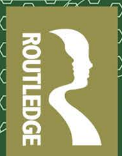
*Routledge Studies in Renaissance and Early Modern Worlds of Knowledge*

# FLORENCE AFTER THE MEDICI

## TUSCAN ENLIGHTENMENT, 1737–1790

Edited by
Corey Tazzara, Paula Findlen, and Jacob Soll



# Florence After the Medici

Although there is a rich historiography on Enlightenment Tuscany in Italian as well as French and German, the principle Anglophone works are Eric Cochrane's *Tradition and Enlightenment in the Tuscan Academies* (1961) and his *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries* (1973). It is high time to revisit the Tuscan Enlightenment. This volume brings together an international group of scholars with the goal of putting to rest the idea that Florence ceased to be interesting after the Renaissance. Indeed, it is partly the explicit dialogue between Renaissance and Enlightenment that makes eighteenth-century Tuscany so interesting. This enlightened age looked to the past. It began the Herculean project of collecting, editing, and publishing many of the manuscripts that today form the bedrock of any serious study of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, Vasari, Galileo, and other Tuscan writers. This was an age of public libraries, projects of cultural restoration, and the emergence of the Uffizi as a public art gallery, complemented by a science museum in Peter Leopold's reign whose relics can still be visited in the Museo Galileo and La Specola.

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# Florence After the Medici

## Tuscan Enlightenment, 1737–1790

**Edited by Corey Tazzara, Paula Findlen, and Jacob Soll**

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# Acknowledgments

*Florence after the Medici* began with our great admiration for Eric Cochrane's *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries*. Forty-seven years ago, Cochrane introduced his readers to the fascinating world of the Habsburg-Lorraine and the transformation of Tuscany and its capital city under their rule. Despite the lively and important research on this subject by Italian and European scholars, very little has been written about eighteenth-century Florence in English since then. We decided to venture into this territory, in part to introduce readers to some of the most interesting work on this subject being done today, and more generally to provoke a conversation about why places like Tuscany still tend to be left out of the general narrative of the Enlightenment.

This volume is based on a conference held at the USC Early Modern Institute at the Huntington Library in November 2015. We thank Peter Mancall as the Institute director and his staff for making the event a success and our colleagues and students who attended the workshop and offered their comments on the preliminary papers. We would also like to thank Scripps College and Stanford University for additional assistance in funding and managing the conference. Amy Marcus-Newhall, Dean of Faculty at Scripps College, graciously offered funding to this off-campus venue. Debra Satz, then Senior Associate Dean of Humanities at Stanford University, provided funding for the Early Modern Consortium that supported an off-site event and student participation. In the Stanford History Department, Monica Wheeler and Maria Van Buiten took care of finances.

Collaborative research thrives on our desire to work together on a common goal. This collaboration has been a joy from beginning to end, so our greatest thanks goes to all the participants in this volume for traveling to eighteenth-century Florence with us and sharing what they learned. Finally, we thank our families for humoring our desire to experience Florence without the Medici.

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# Introduction

## Tuscany and Enlightenment in the Atlantic World

*Corey Tazzara and Paula Findlen*

"When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life."[1] Even so, the Florentine adventurer Filippo Mazzei (1730–1816) found much that annoyed him in the English capital.[2] He arrived in 1756 and set himself up as a merchant specializing in the wines, cheeses, and other foodstuffs increasingly desired by the English after they experienced Italy on their Grand Tour. At ease with the English language, Mazzei was nonetheless proud of the fact that he never lost his Tuscan accent in all his years abroad. His fluency in the Tuscan tongue also put him in demand as a tutor for the prosperous middling sorts in London; his most illustrious pupil was the young Edward Gibbon, who began to study Machiavelli in 1759 under his instruction. This activity afforded Mazzei some opportunity to observe English life firsthand, warts and all.[3] Particularly galling was the English sense of superiority over other societies. At one soiree hosted by an elderly doctor, a certain young man, "wishing to do honor to Milton," had the nerve to slight Dante, declaring that his fame rested on unintelligibility. As if this were not enough, the Englishman concluded by opining that Italians "were four hundred years behind the times."[4] At this point, Mazzei's host tartly observed that English luminaries such as Locke, Newton, and Milton were deeply indebted to their Tuscan predecessors such as Dante, Ficino, and Galileo. The young man was duly chastened, but the impression of English snobbery lingered in Mazzei's mind.

As a worldly Florentine, Mazzei thought he had been well prepared for England. "I had gone there with the idea that it was a land where everyone enjoyed perfect liberty, for that was the general opinion held in Florence."[5] He regularly encountered the English at home. Florence was one of the major stops of the Grand Tour, where English aristocrats basked in the cultural nimbus of the Renaissance and imbibed the wines that cost a fortune back in rainy Britain (figure 0.1). Indeed, it was Sir Horace Mann, the British resident in Florence from 1738 until 1786, whom Casanova dubbed the "idol of Florence," who complimented Mazzei on his knowledge of the language and inspired his youthful fascination with the English.[6] So Mazzei might be forgiven for believing he knew all about England.

*Figure 0.1* Thomas Patch, *British Gentlemen at Sir Horace Mann's Home in Florence* (1763–5), oil on canvas, 37 15/16 × 48 15/16 inches (96.4 × 124.3 cm). B1976.7.187.

*Source*: Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

What especially confused Mazzei about Britain was the strength of private liberty and the weakness of public liberty. Private liberty referred to the protection of property rights, as well as the law's dispassionate treatment of rich and poor alike. While such fairness encouraged Mazzei to think well of England, public liberty was just as important to him. Public liberty meant the capacity of citizens to participate in civic life on a footing of equality. He was aghast at the English custom of impressing seamen into service. Worse, he learned that elections to Parliament were often controlled by the crown or great lords, and that the majority party always cast its votes in support of the government in power. To a Florentine weaned on Machiavelli, this was no kind of civic liberty at all.[7] In this regard, he was a more astute observer of English society than Voltaire because he saw it through Tuscan eyes.

Despite these misgivings, Mazzei's stay in London was a turning point in his life, offering vistas onto the Atlantic world that transformed his relationship with his native Tuscany. He began frequenting the American colonists in London after receiving a letter on behalf of Grand Duke Peter Leopold of Tuscany (r. 1765–90), who wanted Mazzei to secure

two Franklin stoves for him. The Florentine went directly to Benjamin Franklin himself, then in London as an agent for Pennsylvania. The two searched about in vain, until Franklin saw a couple of similar stoves in an unlikely shop. The presumptuous owner foolishly tried to explain the "improvements" he had wrought upon Franklin's design, until Mazzei shut him up. "It was owing to this rebuke that Leopold obtained the first two stoves in Europe built exactly in accordance with Franklin's principles."[8] Through Benjamin Franklin, Mazzei became acquainted with Thomas Adams of Virginia; and through Adams he eventually met Thomas Jefferson, who become one of his lifelong friends. By this point, Mazzei was no longer simply a Florentine merchant in London but acting as the grand duke's agent.

