

Diplomacy, Rhetoric and Pragmatism. A Study on Greek Acts and Privileges issued by the Byzantine Emperors to the Italian Mercantile Cities (AD 1100-1400) – Prof. Cristina Rognoni

The project aims at investigating an aspect of Byzantine diplomacy consisting of 33 Greek acts issued by the Byzantine emperors in favour of the cities of Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Ancona, and Florence dating from the 12th to the 5th century.

These documents are available only in old nineteenth-century editions, which offer neither a translation nor any support for their understanding. Moreover, they have so far been studied mostly from an economic perspective or for the 'positive' information they provide on political history. The project aims at studying this legacy under its aspect of cultural and social memory as well as at providing a fresh edition of it, with translation and commentary.

The new edition will be prepared both in printed and in digital version. The value of the acts as historical source mirroring the identity traits of the political powers involved in the negotiation activity will be emphasised.

As far as Byzantium is concerned, the project will clearly demonstrate the modernity of its way of promoting forms of international relationships that today we would call 'cultural diplomacy'.

Finally, the proposal aims at raising awareness of the importance of this Greek medieval legacy for the history of western Europe as well as the importance of state archives in preserving and enhancing our cultural heritage.