Naples in the Eighteenth Century: The Birth and Death of a Nation State, ed. Girolamo Imbruglia. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2000. Pp. ix, 204. ISBN 0-5216-3116-1.

This collection of essays analyzes the history of the Neapolitan state during the height of the Enlightenment. Naples was one of many kingdoms across Europe that witnessed a dramatic struggle between philosophes who wished to reinvent society, and traditionalists who sought to preserve the *status quo*. The strength of this volume lies in its explanation of why, even as it was often a hotbed of new cultural ideas, the Kingdom of Two Sicilies was unable to modernize itself politically and economically. No single culprit exists, but the combination of ecclesiastical resistance, baronial arrogance, popular suspicion, and monarchical incompetence resulted in an ineffective state. The consequences of this failure continue to haunt portions of southern Italy today. For more than two centuries after 1503 Naples was ruled by a Spanish viceroy and was then transferred to Austrian control in 1707. In this volume, all of the authors focus on the period between 1734, when Don Carlos of Bourbon ascended to the throne of a newly-independent monarchy, and 1799, when the Parthenopean Republic flowered and died within the same year.

This volume is the twentieth book in the successful series 'Cambridge Studies in Italian History and Culture.' The series has contributed to a wider understanding of Italian history by publishing monographs and essay collections that range from the late Middle Ages to the Risorgimento. This collection fits squarely into that tradition by showcasing the work of Italian scholars who might otherwise remain unknown to the English-speaking world. Most of the authors are established scholars with books of their own: Anna Maria Rao and Antonino De Francesco each edited an edition of Vincenzo Cuoco's important work on the Neapolitan Revolution, Maria Grazia Maiorini wrote a book on the administration of justice under the Bourbons, and Girolamo Imbruglia (the editor) has published several articles and another edited volume on historiography. All but one of the nine essays was translated into English; there are, however, occasional infelicities when the use of academic jargon or exceptionally long sentences make the prose difficult to wade through. A list of authors, their institutional affiliations, and their research specialties would have been useful in the back of the book, particularly because Cambridge University Press explicitly declares its desire to have these scholars and their work more widely-known in the English-speaking world. The authors assume a good deal of prior knowledge about the Enlightenment, which makes the articles suitable for specialists in that era but of less utility to Italian historians of a different period. One notable exception is the essay by Anna Maria Rao on feudalism and the judiciary, which is exceptionally clear and takes pains to introduce historical figures and Neapolitan institutions unknown to a general reader.

Naples in the Eighteenth Century takes a balanced approach with essays that focus on politics, economics, jurisprudence, music, and academia. The first essay, by Maria Grazia Maiorini, offers an overview of the political situation from the

accession of an independent Bourbon monarch in 1734 to the fall of the republic in 1799. Maiorini demonstrates that the barons and other elites, inside the city and especially in the rural provinces, provided an enormous obstacle to the reform programs. As one might expect, the creation (and effective governance) of a modern administrative state declined in direct proportion to the distance from the capital. Giovanni Montroni then describes the Neapolitan Court in detail, tracing the intricate hierarchy of the nobility in the earlier eighteenth century and the gradual dominance of the Crown by 1800. Although it is useful to know more about how the new king represented his sovereignty, some of Montroni's conclusions seem rather obvious. It should not surprise us that "the good favor of the sovereign could guarantee social advancement" (23) or that the Court was a place where groups previously opposed to each other might become linked. His discussion of the knightly orders of San Gennaro and of San Carlo, on the other hand, provides a compelling and concrete example of how the king gradually tamed the nobility. Biagio Salvemini mixes economic analysis with interesting tidbits about the crops imported and exported by the Kingdom of Naples as he explains how it gradually fell further and further behind the economies of northern Europe. Despite valiant efforts by the reformers, the southern economy could not adapt to the commercial revolution nor could the monarchy compete with the centralized nation-states of England and France.