The more Mazzei learned about British North America, the less interesting London seemed for his future ventures. By 1771, with the encouragement of his American friends, Mazzei conceived a plan for immigrating to America. His project, which sought to introduce olive oil, silk, and wine to Virginia, exemplified the kind of imperial botany so typical of the epoch. Since England imported silk and olive oil from Italy, and wine from the Iberian Peninsula and France, the logic of these choices was unimpeachable to the mercantilist mind. Why buy from a foreign nation what the colonies can produce? Mazzei envisioned recruiting fifty laborers from all over southern Europe, as well as collecting the vines, silkworms, and olive stock necessary for such an adventure. This most grandiose vision was not to be, both because he failed to achieve the support of the English government, and because Italians jealous of protecting their silk industry opposed him.[9] Instead, Mazzei pursued a smaller version of the project, focusing just on viticulture.[10]

In 1772, Mazzei returned to Tuscany to find laborers willing to immigrate to America. He had an audience with the grand duke, who granted him permission "to export all kinds of plants," with the exception of the mulberry trees on which silkworms lived. The grand duke also allowed him to recruit families for the venture, so long as Mazzei did not poach his own subjects; since there were non-subjects in Livorno as well as Lucca (where Mazzei had business ties), this was not as forbidding a prohibition as it might seem.[11] Mazzei found ten families to accompany him to America though he failed to persuade Peter Leopold to part with a talented young Florentine of German origin, Giovanni Fabbroni (1752–1822), to fulfill his promise to Jefferson that he would provide him with "the company of an educated young Tuscan."[12] He set sail in 1773, settled in Albemarle County, and began forthwith the project of planting vines not far from Monticello. His first efforts met with indifferent success, although he remained convinced that "in no other country are conditions so favorable to the culture of grapevines."[13]

Here Mazzei's political education began in earnest, leading him to reflect on the relationship he hoped to forge between Tuscany and America. From Virginia he wrote about the rapid deterioration of Great Britain's

relationship with its American colonies, defending the colonists in their quest for the perfect liberty he had failed to find in London. He wrote articles in the leading Florentine journals, *Notizie del mondo* (*News of the World*) and *Gazzetta universale* (*Universal Gazette*), hoping to elicit greater sympathy and understanding for his new friends and their cause, knowing that the British resident Mann was working hard to achieve exactly the opposite. In December 1775, Franklin expressed his pleasure that Mazzei had sent the grand duke a translation of the *Declaration of Independence* months before its ratification. Both Florentine journals published it in September 1776 when the news was still fresh.[14] Mazzei's American friends saw him as a potential partner in their efforts to gain European support for their cause, especially the aid of Grand Duke Peter Leopold.

Political events were soon to turn Mazzei into one more hapless piece of flotsam in that age of revolution and upheaval.[15] Yet Mazzei so readily embraced the American project of independence, in part, because he had come of age in the Tuscany of the Habsburg-Lorraine. He was six years old when Gian Gastone de' Medici (r. 1723–37), the last of the Medici grand dukes, died; and he spent his youth under the Regency of Francis Stephen (r. 1737–65). He witnessed the transformation of Tuscany by the grand duke's ministers who set to work reorganizing political, economic, cultural, and religious institutions. On his first trip home from London in 1765, Mazzei arrived in the port of Livorno shortly after Francis Stephen's and Maria Theresa's third son, Peter Leopold, made his entrance into Florence. The new grand duke assumed his father's title at the age of eighteen, becoming the first Habsburg grand duke to reside in the territory he ruled. During this phase of Mazzei's life, Peter Leopold aggressively transformed Tuscany into a model state crafted by an enlightened prince and his ministers. Thus, by the time Mazzei reached Virginia, he had already lived through decades of social, political, and economic change in his native Tuscany. How did this movement encourage him to think that America and Tuscany were natural commercial partners and potentially allies in other ways?

## Revisiting the Tuscan Enlightenment

From Florence to Virginia by way of London: Mazzei's own biography embodies the Machiavellian moment of early modern Europe.[16] As his cultural touchstones indicate, from his dispute with the arrogant Miltonian to his analysis of English politics, the Florentine Renaissance continued to shape his perspective on the world. Like many eighteenth-century Tuscans, Mazzei looked to the past for inspiration. He surely encouraged Gibbon's enthusiastic interest in the Florentine Renaissance, even if Gibbon ultimately preferred to write the history of Rome. The rise of the Medici—the cultural brilliance, commercial prosperity, and political

sophistication of the Florentine state—continues to fascinate us to such an extent that it is difficult to imagine that there *was* a Florence after the end of Medici rule. Yet the Tuscany from which Mazzei emerged and to which he was soon to return was a dynamic society, on the periphery of European politics perhaps, but certainly not on the periphery of its cultural life (figure 0.2). Tuscany's strong ties to Habsburg Europe transformed it into a satellite of one of the most important eighteenth-century empires, while retaining its own identity. This quintessential Renaissance society experienced its Enlightenment in two different ways—by embracing its past as an integral part of its vision of modernity and by eagerly adopting the ethos of reform that connected Florence to Vienna.

The Tuscan Enlightenment is intelligible only by recalling the achievements of its venerable predecessor, the Florentine Republic. The fortunes of this Renaissance city had been married to the Medici family ever since the days of Cosimo il Vecchio (1389–1464), *pater patriae* and one of the greatest bankers of his age. In Renaissance Florence governments changed more often than anywhere in Europe; the Medici family transformed themselves from the unofficial first family of the city into a dynasty that produced two popes and, as of 1531, a succession of hereditary dukes who became the Grand Dukes of Tuscany in 1569. Under Cosimo I (r. 1537–74) and his sons, the grand duchy became a strong territorial

*Figure 0.2* Giuseppe Zocchi, *View of the Arno in Florence*, first half of the eighteenth century, oil on canvas, 22.4 × 34.2 inches (57 cm × 87 cm). Private collection, Web Gallery of Art, WGA25993.

*Source*: Giuseppe Zocchi [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

state with Habsburg imperial backing. The marriage of Cosimo's son Ferdinando I to Christina of Lorraine in 1589 paved the way for Francis Stephen to succeed Gian Gastone a century and a half later.

The machinations that made the Medici into the rulers of a state with a proud republican tradition continued to be contested into the eighteenth century. What was not in doubt was the dynasty's brilliant ceremonial, artistic, literary, and scientific culture, culminating in such figures as Giorgio Vasari (1511–74), whose *Lives of the Painters* formed one of the earliest interpretations of the Italian Renaissance, and Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), whose astronomy and physics transformed science before the Roman Inquisition decreed that he had gone too far. The creation of the free port of Livorno exerted a catalytic effect on commercial life in the region; Tuscans became known for their willingness to do business with English, Dutch, and Jewish merchants, and just about anyone else searching for a foothold in the Tyrrhenian Sea. Yet despite the dazzling achievements of the early grand dukes, the long seventeenth century weakened Tuscan commercial power and prestige, transforming a state that had once aspired to imperial dominion in the Mediterranean into an increasingly minor player on the European stage.[17] Medicean Florence was gradually dying, well before the demise of the Medici.

In 1737, the much-anticipated death of the last Medici Grand Duke Gian Gastone led to the extinction of one of the most durable ruling families in Europe. By the time the indolent Gian Gastone breathed his last, Tuscans had already begun to prepare for a future without the Medici; it was the end of a Florentine Ancien Regime. Francis Stephen, recently married to Maria Theresa, inherited the grand duchy from his second cousin as a condition for giving up his own duchy of Lorraine to the Polish king. Six thousand Austrian troops marched into Tuscany even before Gian Gastone died. Many Florentine officeholders found themselves out of a job to make way for appointees under a new regime that made French the official court language.[18] The arrival of the carpetbagging *Lorrainers*, a term of disparagement that captured the uneasy mood of native Tuscans at the end of the 1730s, signaled the beginning of a new era (figure 0.3). The great chronicler of Italian history Ludovico Antonio Muratori lamented the loss of Italy's "natural princes" and the rise of indirect rule.[19] Yet despite relative decline during the seventeenth century, the grand duchy that Francis Stephen inherited offered many interesting possibilities. The Medici shaped the Florentine Renaissance; the Habsburg-Lorraine put their stamp on the Tuscan Enlightenment.[20]

Shortly after Gian Gastone's death, his sister Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici negotiated the terms by which the Lorraine duke took possession of the grand duchy. The Family Pact (*Patto di Famiglia*) of October 1737 helped to institutionalize the memory of the Medici, but it also made the Habsburg-Lorraines the custodians of a historical entity that they had not created but now ruled. Its institutions, including the Uffizi Gallery

