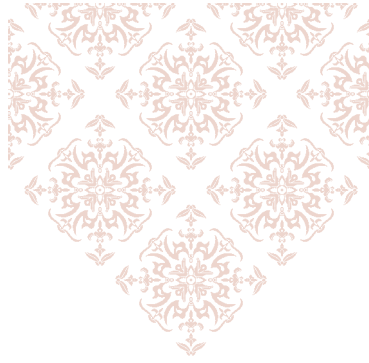


SAN LORENZO
A Florentine Church



VILLA I TATTI SERIES, 33



SAN LORENZO

A Florentine Church

ROBERT W. GASTON and LOUIS A. WALDMAN

Editors



VILLA I TATTI

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New Sacristy, San Lorenzo, Florence. (Photo: Villa I Tatti.)



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IN SEARCH OF LITTERAE HUMANIORES

Presences and Absences in the Readership of the Biblioteca Laurenziana

PASCHALIS M. KITROMILIDES

THE HISTORY OF LIBRARIES IS AN IMPORTANT AND essential part of cultural history. It relates the story of the “infrastructure,” as it were, of cultural history, by informing us about the structures and mechanisms whereby human societies or particular groups within them have tried to preserve and transmit to future generations the intellectual treasures of their cultural heritage. One such repository of intellectual treasures—not just of the Western tradition but of significant parts of world culture beyond this particular tradition—has been, since its foundation in the sixteenth century, the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence. The library was planned as a depository of the magnificent collection of manuscripts assembled by successive generations of the Medici family since Cosimo il Vecchio in the fifteenth century.¹ In 1524 Michelangelo Buonarroti was charged with designing the building in which the library was to be housed, attached to the Quattrocento cloister of San Lorenzo. Michelangelo designed the monumental staircase, the ceiling, and the benches of the reading room, in which the Medicean manuscript treasures were eventually arranged on the basis of a humanist classification of ancient knowledge. His architectural achievement has perhaps attracted as much attention from art historians² as the library’s inestimable manuscript treasures. Individual codices, Greek and Latin, renowned for their artistic significance, have attracted the attention of paleographical scholarship or art history over the years. Equally significant for cultural history are the special

collections, which have been the subject of exhibitions, making available to a broader public a sense of the extent and richness of the library’s holdings.

The origin of the present-day Laurenziana can be traced back to the year 1522, when the Medici manuscript collection, which had been removed to Rome, returned to Florence according to the will of the Medici Pope Leo X and under the care of his cousin Cardinal Giulio de’ Medici, subsequently Pope Clement VII. He was responsible for the charge to Michelangelo to design the building of the library. The library was officially founded with a bull of Clement VII in 1532, while the first Medici grand duke of Tuscany, Cosimo I (1567–74), provided for its present site, where Michelangelo’s original plans were executed by Giorgio Vasari. Cosimo I officially inaugurated the Laurenziana on 11 June 1571. At the time, the collection was composed of about three thousand codices, primarily in Greek.

The library was entrusted by Cosimo’s successors to the chapter of their parish church San Lorenzo. During its early history, it was not easily accessible to readers. Toward the end of the seventeenth century, considerable conservation work was undertaken on the initiative of the chapter of San Lorenzo, indicating the sense of responsibility and concern for the library and its treasures felt by those to whose care it had been entrusted.³ The House of Lorraine, which in 1737 inherited the grand ducal crown of Tuscany after the extinction of the Medici dynasty, took particular pride and interest in the library. They took special care to enrich the library with new manuscript collections and, with the intention of opening the

library to interested scholars, appointed expert librarians who guided the library through the Age of Enlightenment. In 1741 Antonio Maria Biscioni was appointed as the first librarian. He was a scholar of Greek and Hebrew, and he worked on the catalogue of Laurenziana's Hebrew manuscripts.⁴ He was succeeded in 1757 by the greatest of the Laurenziana's librarians, the indefatigable Angelo Maria Bandini, who served until his death in 1803.⁵ Bandini produced the monumental volumes of the catalogue of Greek and Latin codices of the Laurenziana, which are still the foremost guide to the library's manuscript collections.⁶ He also produced a history of the library, which, in a short form, appears in the introduction to volume one of *Codices Laurentiani Graeci*, and in a more detailed version, which was left in manuscript and published posthumously along with Bandini's detailed records of the library's historical archive up to the year of his death.⁷ In 1771 Bandini also initiated the visitor book of the Laurenziana, the volumes of which, under the title *Album dei Visitatori della Biblioteca Laurenziana*, form part of the library's historical archive.⁸ The first two volumes, running, respectively, from 1771 to 1807 and from 1807 to 1864, constitute a valuable record of the place of the library in the world of the Enlightenment and its aftermath, and can tell us a great deal about cultural outlooks and attitudes toward the place of the classics in European culture. In fact, the significance of the evidence codified by the first two volumes of the *Album dei Visitatori* consists primarily in the insights it can supply on the perception and reception of humanism in the culture of the Enlightenment and by the various strands of European romanticism. In the Laurenziana, the Enlightenment and romanticism confronted primarily the sources that had transmitted the heritage of classical letters, *litterae humaniores*. Inevitably, this encounter invited reflection on the place of humanism and the classics in European culture and the role of this heritage in the definition of European intellectual identities. It is this process that can be captured with immediacy but also with imaginative reconstitution of past intellectual attitudes through the looking glass supplied by the *Album dei Visitatori*.

The two manuscript records of visitors to the Laurenziana can reveal a great deal, not only by the information they codify but also by their silences, about the scale of cultural values in European society at a period marked by the apogee of European power and dominance over the rest of the world. Until now, this material has not been studied in any systematic detail. In what follows, I present the evidence of the first two volumes of Laurenziana's *Album dei Visitatori* and point out some aspects of its significance for the cultural history of Europe.

The evidence supplied by the two manuscripts, infinitely fascinating for its prosopographical details for the intellectual

historian, should, nevertheless, be contextualized in order to make full historical sense. One meaningful way of contextualizing the evidence is to connect it with the place of Florence in European culture and, especially, with the fascination exerted by its monuments on European sensitivity. There is no better way to capture that fascination than by looking at the testimonies of the Grand Tour, for which Florence was a major destination.⁹ Thus, the Grand Tour was perhaps the principal source of visitors in the period we will survey below, drawing on the evidence of the two manuscript *Albums*.

Before its opening to the public in the mid-eighteenth century, the library does not appear very often among the monuments that attracted the admiration of famous visitors. Montaigne, Hobbes, and Montesquieu all visited Florence, but they admired mostly the great monuments of architecture and art.¹⁰ The Laurenziana became a pivotal point of attraction to visitors in the eighteenth century, when the Grand Tour reached its apogee. Thus, the evidence of the *Album* could be considered concrete documentation of the enriched list of priorities on the visitors' agendas. Until then, primarily visitors with specific scholarly motivations, deriving from interests in the classics or patristics, sought to visit the Laurenziana in search of manuscripts. Among this group we have some of the most valuable testimonies.

The testimony of Gilbert Burnet in the 1680s is among the most informative concerning the state of the library at the time:¹¹

The famous Library that belongs to this Convent [San Lorenzo] took up more of my time than all the other Curiosities of Florence; for here is a collection of many Manuscripts, most of them Greek, that were gathered together by Pope Clement the VII and given to his Country; and there are very many Printed Books mixed with them; and these Books that there are, are so rare, that they are almost as curious as Manuscripts. I saw some of Virgil's Poems in old Capitals. There is a manuscript in which some parts both of Tacitus and Apuleius are written . . . but that which pleased me most was that, the Library-keeper assured me that one had lately found the famous Epistle of St. Chrysostome to Cesarius in Greek, in the end of a Volume full of other things, and not among the Manuscripts of that Father's Books of which they have a great many. He thought he remembered well the place where the Book stood; so we turned over all the Books that stood near it, but found it not: he promised to look it out for me if I came back that way.

