

ISTITUTO ELLENICO DI STUDI BIZANTINI
E POSTBIZANTINI DI VENEZIA

Convegni - 1

*Italia - Grecia:
temi e storiografie a confronto*

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*Bridges to the Renaissance and the Enlightenment.
The Assimilation of Italian Culture as a Problem
in Greek Historiography*

The broad subject of influences and loans across cultures is pregnant with possibilities for imaginative research and interpretative history. The question itself concerning cultural influences and borrowings refers basically to the transfer of ideas, styles and forms of expression across linguistic frontiers – and where such frontiers remain unclearly demarcated, shifting and inter-penetrating, the mobility of ideas and cultural models tends to assume the character of a regularity in intellectual, literary and artistic life, with usually fertile results. The historical logic appears to be the same at both ends of the pattern of cultural transmission: the very same openness and permeability of cultural and linguistic borders that facilitates the movement of ideas allows their easy reception, incorporation and creative elaboration into the contexts to which they are transferred.

Since, therefore, openness and permeability of frontiers appears to be the decisive factor in cultural transmission and reception, it is obvious that the next question for historical analysis should examine the preconditions which allow these possibilities. On this level of analysis it appears that the fundamental contextual precondition for the unobstructed mobility of ideas is the absence or reduced presence of nation-states: in either a pre-modern environment of pre-national cultures associated politically with empires or city-states or in supra-national environments of transnational ties and networks as exemplified by the pattern of post-industrial and post-modern societies at the end of the twentieth century, it is possible to observe a greater density of transfers of cultural models or patterns of cultural osmosis.

A case in point, that could allow us to both observe the logic of cultural transfers and appraise the significance of their results is

offered by the dense and complex web of ties between the multiple cultural centres of Italian expression and the politically fragmented geographical space of the Greek East in the pre-modern and early modern period, from about the middle of the fifteenth to the opening decades of the nineteenth century. What is common in the historical experience of both regions of Southern Europe in this period is the absence of nation states and a considerable degree of fragmentation in political units and forms of government involving domination by foreign empires but also, in the case of Italy, survival of medieval forms of statehood and political community. This institutional environment was associated, during the period in question, with a dynamic and complex pattern of transfer and inter-change of ideas and cultural outlooks that contributed to the creation of a truly multicultural Mediterranean context of creative expression, which represents, I think, one of the great, but largely ignored outside a narrow circle of specialized researchers, chapters of European cultural history. What I would like to do in this necessarily synoptic paper is to briefly draw attention to some aspects of this history, which, I believe, possesses a broader significance for understanding the dynamics of an inclusive rather than selective history of European culture, free of blind spots, preconceptions, and unstated priorities*.

I.

I should like to consider the manifestations of this history of cultural transmission and osmosis in three broad fields of intellectual life: literature, philosophy and political thought. Literature is certainly the richer and better studied of these varieties of creative expression. It represents the transfer and flowering of Renaissance sensibilities and styles of expression into Greek-speaking environments in the Eastern Mediterranean, primarily islands under Venetian or Genoese rule. Crete, where Venetian rule lasted longer and fostered the development of a cultural life of extraordinary density, produced in the sixteenth and especially in the seventeenth century an exquisite literature in the local idiom, comprising works of pastoral and religious drama, comedy, tragedy and romance that represent some of the

* I am grateful to Anna Tabaki and Alfred Vincent for their suggestions.

greatest literary achievements in Modern Greek¹. This literary production represents the earliest expression of an evolving post-medieval sensibility in Modern Greek, through the adaptation of Italian models or the large-scale reworking of models from other European literary traditions, at which, however, Cretan authors arrive invariably through Italian channels². This is the case with the greatest achievement of the Cretan Renaissance, the romance in verse entitled *Erotocritos*, whose plot is based on a fifteenth-century romance of chivalry, *Paris et Vienne*, which, however, became known to the Cretan poet Vincenzo Cornaros, through its late sixteenth-century Italian adaptations³.