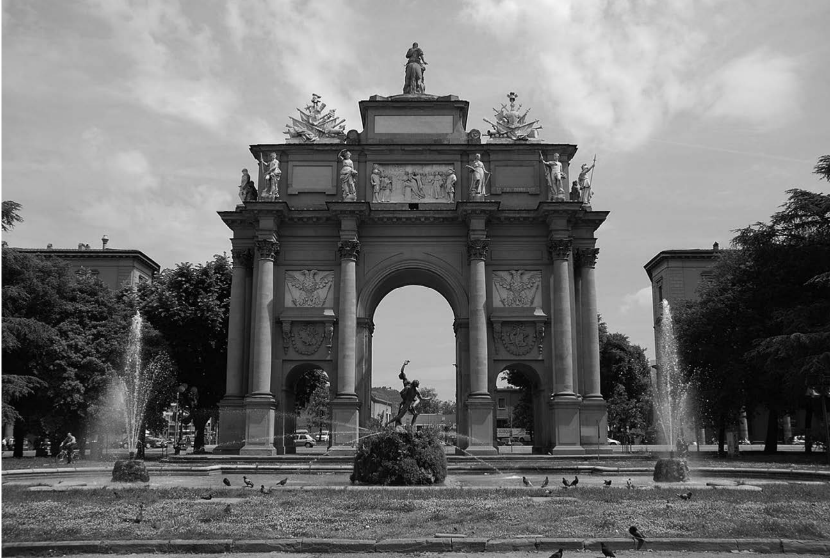

*Figure 0.3* Jean-Nicolas Gadot, *Triumphal Arch of the Lorraine* (1737–9), Piazza della Libertà, Florence.

*Source*: Photograph by Marcus Obal. MarcusObal [CC BY-SA 3.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons.

first assembled under Francesco I (r. 1574–87), were theirs to reinvent. The transition was not an easy one at first since Francis Stephen initially perceived Tuscany as a valuable asset to replenish Austria's depleted war treasury. "The Tuscans would give two-thirds of their property to have the Medici back," remarked Charles de Brosses when he visited in 1739, "and the other third to get rid of the Lorrainers."[21] Fears about the Habsburg despoliation of Florence's greatest treasures inspired Electress Anna Maria Luisa's decision to insist that Tuscany's cultural patrimony remain on site. A rich culture of experimentation that memorialized the past while innovating in the present became the essence of the Tuscan Enlightenment.

Francis Stephen was an absentee grand duke. He was preoccupied with supporting his wife the empress in Vienna and spreading their children like pawns across the European chessboard. Nonetheless, the ministers who ruled on his behalf—Prince Marco di Craon and Count Emmanuel de Richecourt, working with local notables such as Pompeo Neri—set in motion a series of reforms during the 1740s and 1750s that began to transform the political and economic structures of the state. In September 1737 Richecourt wrote with exasperation to Francis Stephen that the

Tuscan government was "a chaos almost impossible to untangle," finding it an untidy mixture of "aristocracy, democracy, and monarchy."[22] His proposed plan of reform, designed to rationalize an overly complex and archaic system, began with the establishment of the Council of Regency two years later. The grand duke's ministers put censorship in the hands of the state rather than the church and opened previously private libraries to the public. They redefined the nobility, weakening their power and privileges, and reduced the number of hospitals that had been an integral part of the city's infrastructure under the Medici, closing down over five hundred institutions between 1741 and 1755. They consolidated the policy of Tuscan neutrality with a 1739 edict to ensure that their state and its port of Livorno did not suffer the consequences of escalating wars between major European states.[23] In 1750 Mann remarked to his friend Sir Horace Walpole, who spent a year in Florence in 1739–40, on how dramatically the city had changed.[24] His cozy relationship with the Medici no longer defined English diplomacy and Florence increasingly seemed to be a world of outsiders who did not always play by the rules. Mann was not entirely happy with the results but resigned to its evolution. The administrative transformation of the grand duchy under the Regency set the stage for the arrival of Peter Leopold, perhaps the greatest reformer in eighteenth-century Europe.

It was not preordained that Peter Leopold would rule Tuscany any more than was his succession as emperor in 1790, with the death of his oldest brother Joseph II. European pressures after the War of Austrian Succession forced Francis Stephen and Maria Theresa to acknowledge that their eldest son could not inherit Tuscany, a decision Joseph II confirmed by formally relinquishing his right to rule in 1763. Tuscany remained a Habsburg satellite rather than an outright possession. This became a younger son's opportunity for Peter Leopold. The emergence of modern Tuscany began during his reign. It was an early modern state inspired by and inspiring for the Enlightenment, predicated on a model of rule that the grand duke developed in explicit opposition to his brother Joseph II's style of enlightened absolutism in Vienna. The "Leopoldine myth" loomed large even in Peter Leopold's own day.[25] He was a ruler who earned the admiration of many European observers, even if the Florentines continued to feel that he was a foreigner in their midst who tried to change everything about their society, whether they liked it or not. Peter Leopold could never rule autonomously from Vienna, though, however much he resisted his brother's requests to treat Tuscany as a lucrative resource for Habsburg imperial ambitions. The Tuscans understood the precariousness of their position.

It has now been almost fifty years since Eric Cochrane published *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries* (1973), one of the classics of modern historiography. Adam Wandruszka's monumental study of Peter Leopold's reforms appeared five years before Cochrane's book; Furio Diaz,

Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, and Carlo Mangio's history of the grand duchy under the Habsburg-Lorraine did not appear until 1997.[26] Until recently, Cochrane was virtually the only Anglophone scholar to recognize the importance of Tuscany under the Habsburg-Lorraine—in this influential work and in his earlier *Tradition and Enlightenment in the Tuscan Academies, 1690–1800* (1961). For Cochrane, the Tuscan Enlightenment was deeply rooted in Tuscan cultural and political traditions. Certainly, one aim of this volume is to introduce readers to some of the distinctive features of Tuscany, starting with the well-cultivated historical consciousness that Florentines were remaking a Renaissance society.[27] Indeed, so persuasive was the articulation of Renaissance Florence as a distinct entity that it became the focus of academic specialization as well as a touchstone for museums and other organizations. The institutionalization of the Renaissance ultimately obscured the links between Renaissance and Enlightenment that this book seeks to recover.

Yet the insistence on the legacy of the Renaissance is not to deny the profound ways in which Tuscany, like other Habsburg territories in Italy, was entangled in the European Enlightenment writ large. This theme was marginal to Cochrane but central to more recent interpretations of the Italian Enlightenment, which has generated a rich historiography in French and German as well as Italian. Franco Venturi is the most influential scholar in this vein. While some of his work has been made available in English, it has yet to inspire a full integration of this subject into the general study of the Enlightenment. As Venturi and his followers have demonstrated, Italian reformers—however deeply embedded in local political and social realities—participated in broader currents of Enlightenment thought. The Tuscan Enlightenment was at once local and transnational, Catholic and reformist. It was never a movement in isolation.[28]

The Tuscan Enlightenment looked to the past, transforming Medici nostalgia into a cultural program that celebrated Renaissance Florence with the kind of reverence that had previously been reserved for Greco-Roman antiquity, while also deconstructing its institutions and practices.[29] Eighteenth-century Florentine scholars began the herculean project of collecting, editing, and publishing many of the manuscripts that today form the bedrock of the study of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Bruni, Alberti, Machiavelli, Vasari, Cellini, Galileo, and many other Tuscan writers. They rediscovered Tuscan global merchants, Amerigo Vespucci and Francesco Carletti, as if to remind themselves that an increasingly small European state now under foreign rule had once fulfilled Fernand Braudel's statement that there was a Tuscan in every port—a sentiment Mazzei surely appreciated and sought to revive for his own times.[30] This was an age of public libraries and lectures, relative freedom from censorship, proliferating journals full of news and opinion, and academies eager to demonstrate that knowledge was a public good. Eighteenth-century Tuscans boldly implemented projects of cultural restoration and archival curation,

and they were justifiably proud of their museums. The emergence of the Uffizi as a public art gallery, especially in light of its administrative reorganization under Peter Leopold in 1769, was a prelude to the creation of a science museum in 1775 whose relics can still be visited in the Museo Galileo and La Specola.[31] When we look at Michelangelo's *David* in the Accademia today, we see a legacy of Peter Leopold's Tuscany.