The impressions generated by the fruitless meeting with the custodian at the Laurenziana were reinforced when later on Burnet met the grand duke's own library keeper Magliabecchi, "a person of most wonderful Civility, and full of Candor" and "learned beyond imagination," who was very severe in his judgment of the Laurenziana librarian, whose failure to find the manuscript he attributed to his ignorance of Greek: "he added there was not one man in Florence that either understood Greek, or that examined Manuscripts, so that he assured me I could not build on what an ignorant Library-keeper had told me." This remark could very well have been an exaggeration, but in view of what is more generally known concerning the decline of Greek in Italy and in Florence, it could equally be pointing to a real problem in the handling of the classical heritage, just as the Enlightenment was making itself felt in European culture.¹²

A few years later, another visitor on the Grand Tour, Ellis Veryard, M.D., visited San Lorenzo and came to the library through the cloister, where he noticed "the statue of Paulus Jovian the Historian." He found the building admirable but was not impressed by the attitude of the custodians concerning access to books and manuscripts: "The Library-keepers permit them not to be copied out, for fear of being deprived of the vanity of boasting themselves to be the only Possessors of what was designed for the Benefit of the Publick." As a medical doctor, Ellis Veryard takes particular care to record the most impressive medical manuscripts he saw. He notes that some "are not yet extant in print as a treatise of Dioscorides περί αντιφάρμάκων; a great Greek manuscript containing the works of the Ancients that write about chirurgery; some pieces by Nicander; Aphrodiseus περί πυρετοῦ; and some fragments of Diodorus Siculus."¹³

In the early eighteenth century the Laurenziana was visited by Joseph Spence, a literary scholar and an authority on Alexander Pope. Spence was accompanying Lord Middlesex on the Grand Tour and came to the Laurenziana in order to look at Pluteo I.9.¹⁴

The firm establishment of the library as one of the major attractions for visitors coming to Florence on the Grand Tour is recorded in detail in Raffaello Del Bruno's classic eighteenth-century guidebook to the cultural highlights of the city. The visit to the San Lorenzo complex is placed on the second day of the proposed schedule of the tour, and the library's turn comes after the basilica and before the Capella dei Principi. In describing the library, attention is primarily focused on the design and the precious materials of its construction, the work of Michelangelo and Vasari. But then note is taken of the library's contents:¹⁵

Alla bellezza del materiale corrisponde il pregio e il valore de' Manoscritti, che sopra certi banchi di noce, quarantaquarto per banda, in gran numero vi si conservano. . . . Sono questi di lingue diverse, e specialmente Ebraica, Greca, Latina, Cinese, Arabica, Caldea, Siriaca, Toscana, Schiavona, Provenzale, e Francese antica, ne solo per la rarità, ma eziandio per l'ornamento di Pitture e miniature singolarissimi. Da questi, come da rari esemplari, sogliono i Letterati, e in specie gli Oltramontani, diligentissimi osservatori riscontrare, o emendar quei difetti, che spessevolute scorrono nelle stampe, o che non furono da altri osservati, e pubblicare interessanti aneddoti.

The author goes on to summarize the library's history and refer to the catalogues of manuscripts by Montfaucon and the librarians Biscioni and Giulianelli available at the time, and then tells the visitor what to expect to see:

L'erudito viaggiatore informatosi dalla perizia del Bibliotecario del Principe troverà ad ogni Pluteo qualche raro Manoscritto. Il più singolari per l' antichità sono il Codice Siriano al Plut. I. Quello del Vergilio al Plut. XXXIX. Al XLII il Decamerone del Boccaccio. Quello dell' Orosio al LXV. Quello del Tacito al LXVIII. Per la vaghezza dell' ornato il S. Ambrogio, il Lirano, il Tolemeo, il Giulio Cesare, la Vita di Lorenzo de' Medici, Domizio Calderino, e l' Argiropilo, e molti altri.

Del Bruno's detailed instructions to the readers of his guidebook allow us to form a relatively precise idea of what all those visitors who left their signatures in the *Album* saw and admired in the Laurenziana. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that at least some of them had the *Ristretto* at hand when they paid their visit to the Libreria Medicea Laurenziana.

II

Bandini initiated the visitor book on 12 July 1771. His purpose was to record the visits of illustrious members of Europe's international society, especially crowned heads, who honored the library with their presence. There are many such visits, but very rarely did visiting royalty sign their names in the *Album*. Usually, a member of the library staff, Bandini himself, or his assistant recorded, in very reverential terms, as required by protocol, the presence of emperors, kings, grand dukes, princes, and other members of Europe's ruling houses,

including, of course, the several hereditary dynasties ruling Italy's minor principalities. This evidence can be amusing, on account of the formality of expression, but is also quite instructive in recalling the depth and systematic cultivation of the deferential culture that sustained the legitimacy of monarchical government in Old Regime Europe.

Let us recall some of these dynastic visits that illustrate the library's fame in European society. Immediately upon the *Album's* opening, Bandini recorded in July 1771 the visit of the duke of Gloucester,¹⁶ brother of the reigning British sovereign, George III. The sequence was illustrious: on 17 October 1781 the sovereign of the neighboring duchy of Modena visited the library.¹⁷ But on 5 March 1782 a visit of the highest imperial significance was recorded:¹⁸ *Le loro Altezze Imperiali Paolo Petrowitz Granduca ereditario di tutte le Russie, Duca Reggente di Hofstein Gottop e Ammiraglio generale de quel vasto Impero, e Maria Federica nata Principessa di Wittenberg sua consorte.*

It was obviously a visit by Catherine the Great's son and heir, who succeeded his mother on the imperial throne of all Russia fourteen years after his visit to the Laurenziana. On 31 July 1782, Maria Amalia, archduchess of Austria and sovereign duchess of Parma, visited.¹⁹ The following year, on 28 November 1783, His Majesty the King of Sweden Gustav III visited the library. He was deeply impressed. A month later he was back at the Laurenziana:²⁰ *Venne novamente SM il Re di Svezzia, ed videro varii codici, e si trattene lungamente sulla carta d'unione della Chiesa Greca colla Latina.* This is a quite rare piece of information: we know who visited from the *Album dei Visitatori* but not what they saw or read. The interest of the king of Sweden in the act of Union of the Churches of 1439 is a rare exception.

On 29 July 1784 the local sovereign, patron, and protector of the library came to visit:²¹ *Venne in questa Libreria SAR l' Arciduca Ferdinando, Gran Principe di Toscana . . . e ci si trattene lungo tempo osservanto con piacere e gran satisfazione i mss piu varii che qui si conservano.* It is possible that the grand duke had been hearing about the library from his guests and came to see it for himself. He was pleased and sent other guests to visit: King Ferdinando and Queen Maria Carolina of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies visited shortly after the grand duke.²²

On a symbolic level, the visits of European royalty to the Laurenziana could be seen to represent the ritualization of the reception of the classics in European culture three centuries after the age of humanism. The attitudes and cultural norms reflected in these symbolic gestures could, nevertheless, be considered revealing of the self-understanding of the European intellectual tradition at a period marked by the "rise of modern paganism."