Cretan literary production has formed the object of extensive study and research, for more than a century. In the last sixty years one of the main foci of research has been on the identification of the European models that inspired and guided Cretan poets and dramatists. This type of research has enriched remarkably our awareness of the extent of the reception of Italian cultural influences and specific borrowings. Knowledge of the subject,

¹ For a collection of specialized studies covering authoritatively the particular genres of Cretan literature and their social and cultural context see D. Holton (ed. by), *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, Cambridge 1991. Earlier surveys include S. Xanthoudhides, *Ἡ Ἐνετοκρατία ἐν Κρήτῃ καὶ οἱ κατὰ τῶν Ἐνετῶν ἀγῶνες τῶν Κρητῶν*, Athens 1939, pp. 169-83, A. Embiricos, *La Renaissance crétoise. vie et VIIe siècles*; I, *La littérature*, Paris 1960, both now outdated by subsequent research, and M.I. Manoussacas, *Ἡ κρητικὴ λογοτεχνία κατὰ τὴν ἐποχὴ τῆς Βενετοκρατίας*, Thessaloniki 1965. See also the authoritative surveys by S. Alexiou, *Ἡ Κρητικὴ λογοτεχνία καὶ ἡ ἐποχὴ τῆς*, Athens 1985 and “Ἡ Κρητικὴ λογοτεχνία τὴν ἐποχὴ τῆς Βενετοκρατίας”, *Κρήτη: Ἱστορία καὶ πολιτισμὸς*, ed. by N.M. Panagiotakis, vol. II, Iraklion 1988, pp. 197-229.

² For an authoritative survey of the early stages of this process of cultural transmission and reception see N.M. Panaghiotakes, “The Italian background of early Cretan literature”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 49 (1995), pp. 281-323. The extent of Italian cultural influence in Venetian Crete can be gauged on the basis of the textual evidence discussed by A. Vincent, “Scritti italiani di Creta Veneziana”, *Sin-cronie*, vol. II, N° 3 (1999), pp. 131-62.

³ Cornaros’s identity and background, as well as the work’s precise date and sources, have been the subject of lively debate, with ideological implications. For a survey of the “*Erotocritos* Question” see briefly David Holton, “Romance”, and “Bibliographical Guide” in id. (ed. by), *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, pp. 211-13, 297-98 respectively. The main contributors to the debate are N.M. Panagiotakis, “Ὁ ποιητὴς τοῦ Ἐρωτόκριτου”, *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Δ΄ Διεθνoῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, Athens 1981, vol. II, pp. 329-95, G.K. Mavromatis, *Τὸ πρότυπο τοῦ Ἐρωτόκριτου*, Ioannina 1982 and S.A. Evangelatos, *Πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθεια γιὰ τὸν Βισιένζο Κορνάρο. Ποιὸς ἦταν ὁ ποιητὴς τοῦ Ἐρωτόκριτου*; Athens 1985. See also V. Cornaros, *Ἐρωτόκριτος*, ed. by S. Alexiou, Athens, 1980. In his introduction to this edition Alexiou provides a substantial appraisal of all issues involved in the question.

very often combining the findings of analysis of literary sources and archival research, has proceeded to such depth and precision that the study of the Cretan Renaissance is now an important specialization in Greek literary studies, marked by professionalism and originality. Despite these great achievements, or perhaps and somewhat paradoxically because of them, the study of the Cretan Renaissance has remained just that: literary study, and has not produced a historiography in the proper sense of the term, that is historical writing that might attempt synthesis and interpretation. This appears to be the result of the very professionalization of this field of research: there has been such an overall sense of the enormous material that still remains to be explored, mostly in the Venetian archives but in other sources as well, that conscientious students of the subject have shunned the tasks of synthesis and interpretation. The one work which has recently attempted to put forward a truly original and challenging interpretative perspective on the greatest work of Cretan Renaissance literature has been the product of the creative scholarship of an Italian, not a Greek researcher⁴.

Besides Crete, other islands and territories in the Greek East that also experienced Venetian or Genoese rule sustained their own cultural traditions that incorporated models of Italian provenance into the creative expression of local artistic, literary and intellectual life. One prominent example of this is provided by sixteenth-century Cyprus, which produced an exquisite lyric poetry through the adaptation of Petrarchan prototypes to local conventions of sensibility and symbolic expression⁵. In this case

⁴ M. Peri, *Malato d'amore. La medicina dei poeti e la poesia dei medici*, Messina 1996.