Eighteenth-century Tuscany was a world of action as well as reflection. The Habsburg-Lorraine projects of political reform dovetailed with a number of Enlightenment ideals. It was an age of social experiments, efforts to stimulate the economy, improve agriculture, reform administration, improve education, streamline institutions, and ensure that justice belonged to the many rather than the few. During the reign of Peter Leopold, Tuscany became a virtual laboratory for an enlightened society. Some of his most notable reforms include the abolition of the death penalty; the unification and liberalization of internal customs; the suppression of the guilds, confraternities, and numerous religious orders; and the drafting of a text that would have created Europe's first constitutional monarchy, had he gone forward with the project. Peter Leopold took seriously the call to rationalize society and improve the wellbeing of the grand duchy's subjects. He prided himself on rewarding hardworking men of talent and on his personal knowledge of his subjects and his territory. He filled his study with the notes he took on everyone and everything, and he sought, unsuccessfully as it turns out, to transmit what he learned to his son and successor, Ferdinand III.[32] Few societies underwent as many reforms in such a short period, or were transformed as dramatically. As a result, Tuscany offers an object lesson in the possibilities as well as the limits of Enlightenment.

## Projects of Knowledge

By 1765, the year Peter Leopold acceded to the Tuscan throne, Filippo Mazzei had established himself as a moderately successful trader in London. He decided to visit Italy to purchase high-quality pearls, then in great demand in England.[33] The business side of the trip was a success, but other problems emerged. Unbeknownst to Mazzei, an enemy in London sent a letter to the Congregation of the Holy Office, claiming that Mazzei was involved in importing and distributing illicit books "against revelation and against morality."[34] The visceral anger of his accusers shocked the cosmopolitan Mazzei. "This Signor Mazzei, world pestilence, of whom posterity will be in horror, is now in Italy. He loaded several ships with a quantity of execrable productions bound for Genoa, Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples, and Messina with false titles." Among the illicit titles were supposedly works by Voltaire and Pierre Bayle. Never mind that Mazzei was neither a printer nor a dealer in books: how could he defend himself against "the shadowy machinations of friars"?[35] Mazzei immediately departed for Lucca, outside of Tuscan jurisdiction, and from

there went into temporary exile in Naples, where he convinced the prime minister, the Tuscan-born jurist Bernardo Tanucci (1698–1783), to intervene on his behalf. A host of eminent friends rushed to Mazzei's defense. He declared with some satisfaction: "In less than a year I had said and written so much that the evil tribunal was totally abolished in Tuscany."[36]

In fact, the attack against ecclesiastical authority began long before Mazzei's brush with the Inquisition. While Gian Gastone had been no bigot, the change in dynasty had important consequences for relations between church and state. The Regency sought to recapture the unitary sovereignty of the state by reordering relations with the church, clawing back jurisdictional rights, or simply ignoring some of Rome's injunctions.[37] The accession of Peter Leopold in particular signaled emboldened resistance to the demands of Rome. He thought there were too many priests and nuns in his capital city and later advised his son, Ferdinand III, that the church was Tuscany's greatest enemy.[38] No wonder he was prepared to shield Mazzei from the Inquisition.

The new dynasty also resisted the church's pretensions over the control of knowledge. The most notorious weapon in the arsenal of the Catholic Reformation, apart from the Inquisition itself, was the Index of Prohibited Books. A press law in 1743 removed all powers of censorship from ecclesiastical authorities and put them in the hands of the state. The Hapsburg-Lorraine, it turned out, had more tolerance for publication than the Medici grand dukes ever had and less loyalty to Rome. The press was freer than it had been since the days of Machiavelli, making Florence one of the journalistic capitals of Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century.[39] There was a resurgence in printed matter, connecting Florence to all the centers of Europe, and inundating Tuscany with the most radical elements of contemporary thought. In 1764, a publishing house in Livorno brought out the first edition of Cesare Beccaria's *On Crimes and Punishment*; in 1771, it began to print an edition of Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, dedicated to Peter Leopold who financed and supported its publication. The grand duke's library contained those dangerous French books that religious authorities most feared. Contemporaries reported seeing him reading Locke and Voltaire in Palazzo Pitti. In 1769 Pompeo Batoni depicted Peter Leopoldo with his brother Joseph II during their trip to Rome with a copy of Montesequieu's *Spirit of Laws* on the table (figure 0.4).[40] The Tuscan press was an agent of Enlightenment well beyond the bounds of the grand duchy. Along with the numerous visitors who passed through or resided at length in Florence, the lively publishing culture of the principal Tuscan cities transformed a provincial capital into a dynamic cosmopolitan center. There was a reason that Mazzei became curious about a wider world as a product of his Tuscan formation.

Many of Peter Leopold's reforms emphasized the production, control, and dissemination of knowledge. He also came to understand that there were specifically political problems associated with this program

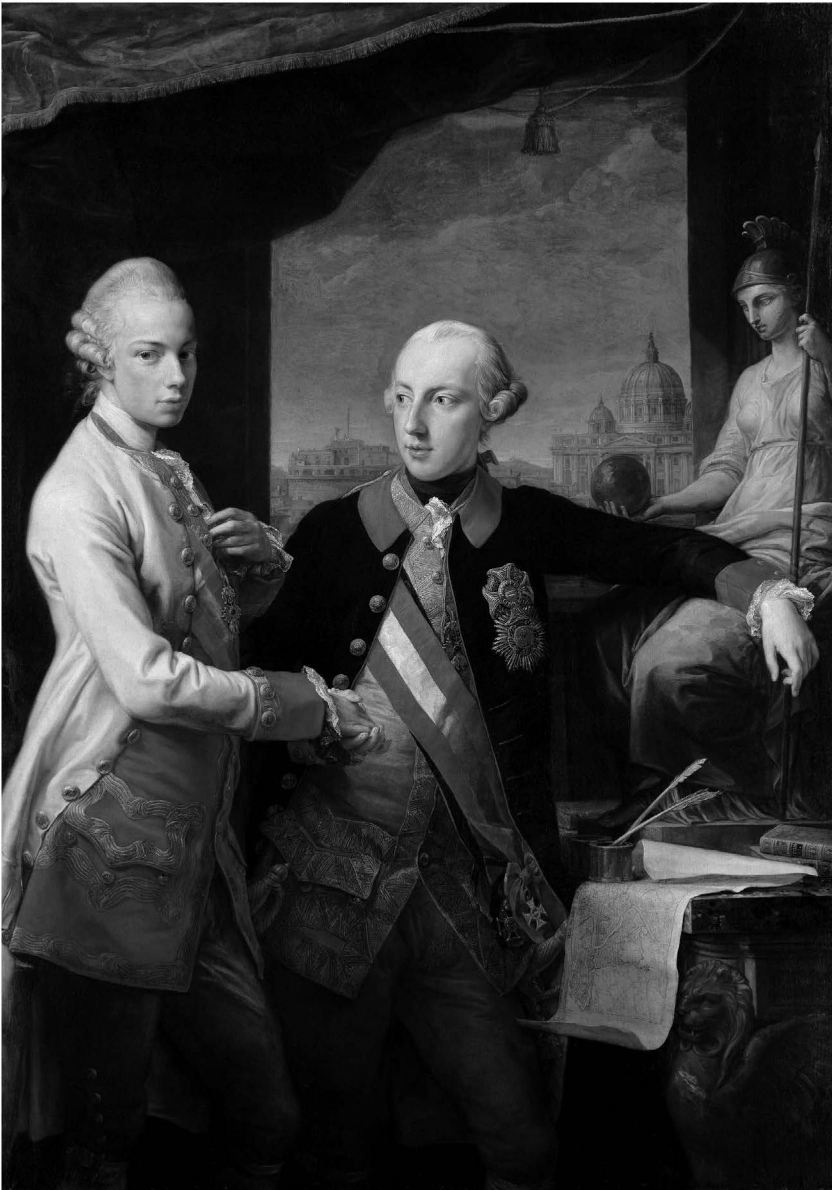

*Figure 0.4* Pompeo Batoni, *Emperor Joseph II and Grand Duke Peter Leopold* (1769), oil on canvas, 68.11 × 48.03 inches (173 × 122.5 cm). Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna, Gemäldegalerie, GG 1628.