In the late 1780s, the presence of royalty at the Laurenziana thinned out. In the 1790s it disappeared. Obviously, they had their minds on other things, not codices and books, however rare and valuable: Europe was in revolution. Many of the minor sovereigns of Italy, including the Tuscan grand dukes, were chased away by French revolutionary troops who came to "liberate" Italy from its tyrants. There could be no better evidence of the spirit of the times than this sudden absence from the Laurenziana's *Album dei Visitatori*. The old sovereigns disappeared—at least for a time—but a new presence made its appearance. On 27 August 1797, a paleographically uncertain signature—to be sure—recalls the changed times in Italy and Tuscany:²³ *Bonaparte.*

It took years for European royalty to reappear at the Laurenziana. After 1815 they returned in Restoration Europe and tried to resume the old ways of civility and legitimacy. It was too late, of course, but the struggle to bring the old ways back was fierce, and a great deal was invested in symbolism and the resurrection of the old patterns of control through the revival of the rituals of legitimacy. Meanwhile, the first volume of the *Album* was completed in 1807. Bandini had died in 1803, and the new volume was opened under his successor, Francesco del Furia, who served from 1803 to 1854. Its purpose was clearly stated on the title page: *Nome delle Persone Distinte che visitarono questa Biblioteca.*²⁴ This was a categorical verbalization of a firmly rooted mentality, which obviously remained unshaken in the revolutionary period. As we will have occasion to remark upon later, this resilient mentality had its victims in recording the readership of the library.

The presence of European royalty in the second volume of the *Album* is more sparse. But soon after the book was opened, international relations in Napoleonic Europe brought an illustrious visitor to Florence and to the library: *L'Empereur de toutes les Russies* came on 20 July 1809. It is worth noting the French language in the recording of this visit. Alexander I had signed the treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon in 1807, and while his legitimist crowned brothers and sisters were barred from their thrones by his new ally, he could come look at the marvels of the civilization of Europe as had so many Russians before and especially after him, embarking on an itinerary in which Florence was a stopover or even a destination of major significance. After 1815 the old legitimist royalty reappears in the *Album*, but they were preceded by the man who brought them back on their thrones: *il Principe di Metternich, Ministro Plenipotenziario di S.M. l' Imperatore d' Austria*, who visited the Laurenziana on 15 June 1817. He was obviously greatly impressed. When he returned to Florence with his emperor two years later, he rushed back to the library on 21 March 1819. Later that week, on 27 March, Emperor Francis II, *Imperatore di Germania*, also came to visit. It is

not recorded whether he was accompanied by Metternich. In the following years, other European monarchs stopped at the Laurenziana during their visits to Florence, resuming an old ritual characterizing state visits to the Tuscan capital. On 17 December 1822 Frederick William III of Prussia visited. On 17 September 1827 he returned, a sign that his first visit was not just a ritualistic gesture but had left an impression on him that he obviously wanted to revive.

I will mention only one more European monarch whose visit to the Laurenziana is recorded in the second volume of the *Album* twenty years after the first visit of the king of Prussia. On 26 May 1844, *Nel giorno dell'Ascensione*, the king of Bavaria visited. It was Ludwig I of the House of Wittelsbach, father of King Otho of Greece. In this case, the Bavarian monarch's passionate philhellenism must have made his visit to the Greek treasures of the Laurenziana a substantive and moving experience, not just a ritualistic gesture. It would be interesting to ruminate on what he could have told his son about the Greek Laurentian codices at their next meeting.

III

Meanwhile, many other visitors had been coming to the Laurenziana in the age of the Enlightenment and in the revolutionary era, motivated, in most cases, by substantial quests of scholarship. Many of these visitors, but not all, are recorded in the two volumes of the *Album* in a different way than that of the royal visits. The scholars and intellectuals who came for research or just to be immersed in the cultural tradition symbolized by the Laurenziana signed their names in the *Album* themselves. The two volumes, thus, constitute one of the most important collections of signatures of the creators of European culture.

One of the earliest research visits recorded in the *Album* immediately after its opening in 1771 was by a scholar from southern Spain, *Enriquez di Cordova*, as he signed his name. The purpose of his visit was stated to have been his interest in *lettere Ebraiche e Greche*,²⁵ but this instance in which the *Album* informs us about the visitor's object of study remained rare. On 29 May 1772 two brothers from Sicily named Ascensi came to visit. They recorded not their object of study but their religious capacity: they were members of the *Societas Jesu*.

On 21 June 1779 one of the library's most famous visitors came for the first time: *Vittorio Alfieri di Torino* signed the book on that day.²⁶ This early visit, however, remained unnoticed by modern readers of the *Album*. On 13 July 1780 a Venetian gentleman came to visit: *SE Antonio Zanier Cavalier Veneziano nipote del Serenissimo Doge*²⁷ On 3 August 1780 Count Emmanuel Kevenhüller and his lady visited the library.²⁸ The count bore an illustrious name in military science, that of the

famous Prussian field marshal Kevenhüller, author of a very popular manual of military tactics, which had been translated into most European languages. On 22 August 1783 a second Venetian visitor arrived: *Il Cavalier Zulian nominato Bailo a Constantinopoli*.²⁹

On 29 October 1785 a professional visit took place: the *Bibliothecario di Sua Eccellenza Reverendissima Monsignor Conte Batthyani, Vescovo di Gran Principato di Transilvania Emerico Daniel* signed his name in very nice calligraphy.³⁰ He obviously came or was sent to see how things were done in one of the great European models for his position. On 12 May 1788 two *Inglese* visited the library: Chandler and Clarke.³¹ On 28 May 1789 an important visitor from Prussia arrived: *J. G. Herder, Surintendant Général des Eglises du Duché de Saxe-Weimar*.³² In 1789 another English gentleman arrived, *Arthur Young, Fellow of the Royal Society*,³³ and on 2 April 1794 a Scot, one of the stars of the Scottish Enlightenment, *Adam Ferguson di Edinburgo in Scozia*, also came to visit.³⁴ On 18 September 1799 *Charles Pine Coffin of Trinity College Cambridge* signed the *Album*.³⁵ On 11 September 1802 a distinguished Polish visitor arrived, bearing the name of the last king of Poland, who had died in exile in 1798: Stanislas Poniatowski.³⁶ He was the late king's nephew and namesake. After the last partition of his country, he had settled in Italy and eventually in Florence.

On 28 September 1802 the celebrated poet and dramatist Vittorio Alfieri, accompanied by the contessa d'Albany, again signed the book.³⁷ This visit was appropriately noted in the catalogue of the great exhibition of the poet's manuscripts in the Laurenziana.³⁸ On 17 October 1809 the sculptor Antonio Canova signed the *Album*.³⁹ The period of revolution and war down to 1815 slowed down the movement of foreign visitors, but under the Restoration international travel to Italy resumed its pace. On 11 June 1816 *Federigo North Inglese* signed the *Album*. Lord Guilford, great philhellene and collector of Greek books and manuscripts, must have felt himself in a congenial environment in the Laurenziana.⁴⁰ In September 1821 the first recorded American visit to the Laurenziana took place: *Doctor W. Darrach of Philadelphia, USA*, signed the *Album*. One year later, on 13 November 1822, a famous visitor just signed his name: *Arthur Schopenhauer*.

