957 luego de ser administrada como Territorio Nacional, Chubut tiene una historia institucional reciente, de la mano de los acontecimientos relativos al descubrimiento del petróleo y la radicación de colonias galesas, a la vez que su pueblo tiene un sentimiento especial con sus orígenes mapuches y tehuelches.

Los archivos de la provincia del Chubut conservan así de los más variados documentos. Los historiadores de la región se han esforzado por rescatar las fuentes documentales y depositarlas en archivos, más o menos organizados, que preservaran la historiografía de su pueblo.

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