*Source*: Dguendel [CC BY 4.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0)], via Wikimedia Commons.

of enlightenment. In chapter one of this volume, "The Enlightenment at Work," Renato Pasta offers a rich portrait of the political landscape that Peter Leopold inherited from his predecessors, the Medici and the Regency. He examines the grand duke's most remarkable project: the effort to establish a constitutional monarchy along the lines of the "king in parliament" of eighteenth-century Britain. The constitution exists in two drafts from 1782 and 1787. The grand duke's prime minister Francesco Maria Gianni (1728–1821) assisted Peter Leopold with its composition. Gianni was initially flabbergasted by the idea, fretting that reducing the grand duke merely to "a first citizen or a first magistrate" was simply a fantasy.[41] With his usual diligence, however, Gianni set about implementing his monarch's ideas. The grand duke sought to establish a political order which he believed would result in "the best possible happiness available to humans," with as much civil liberty as he considered feasible. It was a remarkable effort to translate ideas into practice.

What in the end was the nature of the grand duke's political enlightenment? While Peter Leopold followed the controversies aroused by Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1762) and the constitutional debates in North America, the ideals of republicanism scarcely had any impact on his own views. Ultimately, he chose not to invest in Mazzei's America even though he studied its development attentively. The executive branch dominated Leopold's constitution; perhaps revealing that he was much closer to his brother the emperor than he acknowledged, he eschewed any notion of a balance of power. The assembly's chief purpose was to negotiate the government budget and act as a channel of information (and control) between center and periphery. "Every state needs a Constitution or a contract between the people and the sovereign that limits the sovereign's authority and power," Peter Leopold wrote to his sister Maria Carolina, Queen of Naples and Sicily, in January 1790.[42] The constitution never became law because of opposition among the grand duke's ministers and his brother Joseph II, emperor until Peter Leopold himself ascended the imperial throne, a month after this exchange with their sister in Naples. Even so, the constitution embodied the outermost limits to which any Ancien Regime ruler was willing to go in the service of enlightened governance. His collaborator Gianni considered it important enough to write his *Memorials of the Constitution* (1805), when Peter Leopold was no longer around to offer his own opinion and after Napoleon had forced Ferdinand III to flee to Vienna in 1801 in his bid to redraw the map of Europe.

Peter Leopold's constitutional proposals rested on a more general program of educating his subjects. In chapter two, "The Politics of Libraries under the Habsburg-Lorraine," Emmanuelle Chapron examines the state-led reorganization of libraries throughout the grand duchy, and their opening to a widening public of readers. The library founded by the bibliophile Antonio Magliabechi (1633–1714) opened to the public in

1747, and the Marucelli library opened in 1752. Peter Leopold deemed these institutions "little frequented and extremely deprived of modern books"; he merged the more up-to-date Palatine Library (which brought together the Medici and Lorraine collections) with the Magliabechiana in 1771.[43] The latest texts of political economy—the writings of the French Physiocrat and statesman Turgot, for instance, who considered Tuscany a pioneering example of how his ideas about economic liberalism might be implemented—tended to be housed within the prince's personal collection, where he made them available to his ministers. During the second half of the century, important grand ducal institutions such as the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova and the new Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History became repositories of specialized technical libraries, ensuring that "useful knowledge" was available to those who had the skills to exploit it.

One of Peter Leopold's goals was to improve public education in order to create productive and engaged citizens, as his *Notes on Education* (ca. 1775) reveal. He considered himself both father and educator of his people. Inspired by his reading of Rousseau and other theorists, the grand duke modeled his ideas on pedagogy with his own brood of children, male and female, minutely attending to the details of their education as well as the education of his mistress Livia Raimondi. He envisioned a system of public schools, segregated by sex and distributed uniformly throughout the neighborhoods, to encourage basic literacy and instruction in trades as well as the cultivation of moral virtue. Very much his mother's son and therefore cognizant of the value of women's education, Peter Leopold established the "Leopoldine Schools" (*Scuole leopoldine*) to prepare future teachers to educate young girls, diminishing the role of convents in female education.[44] The suppression of the monasteries in the early 1780s, following Clement XIV's suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773, freed up resources for the grand duke's projects of public improvement. It also led to the seizure and redistribution of dozens of ecclesiastical libraries, extending the secularization of knowledge to the localities throughout Tuscany. Like many of Peter Leopold's reforms, the library projects fluctuated between an authoritarian impulse to control his subjects, exemplified by the micromanagement of collections by state authorities, and an ideal of unbounded enlightenment that aimed to transform subjects into sympathetic collaborators of reform.[45] This was the paradox of enlightened rule.

The management of the Florentine libraries drew extensively on a prior tradition of book collecting in the grand duchy. Likewise, the treatment of the mentally ill also emerged out of old Medici institutions for handling the infirm. In chapter three, "The Economics of Healthcare and the Tuscan Medical Enlightenment," Elizabeth Mellyn examines how the economics of confinement dovetailed with the management of illness. Paralleling the recovery of power from ecclesiastical authorities in other

realms, between 1737 and 1790, reformers transformed a loosely configured network of hospitals under ecclesiastical jurisdiction, into a centralized and laicized public health system run out of Santa Maria Nuova, Florence's largest and most prestigious hospital. This venerable institution was founded during the late Middle Ages by the father of Dante's beloved Beatrice and transformed by Peter Leopold into a center for educating physicians and midwives as well as treating patients. Leopold claimed that before his accession, "hospitals were maintained with the least economy and the least attention . . . the sick were poorly kept, with little cleanliness."[46] However, the program of reform that he superintended owed less to new medical principles than to a more rational approach to administering hospital finances.

The basic justification for confining the insane, from the Renaissance right through the Enlightenment, was the desire to remove severely-mentally ill people from the streets and prisons, and to put them in a place that could care for their wellbeing. But how were such services to be financed? The person responsible for answering that question was the renowned physician Antonio Cocchi (1695–1758), whose historical research into Florentine hospitals provided the fundamental data for administrative reform. The achievement of enlightened activism was finding a means of funding the hospitals—and, above all, sticking by the commitment to do so even in the face of rising costs. The solutions included centralization, patrimonial consolidation, and subsidies from public bodies throughout the grand duchy. What at first blush might look like a Foucauldian project of state confinement reveals rather the application of economic rationalism to longstanding and widely shared goals.

Peter Leopold's insistence on sequestering the mad—or those incapable of reason—was one of the most coercive aspects of his project of enlightenment. More typical was his attention to the corporeal implications of modern philosophy, to preserving the dignity and integrity of his enlightened subjects. The grand duke felt that active citizens should be knowing subjects. He supported efforts to modernize the universities of Pisa and Siena that began under the Regency, introducing new subjects such as chemistry into the curriculum in 1757, and encouraged the growth of public lectures on science by leading researchers during the 1770s and 1780s.[47] Peter Leopold considered recent developments in science and medicine to be especially important to the success of a modern state. He surrounded himself with advisors such as Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti (1712–83), custodian of the Florentine botanical garden, Felice Fontana (1730–1805), the inaugural director of the science museum, and Mazzei's friend the naturalist and economist Fabbroni, initially Fontana's assistant and ultimately his rival and successor.[48]

In chapter four, "From the Body to the Body Politic," Rebecca Messbarger shows how Tuscan subjects were to be educated in the empirical truths of nature and in the nature of themselves. Peter Leopold defined

the ideals of "public happiness" and "the common good" in terms of the corporeal wellbeing of his enlightened subjects. Progress was especially obvious in the penal realm. Medicean Tuscany was famous for its gruesome public executions, and the final such spectacle took place in Florence in 1759 after decades of decline. But it was Peter Leopold who formally abolished the death penalty in 1786, the first monarch in Europe to do so. His reforms culminated in a new criminal code known as the *Leopoldina* of 1786, which intrigued no less a luminary than the Marquis de Condorcet.[49]

The grand duke's reforms went beyond rationalizing the judicial system and respecting the bodily integrity of his subjects. He also aspired to educate them in their own physical nature. As director of the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History, the energetic Fontana was tasked with implementing Leopold's vision. The museum sought to display "everything of importance, that is most beautiful, most useful, and most ingenious that men have been able to find or to imagine."[50] Its most famous exhibitions were models of the body, created with stupendous anatomical accuracy and artistry. These models enabled visitors—and the logbook shows they came in droves—to behold the structure of the human body, layer by layer, and contemplate (without aid of explanatory notes!) their own corporeality. Felice claimed: "in the blink of an eye, everything is seen, everything is understood."

