2003), which focused on the Republican period. Tomas demonstrated that Medici women in the Florentine Republic wielded power in ways that go unrecognized by historians focused on institutional histories and official public acts. Unable to participate in government, ambitious Medici women exerted influence through their men, by interceding with their husbands or by guiding and advising politically active sons. Some of the essays in the present volume will leave the reader with similar conclusions regarding the locus of women's power in Grand Ducal Tuscany. While some Medici women enjoyed direct political control, more often they wielded influence by guiding their children, by arranging marriages, or by actively promoting the agenda and reputation of their husbands. Unsurprisingly, those with independent financial resources and their husbands' support had a greater impact than those who did not. But as Brown notes in her introduction, state formation is a social process as well as a political one, and these essays give us a richer picture of the making of Grand Ducal Tuscany and the development of the Florentine court. One hopes that the findings of these scholars will be integrated more fully into broader political and cultural histories of the Medici family.

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Rocco Rubini. *The Other Renaissance: Italian Humanism between Hegel and Heidegger*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. Pp. 386. ISBN-13 978-0-226-18613-9. ISBN-10 0-226-18613-X. \$ 45.00.

Rocco Rubini's thought-provoking and elegantly written *The Other Renaissance: Italian Humanism between Hegel and Heidegger* participates in the recent international trend in unearthing the contribution of modern Italian philosophy to Continental philosophical discourse. Given that Italian philosophy has been construed as only marginally important in the wider European context, its rediscovery and re-collocation requires, as Rubini himself rightly puts it, "a thorough genealogical reconstruction" (xvi). This meticulous reconstruction is achieved in Rubini's exhaustively researched book, which thus makes a fundamental contribution to the recent intellectual shift towards creating "Italian theory."

The Other Renaissance comprehensively explores the intellectual tradition of modern Italian philosophy from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the late 1940s and early 1950s. In this examination Rubini exhumes the difficult and ambivalent relation of this tradition with the legacy of Italian Renaissance Humanism. Rubini focuses on how this relation was forged via the interconnections of Hegel's idealism and Heidegger's existentialism and their respective influences on modern Italian philosophy. Rubini intermittently concedes that the displacement of Renaissance Humanism and its role in modern Italian philosophical discourse could be construed as unjustified and mostly as the result of historical coincidence. The author, however, attempts to, and to a considerable degree succeeds, in interpreting modern Italian philosophy and its reworking of Renaissance thought in the aftermath of postmodernity. Rubini offers a detailed historical account of how Italian philosophy came to perceive itself as autonomous of other philosophical traditions. From the outset, however, Rubini is careful not to equate cultural determinations with mental categories. The author sets out to write a comparative study of the history of philosophy that revisits the interlaced Italian contribution, a contribution whose presumed Renaissance ascendancy was viewed critically by the same nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Italian scholars. Rubini's account is indeed of the philosophical rather than historical thought associated with the Renaissance, and is more about a civic rather than academic philosophy. This interpretative tradition starts in Italy in 1860 through its main exponent Bertrando Spaventa and runs counter to the mainstream German tradition of the Renaissance initiated that same year by Jacob Burckhardt.

Through close reading of early publications and archival sources that have only recently been made accessible, Rubini convincingly shows how modern Italian philosophers attempted to found a new intellectual identity based on what Rubini terms a "Renaissance shame" (7) and how this very historicist approach ultimately contributed to the marginalization of Italian philosophy in postmodernity. In the run-up to political unification (*Risorgimento*), Italians' need for a national philosophy forced them to confront the Renaissance patrimony only to discover, as Rubini lucidly illustrates, that their reaction was to "recoil in horror" (47).