The same month an English visitor added a brief comment to his signature:

*M. Duppa Anglois
I have seen with great pleasure many of the MSS in the
Library.*

Richard Duppa was the author of the first biography of Michelangelo in English, published in 1806.⁴¹ The visit to the Laurenziana in 1822 is recorded in his book of impressions

from his travels in Italy, in which he gives a detailed report on the manuscripts he admired on Michelangelo's benches.⁴²

In this age of the Italian Risorgimento, its several intellectual spokesmen directed their steps to the Laurenziana. Visiting the library was becoming a national pilgrimage. Between 15 and 17 September 1827, just before the visit of the king of Prussia, another hand recorded the visit of *il celebre poeta Manzoni*, but he did not sign the *Album*. At the time, between 29 August and 7 October 1827, Manzoni was residing in Florence at Lungarno Corsini 4, while the last volume of *I promessi sposi* was being edited for publication "secondo l'uso di lingua dei fiorentini colti." Already at the height of his fame, Manzoni had many meetings at the Gabinetto Vieusseux with illustrious men of letters, including Lamartine and Savigny, who had also been in Florence working at the Laurenziana. In 1830 Niccolò Tommaseo came and signed on 14 December.⁴³ Earlier in the same year, on 31 August, the library was visited by *Emilio Tipaldo, Professore de Storia, Geografia, Diritto* of the Collegio di Marina in Venice. At the peak of the revolutionary year, on 4 July 1848, a different prince finally visited the library, although he did not sign his name. A note in the second volume of the *Album* records the changing *zeitgeist*: *Il principe dei Filologi Italiani Vincenzo Gioberti*. He was accompanied by the *Abate Barracco direttore del Museo Egiziano di Torino col quale si è trattenuto al quanto tempo ad ammirare I preziosi monumenti che si conservano in questo sacrario della sapienza*.

Camillo Cavour himself, the unifier of modern Italy, is recorded to have visited the Laurenziana on 18 April 1860, but he did not sign the *Album*.

The period of romantic nationalism, of which the Italian Risorgimento movement was an authentic expression, was also the great age of German scholarship. German historical and classical scholarship was, in a way, the "scientific" expression of the Protean spirit of romanticism. A succession of Germany's greatest scholars directed their research quests in this period to the resources of the Laurenziana. In September 1817 we note the signature of *Immanuel Bekkerus grammaticus*. The great classicist had obviously come to work with the famous tenth-century Laurentian codex of Thucydides, the oldest witness of the text of the historian of the Peloponnesian War, the Pluteo 69.2. Bekker's edition of Thucydides, which appeared in three volumes in 1821, is based, to a significant degree, on the Laurentian codex.⁴⁴

On 22 October 1826 the signature of *Fridericus Carolus de Savigny* was added to the *Album*.⁴⁵ On 6 May 1830 *Leopoldo Ranke, Professore nell' università di Berlino* came to the library, probably in connection with the research that led to the publication of his work on the conspiracy against

Venice in 1618.⁴⁶ On 11 June 1839 *Immanuel Bekker*, now *de l'académie de Berlin*, returned to the Laurenziana. On 20 July 1843 the visit of *Il Cavaliere Tischendorf Dr. di Teologia e di Filosofia da Lipsia* was recorded. Tischendorf was on his tour of major libraries in Italy in search of ancient manuscripts of the Bible. He had spent the previous years in Paris, and in 1843 he was visiting manuscript collections in Florence, Venice, Modena, Milan, Verona, and Turin trying to locate the oldest manuscript witnesses of the Holy Scriptures just prior to his departure for the Near East, which led to the great discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus.⁴⁷ Soon thereafter, on 22 September 1843, another great scholar arrived from the Prussian capital: *Jacobus Grimm Professor Berolinensis*. On 5 December 1844 *Théodore Mommsen du Holstein, Docteur en droit* signed. The young Mommsen, still a subject of the king of Denmark, was on his first research visit to Italy on a Danish scholarship, initiating his lifelong researches on the history of Rome. Professor Mommsen returned twenty years later between 20 May and 30 June 1862. On 4 September 1858 Ferdinand Gregorovius from Königsberg signed the *Album*. He had been in Florence since July working on his *History of Rome in the Middle Ages*.

The day after he signed the *Album*, on 5 September 1858, in Florence, Gregorovius signed the contract for the publication of his book. He noted in his journal: "this was an important day for me," which he celebrated with a lunch at Villa di Parigi. He continued working at the Laurenziana for the rest of the month. On 16 September he noted in his diary: "I am now working at the Laurenziana, the librarians of which, Ferrucci and Del Furia, are no less obliging."⁴⁸

As the nineteenth century progressed, the stream of international visitors to the Laurenziana resumed. On 4 July 1832 Edgar Quinet visited. On 11 April 1834, during one of his many visits to Florence, *H. C. Andersen de Copenhague* signed the *Album*. This testimony is uniquely interesting for Andersen's biography in suggesting that while in Florence he put his mind on other things besides elaborating the stories of *Il porcellino*, with which his Florentine visits are conventionally associated. On 29 April 1841 a particularly distinguished second American visitor arrived and left his signature in the *Album*: *Edward Everett, Boston, United States of America*. The former professor of Greek and future president of Harvard University (1846–49) had just been appointed U.S. ambassador to Britain. A great philhellene during the Greek war of independence, he must have been particularly pleased with the Greek codices exhibited at the Laurenziana. The great Parisian publisher of Greek classics Ambrose Firmin Didot visited on 22 August 1843.

Two English visitors with a special interest in the Greek East also visited. William Martin Leake, the most precise

and dependable author of travel accounts on Greece, Asia Minor, and the Balkans, visited on 6 December 1838. Always meticulous and precise, he also recorded his address: 50 Queen Anne St. London. On 12 November 1850 Robert Curzon came to the library. After his visits to the monasteries of the Levant in 1833–37, during which he attempted to buy Greek manuscripts from the monks,⁴⁹ he must have felt an inner sense of envy by looking at the exquisite codices of the Laurenziana. In early 1864 (between March and early April) the last international visitor recorded his signature in the second volume of the *Album: Professor William Ramsay, University of Glasgow*.

IV

It is not, of course, possible to reconstruct with any certainty or precision what all these visitors came to look at or study at the Laurenziana, and this is the most serious question left unanswered by the evidence supplied by the *Album dei Visitatori*. In some cases, we can formulate hypotheses based on the evidence of their subsequent works, in which it is possible to locate references to material from the Laurenziana. In many of the cases we have noted above, the purpose of the visit was simply to admire and be exposed to the treasures of the tradition of *litterae humaniores*. The evidence, thus, can be read as a testimony to the reception of humanism in European culture. In a few other cases, however, although information remains unavailable in the pages of the *Album*, the purpose of the visit appears obviously professional, motivated by research objectives, as was clearly the case with those of the German scholars recorded above. Let us look at some additional characteristic cases. On 28 March 1831 two Mechitarist monks from the Armenian monastery of San Lazzaro in Venice, Pardi Pasquale and Alessandro, arrived at the Laurenziana, probably to look at Armenian manuscripts in its collections in connection with their editorial work at San Lazzaro.⁵⁰ On 22 July 1836 Emmanuel Miller, *Employé aux Mss Grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, arrived, obviously in connection with his work. He returned thirteen years later, on 9 February 1849, *a confrontare diversi Codici Greci*, as he noted in the *Album*. On 26 June 1837 two very important visitors arrived from Rome, where they had been engaged in research at the Vatican library, and signed the *Album*. We can be sure that their visit was motivated by research objectives:

Barth[olomeus] Kopitar, Conservateur de la Bibliothèque Imperiale de Vienne

and

France. Palacky de Praga storiografo Boemo.

Both were already engaged in their lifelong projects on, respectively, the language and folk poetry of the Southern Slavic peoples of the Western Balkans⁵¹ and the medieval history of the Bohemian nation, and it would be reasonable to assume that they had come to the Laurenziana in search of relevant manuscripts.⁵²

Another important person in nineteenth-century historical research, who visited the Laurenziana twice in connection with his investigations, was Louis de Mas Latrie, *archiviste paléographe à Paris*, who signed the *Album* on 1 September 1842 and again on 3 July 1844. During these years, Mas Latrie was also in contact with G. P. Vieusseux, with whom he exchanged four letters, mostly in connection with the prospects of an edition of the medieval *Chronique de Martin Casale*. For this purpose, Mas Latrie was looking for manuscript witnesses of this source, which, he assured Vieusseux, he considered quite important.⁵³ Mas Latrie had been trained at the renowned École nationale des Chartes, which was, from 1821, the foremost institution for training in paleography and medieval studies in France. Appropriately, on 20 November 1854, what we would today call a “field trip,” or in the language of the time a *mission littéraire en Italie*, brought a group of researchers from the École nationale des Chartes to the Laurenziana. It was a fruitful and instructive visit: on 18 April 1856 the *mission littéraire* to the Laurenziana was repeated.