## The Discovery of the Economy

As a merchant in London as well as in his later incarnation as a Virginian, Filippo Mazzei was ever on the lookout for new products. Tuscany played a role of the first order in his ambitions, whether in his advice to Jefferson about establishing crops in Virginia, or in his ordinary business affairs, which involved the export of products like silk and cheese.[51] There was nothing automatic about exporting the grand duchy's products, however: expertise and experimentation were essential. Consider a colloquy that took place at the home of Pompeo Neri (1706–76), the most eminent jurist in Tuscany. His evening *conversazioni* "were like a school of universal learning," frequented by men (and only men) versed in the latest of contemporary science. Neri's son Filippo and other rich landlords sought to improve the quality of their olive oil so as to rival the product from nearby Lucca. "They begged me to taste their oil," said Mazzei, "to determine whether the product was good enough for the London market." Though Mazzei performed a blind tasting of seventeen samples, he deemed only two good enough for export—both from Lucca. The Florentines were disappointed, but they were not yet deterred. "Since the oil from this region is now much better that it was then, I am convinced that its improvement is due to the patriotic zeal of Signor Filippo Neri."[52]

Tuscans during the Enlightenment were keen on exploiting the economic possibilities of the grand duchy—possibilities that the new dynasty, for its part, was also eager to embrace. They developed new approaches to marketing oil, wine, and grain; they sought new outlets for their silks as well as fostered novel industries such as straw-hat manufacturing and fine porcelains.[53] Underscoring these efforts were basic transformations in Tuscan political economy. Through a consortium known as the General Tax Farm, the Regency rationalized the state's fiscal apparatus; it also invested in ad hoc industrial and commercial projects. Peter Leopold undertook an even more searching reform of the grand duchy's institutions. He abolished internal barriers to trade, making Tuscany a single zone and pushing tolls to the state boundaries; and he eliminated restrictions on the export of grains, thereby liberalizing commerce in the most essential commodity of the Ancien Regime.[54] In 1770 he established a Chamber of Commerce which temporarily replaced the guilds that had monopolized trade for centuries. The cult of improvement took root in the lives of local elites. They discussed and translated the latest works on economic theory for their fellow Tuscans, and they developed a lively culture of experimentation of which Mazzei's taste-test is one example. As Gianni put it, speaking for his colleagues as well: "I have found among the authors so many various ideas . . . that I have not been able to adopt any one of them without serious reservations."[55] Reform had to be practical and suited to Tuscan conditions. Thus, French and English ideas informed but did not compel them. Fabbroni toured the Midlands for three weeks in 1779 and saw James Watts' steam engine, for instance, but he returned to Tuscany to assume a position in the new science museum.[56]

The crowning achievement of the renewal of economic thought was the emergence of the Accademia dei Georgofili ("Academy of Nature Lovers") in 1753. Founded with the goal of promoting and improving Tuscan agriculture, the Georgofili saw itself as an engine of change. Members sifted through foreign scholarship, discussed new inventions, and tailored the general store of knowledge to local conditions. In 1756, at Nelli's encouragement, they offered an annual prize. Tuscan scholars were called upon to stop "writing boring treatises about an inflection or a diphthong" and instead devote their attention to practical improvements.[57] Targioni Tozzetti obliged with his *Dialogues on Tuscan Agriculture* (1759). In 1771 Peter Leopoldo encouraged the academicians to generate ideas that might improve the lives of Tuscan peasants as a prelude to his efforts to reform sharecropping contracts, to the peasants' advantage. When Arthur Young attended a meeting of the Georgofili in 1789, the academicians were eager to hear his views on English agriculture and the national debt, since the grand duke had significantly reduced Tuscany's public debt in the preceding year.[58] A few years later, the first of Marco Lastri's homely peasant calendars began to appear, instructing Tuscan peasants in agriculture.[59]

Many of Mazzei's contemporaries shared his obsession with the agricultural potential of Tuscany.

Long before Peter Leopold and his ministers intervened to create a culture of expertise in support of their wide-ranging reforms, economic life in eighteenth-century Tuscany was deeply politicized. In chapter five, "Carlo Ginori and the Modernization of the Tuscan Economy," Antonella Alimento shows how projects of economic reform were embedded in the political battles of the Regency. Ginori (1702–57) was a leading member of the Spanish faction in Florence, and was finally sidelined in 1746 when Francis Stephen made him the governor of Livorno—an important post, to be sure, but far from the seething center of Florentine politics. Ginori was the activist governor par excellence. He promoted industrial and commercial projects while trying to integrate the port's trade more tightly to the Tuscan hinterland. Some of these schemes were successful. Some were too ambitious even for that ambitious age: for instance, trying to found a colony in the Caribbean Sea, "to guarantee us direct trade with America, and perhaps to serve as the first necessary step to bigger projects."[60] For art historians, Ginori's lasting contribution was the foundation of the Doccia porcelain works in 1737, which is still in operation today. Equally important was his contribution to the circulation of economic ideas in Tuscany. Ginori was a crucial figure for transmitting the liberal mercantilist ideas available in the 1750s, carefully selecting those texts most relevant to Tuscany, including such authors as Joshua Gee, Gerónimo Uztáriz, and Montesquieu. He was one of the first Florentines to combine practical improvement with an effort to appropriate contemporary economic thought. Mazzei's dream of commerce between Tuscany and Virginia drew inspiration from these early initiatives (figure 0.5).

The free port of Livorno was the grand duchy's gateway to the larger world. In chapter six, "Commercial Crisis in Livorno and the Remaking of the Tuscan Hinterland," Corey Tazzara shows how changes in the port's traffic influenced economic discourse within the grand duchy. Thanks to its provisions for merchant hospitality as well as its no-fuss customs regime, Livorno was Europe's freest port city and a great emporium brokering trade between the Levant and Western Europe. The Italian hinterland was crucial for enabling this far-flung system to function, however, and market development elsewhere in Italy led to a commercial crisis in Livorno in the 1740s and 1750s. This regional context accounts for why officials in Livorno lobbied for reductions in customs barriers, criticized the fiscal arrangements (represented by the General Tax Farm), and insisted on other technocratic fixes. It also explains why they began to advocate for a wholesale transformation of political economy throughout the grand duchy. The development of the Tuscan hinterland was the best bet for reestablishing the prosperity of the free port, now that Livorno's dominance of Italian trade was under threat. "As everyone knows,"