⁵ The classic edition is by T. Siapkaras-Pitsillides, *Le pétrarquisme en Chypre. Poèmes d'amour en dialecte chypriote d'après un manuscrit du xvie siècle*, Athens 1952. Of great value have been recent contributions to the subject by E. Mathiopoulou-Tornaritou, who places the poetic production in question in the broader context of cultural life in Cyprus under Frankish and Venetian rule. See especially "Lyrik der Spätrenaissance auf Zypern", *Folia Neohellenica*, 7 (1985-86), pp. 63-159 and "Προτάσεις και παράμετροι για μιὰ νέα έκδοση τοῦ κυπριακοῦ Ἀναγεννησιακοῦ canzoniere τῆς Μαρκιανῆς", *Ἀρχές τῆς νεοελληνικῆς λογοτεχνίας. Πρακτικά τοῦ Δευτέρου Διεθνoῦς Συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi*, Venice 1993, vol. II, pp. 353-90. See also D. Holton, "Cyprus and the Cretan Renaissance", *Ἐπετηρίς τοῦ Κέντρου Ἐπιστημονικῶν Ἐρευνῶν*, vol. XIX(1992), pp. 515-30. The interpenetration of the Greek and Italian cultural traditions in Venetian Cyprus and the great creativity produced by this osmosis is documented in detail in the survey by G. Grivaud, "Ὁ πνευματικὸς βίος καὶ ἡ γραμματολογία κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς Φραγκοκρατίας", *Ἱστορία τῆς Κύπρου*, vol. V, ed. by Th. Papadopoulos, Nicosia 1996, esp. pp. 1109-1207.

too, as in the cases of Chios⁶ and the Ionian islands⁷, the use of Italian models in literary production, mostly in drama in the latter two cases, has been approached through a replication of the literary methodology elaborated in connection with the study of the Cretan Renaissance.

A lively tradition of poetic expression inspired by Italian models and reinforced by transplants of the Cretan heritage after 1669 lingered on in the Ionian islands until the nineteenth century and provided the substratum of the great flowering of Greek romantic poetry in the early part of that century, as represented by the work of Dionysios Solomos and Andreas Kalvos. Their own literary legacy in turn was carried on by a host of minor Heptanesian poets. The extent of the indebtedness of Solomos and the Heptanesian school to Italian poetry is still explored in great detail by scholars of modern Greek poetry⁸. Although this line of research occasionally fosters the impression that Greece's national poet is much closer to Foscolo, for instance, than to his contemporary mainland Greek poets, this does not diminish the pivotal significance of his *œuvre* for Greek poetry, for whose self-definition it has remained for almost two centuries now a fundamental point of reference. This very phenomenon is in fact critical for an appreciation of the significance of the multicultural substratum of intellectual life in the Eastern Mediterranean, even for the very elaboration of the distinct national identities

⁶ See Thomas I. Papadopoulos, ed., *Ἀγνώστου Χίου ποιητῆ, Δαβίδ. Ἀνέκδοτο διαλογικὸ στιχούργημα*, Athens 1979. This work represents a rendering in the popular Greek idiom spoken on Chios but written in Latin characters, of a religious drama belonging to the tradition of Jesuit theatre inspired by the Counter-Reformation. The impact of Jesuit religious drama on Greek authors is explored in detail by W. Puchner, *Griechisches Schuldrama und religiöses Barocktheater im Ägäischen Raum zur Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1580-1750)*, Vienna 1999.

⁷ S.A. Evangelatos, *Ἱστορία τοῦ θεάτρου ἐν Κεφαλληνία*, Athens 1970.

⁸ See especially L. Coutelle, *Formation poétique de Solomos*, Athens 1977 and for a concise appraisal in English P. Mackridge, *Dionysios Solomos*, Bristol 1989, esp. pp. 14-19. The issue of the indebtedness of Greece's national poet to Italian culture raises a "Solomos Question" in Greek cultural criticism, besides the "Erotocritos Question". Arguments concerning the importance of Solomos's Italian background for his poetry have elicited counter-arguments pointing to his affinities with the living tradition of Modern Greek poetry. The most convincing such study still remains E. Hadzigiakoumis, *Νεοελληνικαὶ πηγὰὶ τοῦ Σολωμοῦ*, Athens 1968, which, however, insists on the importance of Cretan literature, especially *Erotocritos* for Solomos's poetic language, and therefore supplies evidence for an indirect appropriation of Italian models. For a balanced appraisal of the overall question of Italian influences in Solomos's work see L. Politis, *Γύρω στὸν Σολωμό*, Athens 1985, pp. 174-75, 210-12, 358-64 and more recently D. Solomos, *Ποιήματα καὶ πεζά*, ed. by S. Alexiou, Athens 1994, pp. 27-43, 291-302, 359-77.

associated with modernity. The informed treatment of problems of this nature should in fact shape the agenda of a serious interpretative historiography of Greco-Italian cultural ties in the years ahead.