The tendency toward some form of “professionalization” of the readership attracted by the Laurenziana traceable in the evidence of the *Album* in the period of the Restoration and onward could lead us to some hypotheses about the changing character of the library’s place in society and changes in the history of reading. Both of these sets of changes could be seen as aspects of broader cultural trends reflected in what has been described as the “reading revolution.” Although the idea of a “revolution” in the character of reading has not commanded universal assent among book historians and historians of reading,⁵⁴ a range of changes such as those hinted at by the evidence supplied by the Laurenziana visitor books might be interpreted as pointers if not to “revolutions” at least to noteworthy mutations in the history of reading. From the ritualized princely visits whereby *ancien régime* and Restoration royalty attempted to claim a role as guardians of the classical heritage of the European tradition to the research visits of scholars from around Europe who flocked to the Laurenziana in pursuit of specific professional projects, a transformation is certainly observable in the place of the library, in the understanding of the purposes of reading, and in the perception of the significance of the manuscripts transmitting a precious heritage. From objects of aesthetic enjoyment and admiration, manuscripts were becoming, at least for a section of

the readership, professional *instrumenta studiorum*. This aspect of the evidence of the visitor books constitutes probably its most significant contribution to our understanding of cultural and ideological transformations in the making in European society.

The library continued to be among the highlights of a visit to Florence in this period also. In the “complete guide of the traveller and the artist” to Italy, M. Valery notes that “La bibliothèque Laurentienne, un de ces foyers illustres dans les annales des lettres, passe longtemps pour la plus riche de l’Europe.” As usual, the architecture and the art of the building take precedence in the account, but the books are also an object of commentary: “l’aspect severe de ces gros volumes enchainés, annoncent de moeurs litteraires d’une autre âge. . . . Le catalogue des manuscrits grecs, latins et italiens de Bandini, ouvrage de quarante-quatre ans, est un vrai chef-d’œuvre de méthode, d’exactitude et de critique.”⁵⁵

V

A special category in the readership of the Laurenziana could be visitors coming from the East. In the composition of the Laurenziana’s general readership during the nineteenth century, a multinational character is immediately obvious. But from this multinational composition of the readership, visitors from Eastern Europe are generally absent. Other than the sporadic visits of Russian royalty, which reflected another regularity as noted above, the furthest east the readership could be traced in our survey above was to the Central European scholars Palacky and Kopitar and, of course, to the single Polish visit of Stanislas Poniatowski. But there was one important exception to this absence of readers from Eastern Europe, and this exception is made up of the Greeks. Over the period under review, many Greeks stopped at the Laurenziana to admire what they could very well have felt formed a part of their heritage. Some of them recorded in the *Album* the feelings that the treasures exhibited on Michelangelo’s benches inspired. Almost all of them, appreciating the cultural context of their visit, signed their names in Greek. This adds a special paleographical interest but also occasional difficulties in deciphering this part of the evidence. In what follows, I survey the Greek readership of the Laurenziana and the testimonies they recorded in the *Album*, adding to this material some additional information about readers from the Christian world of the Levant, who included themselves in a broader cultural conception of Greekness. The Greek is transcribed diplomatically, faithfully following the spelling in the *Album*.

The first Greek reader to record his visit to Laurenziana appeared on 29 August 1782: *Demetrio Razi Greco*.⁵⁶ On 3 June 1786 a second Greek visitor signed the *Album*: *Nicolo Manso*

Greco.⁵⁷ Two years later, between 13 and 24 October 1788, two Greek Orthodox clergymen appeared and signed their names in Greek:⁵⁸

Ἀρσένιος ἱερομόναχος
Δωρόθεος Πρώης

Dorotheos Proïs, or Proïos, as he was later to modify his name to make it sound more akin to ancient Greek, was to become an important scholar and prelate of the Orthodox Church, an exponent of the Enlightenment in the ranks of the Orthodox hierarchy. He had come from his native island of Chios to pursue higher university education in Pisa and Florence.⁵⁹ He must have been deeply impressed by what he saw at the Laurenziana. A few months later, between 29 August and 9 September 1789, he returned with a compatriot:⁶⁰

Δωρόθεος Πρώης Χίος
Ἀγάπιος διάκονος Χίος

On the same page of the *Album* we see two more signatures in Greek:⁶¹ *Νικολ.* and *Γεώργιος Δηλλα Μισσιονη ἰν Βολογνα*. No accents are noted in this short, curiously written in Greco-Latin characters, self-identification, and it probably refers to two Italian missionaries trained in Bologna for undertaking proselytizing work in Greek-speaking areas.

On 14 July 1790 an important Greek intellectual leader of the time visited the Laurenziana:⁶²

Giovanni abate Litino Rettor de’ Publici Collegi in Padoa e Prorettore della Nazion Oltramarina.

Litino, from the island of Zante, had been dean of the Greek College of the University of Padua for years and later in the decade translated Francesco Soave’s Italian version of the abridgement of John Locke’s *Essay on Human Understanding* into Greek.⁶³

Later in the same year, on 11 December 1790, another Greek left his signature in the *Album*. After a name that can be deciphered with some difficulty, we clearly read in Greek the date and the place of origin of the visitor:⁶⁴

Χατζηκυριάκος ἀπό Κωνσταντινούπολιν: 1790:
Δεκεμβρίου 11.

On 28 May 1791 a group of very prominent Greeks from Livorno left their signatures in the *Album*.⁶⁵

Ἰωάννης Κωνστάκης ἀπό Πάτραν [Ioannis Constakis
from Patras]

Λουκάς Ράλλης από Χίον [Loukas Rallis from Chios]
 Θωμάς Σπανιωλάκης από τήν Μονεμβασία [Thomas
 Spaniolakis from Monemvasia]
 Παντολέων Κουμελάς Κόνσολος τῆς Χίου [Pantoleon
 Koumelas Consul of Chios]
 καί ὀφφικιάλος εἰς τά στρατεύματα [and officer in the
 troops]
 τῆς Καθολικῆς Μεγαλειότητος [of his Catholic
 Majesty].

Since the sixteenth century Livorno had been an important point on the European-wide network of Greek diaspora communities. A Greek confraternity had been established there in 1757, and the visitors to the Laurenziana on 28 May 1791 represented the leadership of the community. During that year Loukas Rallis was first councilor of the confraternity, a function Ioannis Constakis assumed in 1792 and Thomas Spaniolakis in 1794.

On 21 September 1792 another group of Chiots arrived from Livorno:⁶⁶

Δημήτρης σκυλίτζης Χίος τοῦ ποτέ πέτρου [Dimitris
 Skylitzis Chian son of the late Petros]
 Νικόλαος ἀργέντης Χίος τοῦ ποτέ τζανῆ [Nikolaos
 Argentis Chian son of the late Tzaniis]
 Ἰωάννης τζελεπῆς Χίος τοῦ ποτέ ἡλίου [Ioannis
 Tzelepis Chian son of the late Ilias].