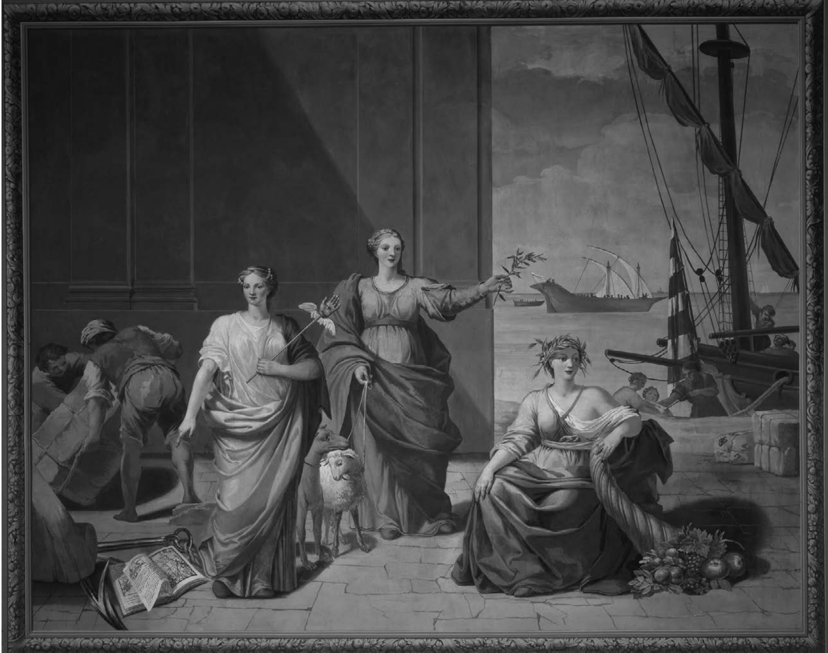

*Figure 0.5* Giuseppe Antonio Fabbrini (1740–?), *Allegory of Commerce* (ca. 1777). Villa di Poggio Imperiale—Peter Leopold Apartments, Florence, Italy. ART345581.

*Source*: Scala/Art Resource, NY.

remarked the economist Gian Rinaldo Carli, "Tuscany was a forest of republics, each one locked in perpetual wars and dissensions against the others."[61] Unmaking that forest of republics was a central goal of Lorraine policy. Key projects of Peter Leopold's reign—including the promotion of manufacturing, agricultural improvement, and the elimination of internal customs barriers—emerged in light of the economic situation throughout the larger region.

The improvement of agricultural yields, whether through better institutions or targeted projects, was at the center of plans for remaking the Tuscan hinterland. No part of the grand duchy required more desperate assistance than the Maremma of Siena, a desolate malarial land that stretched along the southern coastline. In chapter seven, "Forests, Woods, Roads: Agricultural Landscapes as Instruments for the Material Administration of an Eighteenth-Century Tuscan Periphery," Lavinia Maddaluno examines efforts to map, understand, and ultimately resuscitate the Maremma. In 1767, the mathematician-astronomer Leonardo Ximenes (1716–86) visited the Sienese coast to report on the conditions of its

lands. He and his associates commissioned the production of a large map. This map was used not only as an instrument to exercise control over territories and natural resources, but also as a tool to reform the social landscape of specific areas: it was a guide to political action. As Ximenes wrote, "I can well assure you that I am entirely persuaded that if we do not find any solution to the stagnant waters, and to the physical problems in the Maremma, all political regulations—albeit good—will remain ineffective, and useless, just as much so as those which have been enacted by past princes."[62] Ximenes' project highlights the tensions between customary rural arrangements and the interventionist designs of enlightened reform. It also suggests that the abstract rules of political economy needed to be informed by an understanding of the challenges and possibilities of the natural environment. Economics could not be divorced from materially grounded ways of knowing.

## The Culture of Enlightenment

"Our century is philosophical," declared Filippo Mazzei, "at least in comparison to the others we know."[63] His writing abounds in all the clichés about reason and religious freedom we associate with this epoch, as well as some ideas that were controversial in his day, from sexual equality to the rapid emancipation of the American slaves and their civil integration into the fledgling polity (he disagreed with Thomas Jefferson on this point).[64] New principles of human rights and equality were central to Mazzei's Enlightenment.[65] Yet this knowledge about human nature needed to be based on careful historical research before it could be translated into political action; it depended on "the priceless advantage of being able to observe the mistakes of ancient and modern republics."[66] Like many eighteenth-century Tuscans and their grand duke, he was a careful reader of Machiavelli (figure 0.6).

In 1788 Mazzei had an opportunity to put his principles into practice, with the publication of his *Researches on the United States*. Writing in French, Mazzei passionately defended his adoptive nation against misconceptions spread by the abbé Raynal's *History of the Two Indies* (1770/1780) and the abbé de Mably's's *Observations on the Government and Laws of the United States of America* (1784).[67] Based on documents furnished by Americans in Paris and London, Mazzei minutely reconstructed the emergence of this new nation. For that reason, it has seemed decidedly derivative to many historians—why read Mazzei, when we have Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* (1785)? Certainly, Mazzei's preoccupation with responding to every error found in his French antagonists made it seem ponderous and ultimately tangential to the main debates. Yet he did not hesitate to offer his own interpretation of the United States from the perspective of a Tuscan who had been not simply an eyewitness

*Figure 0.6* Jacques-Louis David, *Filippo Mazzei* (ca. 1790–1), oil on canvas, 19.4 × 12.9 inches (49.5 × 33 cm). Musée de Louvre, Department of Paintings MI 1050.

*Source*: Jacques-Louis David [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

but a participant in these heady events. He knew America in a way that most Europeans did not, having tried to cultivate a vineyard there.

Mazzei argued that the United States was something entirely new and unheralded. Ancient Rome was no guide to American democracy. He disputed that the poor in America were like the Roman plebs, for instance: "An intelligent nation cannot be compared to a multitude shrouded in ignorance and superstition and dominated by oracles."[68] Nor did the United States resemble the Italian republics of the Renaissance. There was no danger that a single family might monopolize power in Pennsylvania or any other state, the way the Medici had done in Florence. To begin with, no family could engross wealth like the Medici: the commercial system was too complex and too diffuse. The political situation was different, too. "The whole organization [of the Florentine Republic] seemed designed to produce bickering," explained Mazzei. "A huge bell, far larger than necessary, rang to summon the rulers of the city, who lived within the radius of a mile and could have gathered in a drawing room. The size and government of Pennsylvania are so well known that the reader will see how ill-advised is this comparison with the republic of Florence."[69]

What was true of Pennsylvania was true in spades of the United States as a whole.

Thus, Mazzei's "philosophical century" understood history as a weapon to wield carefully in the sophisticated intellectual arsenal of his age, full of novel ideas that seemed to overwhelm and annihilate many traditions. He recognized that history was a science of documents that one needed to inspect diligently. His fellow Florentines shared Mazzei's belief in the value of historical archives. Tuscany's exceptionally rich documentary culture provided them with ample material with which to write the history of Tuscany in order to celebrate its unique place in human history. Their projects were not antiquarian exercises for an idle elite. Rather, the goal was to assert the importance of Tuscany to European civilization by documenting its contributions to history, politics, art, and science.

The stakes were high. The end of the Medici in 1737 precipitated a flurry of publications that sought to demonstrate Florence's sovereign autonomy, solidifying a fact that now seemed endangered by foreign rule. After the Lorraine arrived, Tuscan historians were eager to explicate the state's complicated institutions. While this research often served political ends, much of it was undertaken in a spirit of genuine inquiry and remains fundamental to scholarship on Medicean Florence to this day. The most notable achievement in this vein was the historian Riguccio Galluzzi's *History of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany under the Medici* (1781) which Cochrane called "one of the best historical works of the age."[70] In 1768 Galluzzi reorganized the state archives for Peter Leopold, giving him unparalleled access to the inner workings of the Medici regime. A good servant of his grand duke, Galluzzi understood the importance of writing about the past as a celebration of the present. He argued that Cosimo I established the grand duchy on solid foundations, providing "peace and stability" to a republic "exhausted by its troubles," thereby presiding over a golden age.[71] He judged Cosimo I's successors to be less masterful, especially after Ferdinando I's death in 1609. They settled into an increasingly ossified system that stifled creativity, science, and enterprise until the extinction of the dynasty. Galluzzi adroitly connected the arrival of the Habsburg-Lorraine in eighteenth-century Tuscany to the historical dynamics of the Renaissance—and thereby provided a sterling justification for reform, not to mention regime change.