II.

Another field of Modern Greek intellectual life which was shaped by influences emanating from Italian sources or through Italian channels was that of philosophy. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that literally the owl of Minerva returned to Greece from Italian nests. The revival of philosophical speculation in Greek culture was largely the product of the training of Greek students at the University of Padua. The greatest among them were probably Theophilos Corydaleus and Alexander Mavrocordatos, whose teaching and writing in the course of the seventeenth century introduced Paduan Neoaristotelianism as the dominant mode of philosophizing in Greek higher education. Corydaleus, an Athenian, was a disciple of Cesare Cremonini at Padua and by means of a stormy teaching and ecclesiastical career and his extensive commentaries on Aristotle contributed more than anybody else to the establishment of his version of Neoaristotelianism as the authoritative form of philosophy in the Greek world for a century and a half⁹. It was precisely Corydallist dominance that in the second half of the eighteenth century elicited the censure of other philosophically inclined Greeks, also trained at Padua and Venice. Now, in an age of Enlightenment, Italian philosophical channels provided access to systems of thought such as rationalism and empiricism that were revolutionizing European philosophy. Eugenios Voulgaris found

⁹ The classic study of Corydaleus is C. Tsourkas, *Les débuts de la pensée philosophique et de la libre pensée dans les Balkans. La vie et l'œuvre de Theophile Corydalé (1570-1646)*, Thessaloniki 1967. A good sample of Corydaleus's philosophical work can be found in the anthology by N. Psimmenos (ed. by), *Ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ Φιλοσοφία ἀπὸ τὸ 1453 ὡς τὸ 1821*, Athens 1988, vol. I, pp. 187-231, 255-66 which also supplies a well-reasoned argument (pp. 173-86) about the centrality of his place in the evolution of post-Byzantine philosophy. On the impact of Corydaleus's ideas on higher education throughout Southeastern Europe, see C. Noica, "La signification historique de l'œuvre de Theophile Corydalé", *Revue des études Sud-est européennes*, vol. 11 (1973), pp. 285-306 and P.M. Kitromilidis, "Τὸ κοινὸ φιλοσοφικὸ παρελθὸν τῶν Βαλκανικῶν λαῶν", *Ἡ Φιλοσοφία στὰ Βαλκάνια σήμερα. Philosophy in Balkan countries today*, ed. by M. Dragona-Monachou, Athens 1994, pp. 171-79.

in the Venetian editions of Antonio Genovesi's early philosophy a congenial form of Christian Enlightenment, that led him to a critical understanding of epistemological questions¹⁰. This familiarized him not only with Descartes but also with the empiricism of John Locke¹¹. Iosipos Moisiodax turned to Ludovico Antonio Muratori's moral philosophy in order to initiate his cultural critique of Greek society and education¹². Nikiphoros Theotokis also through Italian channels in Padua and Bologna, by following the courses of Giovanni Poleni and Eustasio Zanotti, made contact with Newtonian natural philosophy¹³.

Examples could be multiplied in order to establish in greater detail how Greek thought reincorporated itself into the common philosophical culture of Modern Europe by way of Italian institutional and intellectual media. Although illustrations and individual examples are plentiful and information accumulates through specialized research, the history of the phenomenon in its integrity still remains to be written. Corydaleus's life and work for instance has been the subject of an important pioneering study more than half a century ago¹⁴. Since then, however, the study of this important subject has limited itself to a philological approach, which focuses on the editing of unpublished source-material, but treats Greek Neoaristotelianism in total isolation from the great theoretical debate concerning the School of Padua – a debate that has renewed not only our understanding of Neoaristotelianism itself but also has put on a new basis the question of the origins of modern science. On the other hand, the systematic exploration of the question of the Italian sources and channels of transmission of Enlightenment ideas into Greek culture, has only very recently come into the purview of the study of the subject and it looks quite promising as a strategy of comparative research in intellectual history. Thus it appears that the understanding of the history of philosophy as philology, despite its valuable services in

¹⁰ See P.M. Kitromilidis, "Light from the South: The Neapolitan Enlightenment and Greek thought", *Corneliae Papacostea Danielopolu in memoriam εις μνήμην*, Bucharest 1999, pp. 45-52.