Here is evidence of the mobility of the population of the island of Chios, leaving the native island for the communities of the diaspora—in the cases recorded above, to the Greek Orthodox community of Livorno.⁶⁷

In the years 1796–98 the library was visited a few times by a learned lady of Greek origin, *La contessa Isabella Teotochi Veneziana*, who signed the *Album* on 27 April 1796 and 25 March 1798.⁶⁸ In late 1797, after 14 December, the *Album* was signed by the learned Greek merchant from Vienna, *Ἀλέξανδρος Βασιλείου*.⁶⁹ During the following year of 1798, the visits of Greeks to the Laurenziana became numerous. On 10 May *Ἀναστάσιος Πετρόπουλος, ἱερεύς* [Anastasios Petropoulos, priest] recorded his visit,⁷⁰ and on 18 July we read the signature: *Κομνηνός ἱερεύς*⁷¹ [Komninos, priest]. On 17 September *Σέργιος Ἰωάννου ἐκ Σμύρνης* [Sergios Ioannou from Smyrna]⁷² and two days later, on 19 September, *Ἰγνάτιος Ἰουστινιάνος Χίος* [Ignatius Justinianos Chian] signed the *Album*.⁷³ On 27 September 1802 two brothers from Athens recorded their visit in detail:⁷⁴

Μαρίνος Κλάδου Ἀθηναῖος
 Χιλίους ὀκτακωσίδες δύο Σεπτεμβρίου 27

ἡμέρα Δευτέρα
 Ἰωάννης Κλάδου Ἀθηναῖος 27 Σεπτ.

The two brothers were accompanied by a Hydriot companion:

Ἰωάννης Πετσιάβος ὁ ἐκ Νίδρας [Ioannis Petsiavos
 from Nidra].

Two years passed before the next Greek visitor stopped at the Laurenziana, but the visit was to be the point of departure of an active involvement in the intellectual life of Florence and Italy more generally. On 18 August 1804 we read in the *Album*:⁷⁵

Ἀνδρέας Μουστοξύδης Κερκυραῖος 18 Αυγούστου
 1804.

Moustoxydis reappears in the second volume of the *Album* on 20 April 1808, but this time he signs his name in Italian:⁷⁶ *Mustoxidi di Corfu*.

On 18 September 1807 we read the signature:⁷⁷

Παναγιώτης Πάλλης ἐξ Ἰωαννίνων [Panagiotis Pallis
 from Ioannina].

He was a leading member of the Greek community of Livorno, repeatedly its president, becoming consul of Greece following the independence of the country, and in later years he was to develop close ties with Florentine intellectual circles, especially with G. P. Vieusseux, with whom he corresponded frequently in the years of the Greek war of independence.⁷⁸ A few days after Pallis's visit we read on the same page a clerical signature in the *Album*:

Dionisio Canale Archimandrita e
 Presidente della Sede Patriarchale
 de Alessandria di Egitto
 25 Settembre 1807.

Στυλιανός Δόρια Προσαλένδιος ὁ Κερκύριος [Stylios Doria Prosalendios the Corfiot] signed on 14 September 1809 and Δημήτριος Γεωργίου Σχινάς Βυζάντιος [Dimitrios Georgiou Schinas from Byzantium] signed in June 1816. From the coincidence of dates and signatures, we might assume that Schinas accompanied Lord Guilford on his visit.

On the 19 August 1816, at the top of a page in the second volume of the *Album*, a very important person—indeed, a towering figure among diaspora Greeks in Tuscany and in Europe more broadly—signed the book:⁷⁹ *Ἰγνάτιος μητροπολίτης Οὐγγροβλαχίας* [Ignatius metropolitan of

Ungrowallachia]. Ignatius of Ungrowallachia had finally taken permanent residence in Pisa in 1815, after fleeing his see in Bucharest, the capital of Wallachia, following the withdrawal of the Russian army from the principalities in 1812. During the Russian military presence in the principalities, Ignatius had openly sided with them and against the Ottoman masters of the region,⁸⁰ departing significantly from the traditional political attitude of prudence and reserve followed by the Orthodox Church under Ottoman rule. Ignatius was a man of the Enlightenment, and although a senior Orthodox prelate, he had openly espoused the cause of the liberation of Greece and the modernization of Greek culture on the models of the European “lights.” He spent his long years of exile in Italy working for this cause and for the education of Greek youth.⁸¹ He no doubt entertained thoughts of the establishment of an institution like the Laurenziana to save the wealth of manuscripts still remaining in Greece.

Shortly after Metropolitan Ignatius, another important presence in the Greek intellectual diaspora signed the *Album*, without dating his signature:⁸² *Codrika Athénien*, who specified his capacity as *Secrétaire Interpréte aux Affaires Etrangères de France*. Panagiotis Codrikas had been a protagonist in the language controversy that had been a major factor of ideological polarization in the Greek Enlightenment. He had come to Florence in 1816, on leave from his duties at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to consult manuscripts at the Laurenziana in connection with his research on the history of the Greek language. This research resulted in his major work on the spoken Greek language two years later.⁸³ Three clerical signatures can be noted on subsequent pages, one of them particularly interesting. On 13 September 1817 we read *Massimo Maslum Greco-melchita Arcivescovo di Mira*, with his signature following also in Arabic. Archbishop Maximus Maslum’s presence reminds us of the broader and very complex cultural mosaic of Greek culture in the Middle East. Later on, he became the archbishop of Melchite Greeks in Marseilles.⁸⁴ The other clerical signature reads: *Νεόφυτος Κυριακίδης ιερομόναχος και αρχιμανδρίτης* [Neophytos Kyriakides, hieromonk and archimandrite] on 29 August 1818. He was the parish priest and teacher of the Greek Church of the Holy Trinity in Livorno.⁸⁵

The third signature, in November 1820 raises some questions:⁸⁶ *Κάρολος Τζελέσια πρεσβύτερος* [Karolos Gelesia presbyter]. Who could this be? It is doubtful that it was the signature of a Greek Orthodox priest. It could very well be the intellectual identity of a Catholic priest whose knowledge of Greek impelled him to sign his name in a Hellenized version, or he may have been a clergyman of the “rito greco,” which had preserved Greek as the language of worship.

The revolutionary year 1821, the year of the uprising of the Greek people against Ottoman oppression, which was the first revolutionary movement in Restoration Europe, raising the hopes of liberals around the continent, is witnessed by an unusual density of signatures by Greek visitors to the Laurenziana.

On 3 July 1821 a group of four Greeks visited the library and signed the *Album*:

Δημήτριος Βαεζέλης ἐκ Πρεβέζης [Dimitrios Vaezelis from Prevesa], who added next to his signature the following stanza:⁸⁷

Τί μέ κοιτᾶς,
ἀμαθής εἶσαι;
ὅσον δυσμενής κι ἄν εἶσαι,
ἐμβα νά εὐγενισθῆς.

[Why are you staring at me;
are you ignorant?
no matter how uncouth you are
enter in order to be polished]

There follow the signatures of the other visitors:

Σπυρίδων Βάλβης Αἰτωλο-ακαρνάν [Spyridon Valvis Aitolo-acarnanian]
Γεώργιος Παῖ. Μανόλης Κυθηραίος [Georgios Papa Manolis Kytherian]
Ἰωάννης ΠαπᾶΖώη Ηπειρότης [Ioannis PapaZois Epirot].

Of this group of visitors we should note, in particular, the presence of Speridione Balbi or Valvi, to be closer to the Greek pronunciation, a political activist in the Greek community of Livorno and later author of a work on the regeneration of Greece, which argued for broader and more viable frontiers for the new state.⁸⁸

From the signatures in the *Album*, it appears that in July 1821 the Laurenziana was teeming with Greek visitors. On 10 July the *Album* was signed by two visitors:

Στυλιανός Σπέρογλου [Stylianos Speroglou]
Ἰωάννης Κοκκώνη [Ioannis Kokkonis].