Part of recovering Florence's literary and political history was coming to terms with its scientific heritage, associated above all with the figure of Galileo Galilei. In chapter eight, "Long After the Trial: Galileo's Rediscovery, Florentine Nostalgia, and Enlightened Passions," Paula Findlen explores Galileo's legacy in the eighteenth century, starting with his reburial in the church of Santa Croce shortly before the death of Gian Gastone. Galileo's partial rehabilitation was essential to the goals of an enlightened church under the papacy of Benedict XIV, but his reputation mattered on a far more personal level to the Florentines who transformed

him into a secular saint and emblem of their own enlightenment. The eighteenth century was a great age of Galileo scholarship, as Tuscan scholars worked to assemble and publish the Galileo archive, writing essays proclaiming him the Italian equivalent of Descartes and essential precursor to Newton. They sought to insert Galileo into the genealogies of the European Enlightenment, treating the relationship between his contributions to science and struggles with the Roman Inquisition as paradigmatic of his modernity. Peter Leopold encouraged his scientific advisors to see the history of Tuscan science as a subject worth documenting. Targioni Tozzetti dedicated his meticulous study of Galilean science and the Accademia del Cimento (1657–67) to the grand duke, thanking him for ordering the publication of these documents "so that they may not perish."[72] One year after Peter Leopold's death, Giovanni Battista Clemente Nelli's two-volume *Life and Literary Commerce of Galileo Galilei* (1793) appeared, based on painstaking archival research and recuperation.

Revisiting the documentary legacy of Tuscany's fine arts also offered a path toward securing Florence's place in the cultural pantheon of Europe. In chapter nine, "Making Renaissance Art Florentine," Heather Hyde Minor explores the pains taken by scholars and critics to make the Florentine artistic tradition central to our vision of the Italian Renaissance. A leading figure in this movement was the Florentine Giovanni Bottari (1689–1775), who spent much of his career as a librarian in Rome to the Corsini family. Bottari insisted that what set the Tuscan arts apart from other schools was the literary record, which was produced by artists who were themselves intellectuals. Thus, in his 1759 edition of Vasari's *Lives of the Painters*, Bottari set about correcting a text which clumsy editors had "in certain places mangled . . . with additions and mutations."[73] By contrast, he believed that art historians in other countries—especially France—were hamstrung by a poverty of documents. "Had it been the case that their Poussins, Vouets, Mignards, Giovenets, and other artists wrote, they would have excellent teachers and be able to make more secure judgments." Yet primary sources were only the first step in Bottari's program: he and his colleagues also produced a cornucopia of erudite commentary, which was often as dense as the texts they explicated. Their publications remain essential for the scholarly study of Renaissance art today. Their narrative, too—which places Florence at the center of the Renaissance—remains intact, at least in popular culture and the huge apparatus of modern tourism. It is an indelible product of the eighteenth century, far more than the preceding centuries.

The textual excavation of the Florentine Renaissance had important consequences for the reorganization of the city's artistic heritage. If it was possible to conceive of Florentine art as a coherent developmental process, why not extend that approach to the European artistic patrimony as a whole? In chapter ten, "'Twenty Magnificent Temples of the Arts': Geographic schools in the Uffizi Gallery," Callum Reid examines the

restructuring of Florence's most famous collection of paintings according to enlightened conceptions of the history of art. During the seventeenth century, paintings were hung pell-mell to maximize the amount of wall space covered by art. While such a procedure may have bestowed an agreeably baroque impression on viewers, it "rendered the objects useless and detached," in the words of Director of the Uffizi Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni (1729–1808), and it did little to indicate the artistic relationship among the works on display.[74] Bencivenni and his colleagues transformed the collection into a visual compendium of Vasari's Renaissance, meant to illustrate how Florentine artists gradually learned to emulate and even surpass nature with their paintbrushes. This revelation was not found ready-made in some text, "but drawn and colored, not weighed down with the judgment of others, but recognized within their own." As with Fontana's Royal Museum of Physics, the new method of organization served to enlighten, making it possible for a spectator to behold at a glance the artistic development of an individual painter or an entire school of painters.

## Despotism, Democracy, and the Legacy of Reform

Filippo Mazzei might have devoted his life to his vineyards in America, learning to make Tuscan wine on Virginian soil, had not the Revolutionary War erupted in 1776. The American insurgents required money to wage their war against Britain, and Mazzei thought he knew where to get it: from Peter Leopold, who, "being somewhat avaritious in nature," had exploited peace in Italy to enrich his treasury.[75] Duly accredited as Virginia's agent, Mazzei departed for Europe in June 1779. It was an ill-starred venture. Mazzei had to jettison his credentials almost immediately, when the British detained his ship in New York. He did not arrive in Florence until September 1780.[76] The efficiency of the British blockade made correspondence with his American superiors maddeningly difficult; what was worse, the American plenipotentiary in Paris, Benjamin Franklin, disapproved of state-level agents like Mazzei and did everything possible to frustrate his mission.[77] Their escapades together in London a decade earlier no longer seemed relevant. Mazzei suffered from neglect, financial hardship, and the loss of his credentials. "It is a lucky circumstance for my private character on this side of the water, that it has been established long since, otherwise I should by this time have passed as an impostor."[78]

Mazzei did his best to convince Peter Leopold to favor the American cause. He suggested that Americans would be eager to send their sons to the University of Pisa to complete their studies, or that, as an agricultural country, America would readily purchase Tuscan manufactures. For Mazzei, the mercantilist orientation of European policies was simply inappropriate to America's high-wage, abundant land scenario; just as America offered something novel in the political realm, then, so too in the

economic sphere were its conditions not comparable to Europe. Among his most seductive arguments in this vein was the prospect of establishing direct trade between the United States and the port of Livorno. Trade could then bypass Britain, which currently reaped the profits of mediation on commodities such as fish and tobacco. Livorno could rival the nearby French port of Marseille.[79] Where reason of state failed, Mazzei resorted to flattery: "During sessions of the general assembly [of Virginia] the health of the Grand Duke of Tuscany used to be drunk to at public dinners, to the great satisfaction of all diners."[80]

Neither flattery nor pragmatism worked. Leopold was reluctant even to socialize with Mazzei, not because of the machinations of Sir Horace Mann or because of Florentine "anglomania," but because geopolitical forces gave the grand duke little scope for outright support for America. Livorno was a major base of British activity in the Mediterranean, and any aid to Britain's enemies could have catastrophic effects on the grand duchy's commerce. Tuscany was a small power committed to its neutrality, incapable of mixing itself in the diplomatic squabbles of Europe. At some level, Mazzei must have realized this. Italian rulers with their tiny states could not "prudently take the lead of Prussia, Russia, & the Emperour," he wrote—least of all Peter Leopold, who was the emperor's own brother.[81] Mazzei's mission was an abject failure.

Yet Mazzei, who spent most of his adult life abroad, happened to find himself in Florence at the height of Peter Leopold's reign. He kept himself well informed about the inner politics of the grand duchy, and his comments provide tantalizing glimpses into how this most cosmopolitan of Florentines understood the Tuscan Enlightenment.[82] Peter Leopold's ecclesiastical policy met with Mazzei's warmest approbation. He also approved of the grand duke's resolutions for alleviating poverty: a theme to which he returned, as we shall see.[83] Above all, Mazzei thought that free trade was the grand duke's "wisest and most beneficial initiative," although it was often "profaned in Florence as the cause of all evils."[84] He believed that the grand duke was "deeply convinced that all men act only out of self-interest," which was the key to understanding the new legislation.[85] "I have not known anyone more versed in and more convinced of the good principles of political economy than that prince."[86] On the whole, however, Mazzei rarely wrote of the reforms. He was more inclined to criticize Peter Leopold himself.

Some of Mazzei's criticisms—the "petty traits" of the prince such as his ingratitude, vanity, and philandering—reflected his uneasy relationship with the regime.[87] Much of this dislike stemmed from the frustration of Mazzei's diplomatic mission; he seems never to have understood why Peter Leopold had kept him at arm's length during the American Revolution. Nonetheless, he saw that the grand duke's appetite for controlling information was a real political problem. Mazzei complained about the "absurdity, frivolity, and dangers" of the informers' box that Peter