There are thus two key intersecting questions that the author attempts to answer. The first revolves around the debate that arose in the wake of the Second World War (1946–47), when Jean-Paul Sartre's "humanistic existentialism" was pitted against Martin Heidegger's "anti-humanism", with the subsequent French Heideggerianism and its anti-Cartesian slant, leading to the anti-humanist

sentiment which shaped our historical postmodern self-consciousness. The author questions the root of our disillusionment with our modern anti-humanist legacy. The second related question attempts to shed light on how that same pre-Cartesian aspect of this legacy has profounder origins and should not be studied in isolation, because it can illuminate the post Second World War anti-humanist patrimony. The second question thus swirls around fifteenth-century Humanism and the extent to which such Humanism/s (the pluralism of the Renaissance legacy is pivotal here) could be defined as philosophy/ies. Among the influential philosophers who shaped this debate, which became a discussion about “*umanismi*,” were Giovanni Gentile, Ernst Cassirer and their inheritors (who would also bring about the postwar rebirth of Renaissance Studies): Eugenio Garin (1909–2004) and Paul Oskar Kristeller (1905–99). The latter two held opposing views because, while for Kristeller Humanism was a phase in the history of rhetoric, for Garin, the philological and rhetorical practices of *Quattrocento* humanists contained, to varying degrees, a new approach to philosophy and to the human.

In between his two central questions, Rubini places the crucial and unique figure who contrasted Cartesian modernity—Giambattista Vico—and his little studied connection to Renaissance Humanism. Rubini thoroughly demonstrates how modern Italian philosophy developed Vichianism, and invested it in Renaissance thought, in order to push political ambitions—*Risorgimento*, the Fascist Empire and Post WWII Republicanism. In the case of the latter period, Italian existentialists strived to produce a philosophical reinterpretation of Renaissance Humanism by drawing on both the Italian Vichian tradition and on Heidegger. Rubini asks, placing himself squarely behind a fairly objective post-WWII standpoint, whether there was anything worth saving in the philosophical movement that stemmed from the *Risorgimento* and whose ‘actual idealism’ was crucial to the formation of an Italian intellectual identity. His question is clearly rhetorical because, in thoroughly revisiting the interwar period characterized by intersecting concerns of Italian and European philosophies, Rubini concludes that Garin and Kristeller, who in the immediate postwar years were the survivors of Italy’s modern philosophy stemming from the *Risorgimento* (and formed during the *Ventennio Nero*), were those who in 1946–47 truly opened up a discussion about Italian philosophy that returned it to its largely misinterpreted Renaissance patrimony. Rubini demonstrates the ways in which these thinkers, despite being forced to toe the official idealist line during the Fascist years, in fact secretly realigned German and French influences in a new philosophy of Italian existentialism. This new existentialism importantly renewed

what its authors conceived as its largely misconstrued Renaissance inheritance. The goal of Rubini's convincingly argued thesis, is also to reintegrate this same 1946–47 historicist Italian perspective on 'Humanism/s' into the mainstream philosophical debate. The latter primarily explores the contributions of Enrico Castelli and Ernesto Grassi (who in 1947 published Heidegger's 'Letter on Humanism') alongside Eugenio Garin's *Italian Humanism*.

Rubini's book certainly clarifies the interconnections between the postwar revival of philosophy and the coterminous flourishing of Renaissance Studies. It also challenges the reader to deeply consider the future directions modern philosophy can take as a result of a robust recovery of its pre-modern Renaissance humanist thought and its ramifications. As Rubini interestingly points out, the thesis of "*umanismi*," to which he claims that modern Italian philosophy can be reconnected, has its modern-day resonance in the fact that "the philosophical pluralism that Garin and Kristeller saw in the Renaissance is the same philosophical pluralism that we know and accept today, after the archeological investigations of modern reason by the likes of Michel Foucault, Richard Rorty, Alisdair MacIntyre and Stephen Toulmin" (25).

In conclusion, Rocco Rubini's book more than successfully accomplishes what it sets out to achieve. It is most certainly a consistent and "vivid evocation of how the Renaissance was (re)experienced by some of its leading interpreters" in Italy and Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. *The Other Renaissance: Italian Humanism between Hegel and Heidegger* enlightens the modern-day reader by offering a broader, more comprehensive picture of the "philosophical merits of historical humanisms" (29).

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Simone Testa. *Italian Academies and Their Networks, 1525–1700: From Local to Global*. New York: Palgrave, 2015. Pp. 286. ISBN 978-1-137-43840-9. \$100.

Dopo lunghi anni di silenzio nei confronti dell'argomento da parte di critici e studiosi italiani, il recente volume di Simone Testa non solo rispolvera il tema delle Accademie italiane tra Cinque e Settecento, ma fornisce al lettore una chiave di lettura innovativa dello stesso fenomeno facendo uso dei mezzi di ricerca più