¹¹ See Id., "John Locke and the Greek intellectual tradition", *Locke's Philosophy: Content and Context*, ed. by J.A.G. Rogers, Oxford 1994, pp. 217-35.

¹² Id., *The Enlightenment as Social Criticism. Iosipos Moisiodax and Greek culture in the eighteenth century*, Princeton 1992, pp. 44-47, 62-63, 137-38.

¹³ V. Makrides, *Die religiöse Kritik am kopernikanischen Weltbild in Griechenland zwischen 1794 und 1821*, Frankfurt am Main 1995, pp. 56-59.

¹⁴ Tsourkas's work, cited in note 9 above, was first published in Bucharest in 1948.

making available new texts, has reached its limits from the point of view of the substantive tasks of the historiography of philosophy.

III.

It remains to consider very briefly the contribution of Italian sources to the advent of modernity in Modern Greek political thought. The use of Cesare Beccaria's classic treatise of crimes and punishments by Adamantios Korais as one of the foundations of his political thought is well known and well studied and does not need to be elaborated upon¹⁵. What is much lesser known and understood is the extent to which the greatest work of political theory in the Greek Enlightenment is inspired and informed by the literature of Italian republican radicalism. This brings us to the connection of the anonymous treatise *Hellenic Nomarchy or a discourse on freedom* with Vittorio Alfieri's *Della tyrannide*. It is well known that the anonymous patriot, a Greek probably born and living in Italy, in all likelihood in Livorno, quotes directly Alfieri's *Satires* in his text¹⁶. His debt to Alfieri however, is much deeper than this quotation. The rhetorical armoury mobilized by the Anonymous Hellene in his powerful rhetorical onslaught on tyranny points to another work by Alfieri, the treatise *Della tirannide*, as the source of his imagery and symbolic language. This connection has been recognized by the critic George Valetas, who in his 1957 edition of *Hellenic Nomarchy* attempted to trace the Hellene's borrowings from Alfieri's work¹⁷. To these findings one truly evocative example can be added. This is the treatment of fear as an instrument of despotism, an idea used powerfully by both authors. There can be little doubt that the Anonymous author of *Hellenic Nomarchy* was drawing on Alfieri in drafting the relevant passage, and it is very probable that Alfieri in talking of the uses of fear by tyrants was inspired by Montesquieu's theory

¹⁵ Βεκκαρίου περί άμαρτημάτων και ποινών πολιτικώς θεωρουμένων, translated with an introduction and commentary by A. Korais, Paris 1802, second edition: Βεκκαρίου περί άδικημάτων και ποινών, Paris 1823. For a general survey of the reception of Beccaria's work in Greek culture see I. Di Salvo, "Momenti della fortuna di Beccaria in Grecia", III *Convegno Nazionale di Studi Neogreci*, Palermo 1991, pp. 49-69.

¹⁶ Έλληνική Νομαρχία ήτοι λόγος περί έλευθερίας, Italy 1806, p. 156.

¹⁷ Έλληνική Νομαρχία, ed. with introduction and commentary by G. Valetas, Athens 1957, pp. 371-78.

of the activating principles of the three forms of government. We thus have at this point a good illustration of how Italian literature provided bridges which enabled Greek thought to make contact with the mainstream of Enlightenment political ideas. It is precisely this role of transmission belt that makes Italian culture a critical factor in shaping the multicultural world of Mediterranean intellectual life.