On 14 July we read:

Δημήτριος Ν. Περούκας ἦδεν [Dimitrios N. Peroukas saw]

On 17 July:

Αλέξανδρος Φωκᾶς Κεφαλιεύς [Alexandros Phokas
Cephalonian]

Ἰωάννης Εὐμορφόπουλος Χίος [Ioannis
Evmorphopoulos Chian]

It is not immediately obvious what motivated this movement of Greeks through Florence in the summer of 1821, but the coincidence with the revolt in Greece is certainly interesting, perhaps even suggestive. Of these visitors, Ioannis Kokkonis was to later emerge as one of the earliest scholars of political theory in Greece with his work *On Republics*, published in Paris in 1828, somehow recalling the debate initiated by the publication of Sismondi's work in 1802.⁸⁹ Dimitrios Peroukas, a scion of a prominent family from Argos, was to become an activist in the Greek war of independence, future member of the Fourth (1829) and Fifth (1831) National Assemblies of revolutionary Greece, and cabinet member and senator under Ioannis Capodistrias.

On 28 March 1822 a different visitor stopped at the Laurenziana:

Agathangelo Arcivescovo Tupaldo di Ceffalonia

Three more Cephalonian visitors followed later in the year: on 20 August 1822 two brothers signed the book in different languages:

Παναγιώτης Σολομὸς Κεφαλιεύς [Panagiotis
Solomos Cephalonian]

Marino Solomos di Cefalonia

This could be seen as an interesting expression of the double cultural identity that had developed in the Ionian islands following the long centuries of Venetian rule, the one brother signing in Greek, the other in Italian. On 19 September we read: *Marin Calligas de Cephalonia*. The year 1823 was equally marked by visits of Greeks to the Laurenziana. On 23 February 1823 a member of an important family of the Chiot diaspora, who had settled in Livorno, signed the *Album*:

Ἰωάννης Σκαρμαγκᾶς Χίος [Ioannis Skaramagkas
Chian].

A native of Chios, he eventually moved to Trieste, where he was elevated to knighthood by Austrian Emperor Francis II.⁹⁰

Soon thereafter, without recording an exact date, another prominent visitor from Livorno wrote in verse his enthusiasm for what he saw on Michelangelo's benches:

Πηγὴ φωτῶν ἀένναος εἶν' τοῦτο τὸ ταμεῖον
Δόξα μεγάλ' ἔς τοὺς κτήτορας καὶ ἔνδοξον μνημεῖον!
Γεώργιος Μεϊτάνης
ἔξ Ἀδριανουπόλεως

[This depository is an eternal source of lights
Great glory be to the founders and renown to the
monument!]

Georgios Meitanis
from Adrianople]

George Meitanis, the author of these verses, was a native of Adrianople in Thrace and recorded for posterity the impression that Laurenziana had been making on its visitors for centuries. He was a prominent member of the Greek confraternity of Livorno, rising to its presidency in 1828.

In the summer, two more Cephalonian visitors from prominent families stopped by and expressed their admiration:

Γεώργιος Κωσσάκης Τυπάλδος ἐκ
Κεφαλληνίας, ἐθαύμασεν
τῇ 12 Ἰουνίου 1823
Ἰωάννης Ἄννινος ἐκ Κεφαλληνίας ὁμοῦ εὐθάσαμεν.

[Georgios Kozakis Typaldos
from Cephalonia admired
on 12 June 1823
Ioannis Anninos from Cephalonia we arrived together]

The stream of Cephalonian visitors, all of them bearing names of well-known families, continued in September. At the time of Manzoni's visit, two young Greek scholars signed the book: *Κ. Ασωπίος* [K. Asopios] and *Ἰωάννης Καββάδας* [Ioannis Kavvadas].

Of the Greek visitors of the year 1823, two were to become important scholars in nineteenth-century Greece. G. Kozakis Typaldos, who expressed his admiration for the Laurenziana on 12 June, produced the first treatise of philosophy of history in Greek scholarship.⁹¹ His companion Ioannis Anninos was to become one of the leading liberals in the political life of the Ionian islands.⁹² Constantine Asopios, who had served as a teacher at Livorno in 1818, later became a great classical scholar and professor in Athens and was to emerge as one of the last epigones of the Enlightenment tradition in Greek culture.⁹³

Between these 1823 visitors and the next Greek visit to the Laurenziana, ten years went by. It was the dramatic decade of the Greek war of independence and of the liberation of Greece. In 1832 the Greek visits were resumed. On 16 May 1832, three visitors arrived:

Ἀρχιμανδρίτης Ζαχαρίας Χατζόπουλος
[Archimandrite Zacharias Hatzopoulos]
ἐκ Θεσσαλονίκης [from Thessaloniki]
Γρηγόριος Καρακάση ἐκ Βουκουρεστίου [Gregorios
Karakasi from Bucharest]
Μιχαήλ Πολυάννης ἐκ Βουκουρεστίου [Michael
Polyannis from Bucharest].

In December, two more visitors from northern Greece arrived and signed on the 15th of the month:

Θεόδωρος Ἀνδρεάδης Ἡπειρώτης [Theodoros
Andreades Epirot]
Θεόδωρος Σακελλάριος Μακεδών [Theodoros
Sakellarios Macedonian].

A different visitor from the Ionian Islands arrived on 22 April 1839:

+Giovanni Tomaso Hynes Ord[ine] dei Prodi
Vescovo di Zante e Cefalonia,
Vis[itatore] Apost[olico] di Corfu.

On 13 January 1845 a Spartan visitor signed: *Albanacchi Demetrio di Sparta*.

In the last pages of the second volume of the *Album*, an assortment of signatures of visitors, who recorded their identity as Greek, highlights the pluralism still prevailing in the self-understanding of what constituted the Greek world in the age of transition to nationalist modernity and suggest that this world was much more extensive and diverse from that represented by the fledging kingdom that had recently gained independence. Thus, we read:

*D. Demetrio Camarda Sac[erdot]e Greco
di Piana de' Greci in Sicilia 27 Nov. 1850*

The signature reminds us that the contemporary toponym *Piana degli Albanesi* is, in fact, a mid-twentieth-century Fascist change of the historic place name.⁹⁴

There followed three other signatures:

*Archimandrita Theophanes Orthodoxo
die 28 Maj 1851
Πλάτων Λ. Ριβέλλης Κερκυραῖος [Platon L. Rivellis
Corfiot]
δικηγόρος τῆς 9 Αὐγούστου 1852 [lawyer on 9 August
1852]*

Skarlatos Vilkiος Professore del Greco 13 Agosto 1852.

Following a series of extensive signatures in Arabic on 27 August 1853, we read:

*Γεώργιος Δημητρίου Δαυλόγλου ἐκ Καΐρου [Georgios
Dimitriou Davloglou from Cairo],
in all likelihood their interpreter.*

Another signature in Arabic a few years later is followed by an explanatory note:

*Li 14 Marzo 1859 venne a visitare questa
biblioteca Mg. Gregorio Ato, Archivescovo
di Homs e Hama in Soria Greco
Melchita con suo segretario ed interprete
il Sig. Avadès Avliu di Damasco.*

Amid these signatures recalling the pluralism of the Greek East we read another signature in Greek on 14 September 1856: Ὁ Φιλόθεος Τηγλιέρι τῆς Μαρίας δοῦλος [Philotheos Tiglieri servant of Mary]. We can only hypothesize as to his identity through an act of the historical imagination.