Girolamo Imbruglia summarizes the failure of Enlightenment ideas in Naples chiefly through a description of the major intellectual figures such as Antonio Genovesi, Giovanni Maria Galanti, and Gaetano Filangieri (Giambattista Vico is deliberately absent). While these men represented the peaks of intellectual thought in the mid-eighteenth century, most Neapolitans were "struck by the mediocrity of their own intellectual life" (84). This theme is expanded upon by Elvira Chiosi in a short essay entitled "Intellectuals and Academies." Chiosi reviews the different associations and institutions designed to promote intellectual life, scientific knowledge, and economic reform. There was no shortage of intellectual outlets in Naples: ecclesiastical seminaries, royal academies, the university, and scientific associations, to name only a few. Yet nearly all of these were hamstrung in their efforts to advance intellectual inquiry and Enlightenment ideas. Some were overly ambitious and squandered their resources on grandiose palaces, others were limited by restrictive statutes or personality disputes, and still others were hindered by fierce polemics between church and state. The end result, however, was usually the same: Naples could not put reforms into practice and thus failed to implement the necessary political and economic changes.

Renato di Benedetto offers a dense, technical history of music and theatre in eighteenth-century Naples, focusing in particular on opera. Naples was justly famous for its contributions to both classical opera and the opera buffa. Di Benedetto analyzes the contributions of various individuals (Pietro Napoli Signorelli, Saverio Mattei, Antonio Planelli) to such success. He argues that "the history of reform in music seems to have marched in step with that of society and politics" (151), thus linking his own essay with the broader theme of the volume. Naples was perhaps best known in the later eighteenth century for the unearthing

of Pompeii and Herculaneum, so the subject of antiquarian studies, and especially the rise of new comparative disciplines of intellectual inquiry, constitutes the basis of Alain Schnapp's essay. Modern archaeology and ethnology, Schnapp suggests, were the results of a transformation away from "curiosities" and represented a "fresh way of looking at antiquity" (157). This sparked a hunt for antiquities throughout the eastern Mediterranean. The final essay is Antonino De Francesco's provocatively-titled "How Not to Finish a Revolution", which examines the short-lived Jacobin Republic in 1799. He notes several interesting comparisons between the French and Neapolitan Revolutions, but the essay lacks a clear argument. The bicentennial of the Neapolitan Revolution several years ago sparked a wave of new books, in both Italian and English, which might prove a more useful guide to the events of that era.

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Niccolò Tommaseo e Firenze. Atti del convegno di studi, Firenze, 12-13 febbraio 1999, eds. Roberta Turchi, Alessandro Volpi. Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2000. Pp. xi, 384. ISBN 8-8222-4894-5.

Tommaseo's memories of his first weeks in Florence where, at the invitation of Giampietro Vieusseux, he had gone in 1827 from Milan were not happy ones. He wrote in his *Memorie poetiche* (1838) that "il primo soggiorno in una città, fra nuovi uomini e nuove cose, fu sempre tristo a me, quel di Firenze tristissimo". But seven years later, from his self imposed exile in France that had come about when Vieusseux's *Antologia* was suppressed for political reasons, his attitude was quite different. In a poignant letter to one of his closest friends, Gino Capponi, Tommaseo expresses his longing for the city: "oh, dov'è la mia Firenze, e i miei giorni fitti nel pensiero, e il mio pensiero italiano tutto?" (Tommaseo e Capponi, *Carteggio inedito*, 29 May 1834).

The events of Tommaseo's life and career that led to his nostalgic embrace of Florence and eventually, after all the tumultuous undertakings of a career as author, poet, pedagogue, linguist, philosopher, apologist for Christianity, to permanent residence in Florence is the focus of this recent collection of essays.

The 19 studies, divided into three sections entitled respectively "Il pensiero politico e religioso", "L'Opera letteraria e linguistica" and "La vicenda biografica", offer us an Italian and also, on a larger scale, a European overview, of Tommaseo's accomplishments and attitudes in the city he loved above all others. In Florence were his best friends, his most notable literary achievements and much much later, his beloved family. However, as the preface justly indicates, Tommaseo's contact with Florence expanded far beyond the city and had a seminal effect on the definition of an Italian "national" language, a concept towards which the Dalmatian author worked assiduously, in blindness, in poverty, in old age, until his death in 1874.

The opening essay by Franco della Peruta, "Nazionalità e Risorgimento fino alla rivoluzione del '48," sets the historical ambience in which Tommaseo operat-