Alfieri was the foremost but by no means the only source of inspiration for the Anonymous Hellene among Italian radicals. A survey of Italian literary production in the closing decade of the eighteenth and the very early years of the nineteenth century will certainly reveal his debts to a number of other authors as well. A close affinity in political and moral attitudes could be observed for instance between the Anonymous Hellene and Ugo Foscolo's first major work, the autobiographical novel *Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis*, which had just appeared in Italy while the Anonymous was composing his own treatise. Not only Foscolo and the Anonymous Hellene share a deep admiration for Alfieri, but they also exemplify the same nostalgia for classical antiquity that was typical of republican radicalism and they voice vociferously their hatred for tyranny and their bitter disappointment in Napoleon, whose comportment in Italy had disabused them of the illusion they, like many other republican patriots, had entertained earlier on that he might bring freedom to their countries.

This part of the history of the Enlightenment remains to be written. Greek scholars of the Enlightenment, motivated by their primary literary interests, have pointed to the significance of Italian models for Greek literary expression during this period¹⁸. Considerable attention has been devoted as well to the translation into Modern Greek of Italian dramatic literature from Goldoni to Metastasio¹⁹. In the study of the Enlightenment, nevertheless, one

¹⁸ Notably C. Th. Dimaras, *Ἑλληνικός Ρομαντισμός*, Athens 1982, pp. 93-103 and L. Vranousis, "Ἡ Ἄνοιξη τοῦ Βῆλαρά καὶ τὸ ἰταλικὸ τῆς πρότυπο", *Ὁ Ἐργασιστὴς*, vol. 11 (1974): *Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Κ.Θ. Δημαρχᾶ*, pp. 627-48.

¹⁹ See generally A. Tabaki, *Ἡ νεοελληνικὴ δραματοποιία καὶ οἱ δυτικὲς τῆς ἐπιδράσεις (18^{ος}-19^{ος} αἰ.)*, Athens 1993, pp. 22-27, 45-47, 129-32 and *passim* and W. Puchner, *Εἶδωλα καὶ ὁμοιώματα*, Athens 2000, pp. 27-68 on the most famous Modern Greek translation of a work by Metastasio, the rendering of *L'Olimpiade* by Rhigas Velestinlis in 1797. The question of Italian influences on Modern Greek drama is also considered extensively by A. Tabaki, *Le théâtre néohellénique. Genèse et formation. Ses composantes sociales, idéologiques et esthétiques*, PhD thesis, E.H.E.S.S., Paris 1995, vol. I, pp. 126-69, 178-215, 239-52; vol. II, pp. 409-29, 471-76. The same subject is surveyed in detail by W. Puchner, "Influssi italiani sul teatro greco", *Sincronie*, vol. II, 3 (1999), pp. 183-232.

can note the same prevalence of a literary approach, that tends to leave in relative obscurity aspects of cultural life such as philosophy, historiography and political thought which, as we saw, represent important areas for the elaboration of the modern outlook through contact with Italian models.

This has been a rather selective and necessarily brief survey, which has attempted, by pointing to some prominent examples, to illustrate the nature of the movement of ideas between the Italian- and Greek-speaking cultural traditions in the early modern period and the modes of scholarly treatment they have elicited. It has not been possible to refer to many additional areas of cultural creativity, such as painting and the plastic arts, music, religious thought, historiography, natural science and a host of other fields in which Italian influences and channels have been of decisive importance in bringing about changes and shaping the outcomes of Greek choices. The essential argument, nevertheless, did hopefully come across from the examples and illustrations discussed above: in thinking about the formation of distinct cultural traditions in the Mediterranean world, it is essential to go beyond language and to appraise the multicultural origins and constituents that provided their substantive content and shaped the character of their achievements. These cultural traditions, which were defined and integrated by languages, eventually transformed themselves into national cultures, but this was a development that was consolidated at a rather late stage, in the period since the age of the French Revolution, when cultural traditions and their languages were linked with nation-states and adopted the uniformity and political priorities required by the logic of state power.

In considering the dynamics of cultural change, however, which is the primary task of a viable, research-oriented cultural history, we should not lose sight of the logic of cultural encounters and osmosis which is closer to the untidy and occasionally perplexing picture emerging from the historical record, rather than to the tidy, sterilized and inflexible requirements of reason of state. Available scholarship on the multiple cultural ties between the two Mediterranean traditions defined by the Italian and Greek languages, respectively, reminds us in a detailed and precise way of that logic of encounter and osmosis and as specialized research extends an invitation and a challenge to interpretative historiography. For all that we can and we ought to be grateful.