The last two signatures from southeastern Europe recorded in the second volume of the *Album* are:

*Γεώργιος Δ. Τσιγαράς, διδάκτωρ τῆς ἰατρικῆς/
Georges Tzigaras, docteur en médecine,
le 26 October 1859*

and

*Professor Nicolai Ionesco di Romania
(Principati danubei)*

in August 1863.

It was an appropriate time for the Danubian principalities to emerge on the European cultural scene, as they were preparing for their unification and accession to independence. The manuscript closes a few folios later. On the bottom of the last page is noted: *Terminato il di 7 Aprile 1864.*

VI

From 1771, when Bandini opened the first volume of the *Album*, until 1864, we have an almost century-long record of

the readership of the Laurenziana. As noted above, it is not possible to establish the scholarly objective of the visit for most of these readers. This could be supposed for a number of the eponymous scholars, like the great German professors who streamed to the Laurenziana in the course of the nineteenth century, on the basis of their subsequent published research. But for others, it is impossible to imagine what they looked at or read. How is it possible to propose hypotheses concerning Arthur Schopenhauer or Hans Christian Andersen? It is, nevertheless, indicative of the shared culture of humanism that informed and added unity to European intellectual life that such readers who expressed the heyday of romanticism were attracted to the Laurenziana.

It is equally impossible to imagine what at least some of the Greek visitors, whose visits and enthusiasm we surveyed above, might have read. In this case, too, we may propose working hypotheses for some of them, like well-known scholars Moustoxydis and Asopios. But we will never be able to know for sure for lack of evidence. There is a single case among the Greek visitors of the Laurenziana for which we possess precise information about what he read and how he worked. What is further interesting about this case, however, is the fact that this is the one case of a known and attested researcher in the Laurenziana who never signed the *Album*.

In the years 1811–12, at the printing establishment of Niccolo Carli in Florence, a young Cypriot scholar, Nicolas Theseus, published an imposing four-volume edition of Homer's *Iliad*, accompanied, on facing pages, by a version of the text in Modern Greek.⁹⁵ In his prolegomenon, in the form of an address "To the Greeks" [Τοῖς Ἑλλησιν], the editor briefly surveys the development of Homeric studies to the early nineteenth century, noting the contribution of several European nations to the promotion of the subject. Homer has been fruitfully studied, he remarks, by "the profound British, by the wise nation of the French," among whom he ascribes pride of place to "the most learned Barthélemy" and "the beauty-loving Italians,"⁹⁶ as attested by the admiration expressed by "their greatest poet Dante," from whose *Inferno* he quotes the verses referring to Homer:

Così vid' io adunar la bella scuola
Di quel signor dell' altissimo canto
Che sopra ogn'altro com'aquila vola.

He then goes on to speak about his own edition:

Residing in Florence for the sake of my studies, I discovered in the famous Laurenziana library a manuscript

of the fifteenth century on membrane in large folio, containing the *Iliad* and *Batrachomyomachia*, accompanied by a paraphrase written in the margins of the text in smaller red characters.⁹⁷

He is obviously talking of Pluteo 32.1. He adds that this codex was the work of Theodore Gaza, commissioned by Francesco Filelfo. He also records the interest of Cardinal Bessarion in acquiring the codex for his library and Filelfo's refusal to part with this treasure,⁹⁸ which thus remained in his collection and was saved for the Laurenziana rather than the Marciana in Venice, where Bessarion's manuscripts eventually went.

This splendid manuscript of the *Iliad*, which over the centuries has attracted the admiration of many lovers of *litterae humaniores*⁹⁹ struck the young Cypriot scholar, who decided to publish it in order to contribute to the cultural revival of his compatriots. This patriotic aspiration supplied the motivation for his project:¹⁰⁰

A day of hope, of a splendid and great hope, has dawned finally upon us, since the light of correct education began dispelling the darkness of superstition . . . no one can any longer doubt the resurrection of our nation. More than anybody else this is confirmed by the venerable Korais.

Attempting to publish the *Iliad* from Gaza's codex was certainly a daring project, and the editor was aware that it might be beyond his abilities. But he possessed the training in Greek and the paleographical skills necessary for the undertaking. He had been born in Nicosia, Cyprus, around 1788. His family name was Papasavva, and he was obviously the son of a priest. Early in the nineteenth century he joined a group of other young Cypriots sent to the Academy of Kydonies, one of the most famous Greek schools at the time, for higher learning.¹⁰¹ The Academy of Kydonies, on the western coast of Asia Minor in the region of ancient Aeolia, was a focal point of the Enlightenment movement in Greek society.¹⁰² Its students were taught to converse among themselves in ancient Greek, they adopted classical Greek names—hence the name Theseus—and staged ancient Greek plays in the original. Didot, the distinguished Parisian publisher, whom we encountered above as a visitor to the Laurenziana in 1843, had witnessed a performance of Euripides's *Hecuba* in the original during his visit to Kydonies in 1817.¹⁰³ This was the background of the young Cypriot scholar's seemingly audacious decision to publish the Gaza codex of the *Iliad*.

In the prolegomenon he explains in detail his working method.¹⁰⁴ He states that he transcribed the text of Laurenziana Pluteo 32.1, collating it with the texts of the *Iliad* transmitted by the tenth-century manuscript in Pluteo 32.3 and also with the text of Pluteo 32.9. By collating, he concluded that the three manuscripts belonged to the same tradition in the transmission of the text: “out of respect I did not dare delete or add anything to it, on the witness of the best critical editions; I just corrected scribes’ errors in the above-mentioned manuscripts.”¹⁰⁵ At the end of each of the four volumes he listed the differences of his edition from the text in the edition of the “best critical editor” Hayne.¹⁰⁶ He had also consulted Villoison’s critical edition of the *Iliad* (Venice, 1788), but he strayed from Villoison’s corrections.¹⁰⁷

The paraphrase in Modern Greek that he printed in his edition from Theodore Gaza’s version also formed an object of critical examination. He collated it with other paraphrases in manuscripts at the Laurenziana, the Riccardiana, the Marciana, and the Vatican libraries, concluding that Gaza had used a different, older manuscript that had some lacunae, which, however, he decided to leave unfilled out of respect.¹⁰⁸ He also refers to the paraphrase in the famous Geneva manuscript of the *Iliad*, but he concluded that Gaza’s version was more precise, and he decided to base his edition on that one alone.¹⁰⁹

Then came the *Batrachomyomachia*. He was aware that the paraphrase had been printed by Abbate Fontana in his Florence edition in 1804, and he remained faithful to that.¹¹⁰ He states this clearly in the title of his edition in mentioning that the paraphrase is published for the second time. The young editor concluded his prolegomenon with an apology.

He admitted that his edition had many imperfections and confessed that a project of such a philological scale presupposed much greater experience than he in fact possessed. But he ascribed his daring to his excessive zeal to be of service to his homeland. He closed by begging the philologists to be fair in judging the publication of the paraphrase and lenient in appraising the edition of the text, which was the work of a young student, as he described himself.¹¹¹

Theseus’s work was a laborious and demanding project. He must have sat for months in the Laurenziana transcribing and collating the text and the paraphrase in Pluteo 32.1. Yet he was never asked to sign the *Album dei Visitatori*. He certainly was not judged to belong to the “persone distinte” visiting the library. Following publication, the book found its way to schools and libraries in the Greek East. It has survived in a number of libraries in the Greek world.¹¹² Only one copy has been located in Florence. It belonged to the Palatine collection and entered the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in 1872.¹¹³ Neither the Laurenziana nor the Riccardiana, where Theseus carried out his work of transcription and collation, possess copies of the work. Correspondingly, the work of the young Cypriot scholar has completely fallen out of sight of critical scholarship on Homer’s text¹¹⁴ and on the famous Pluteo 32.1 codex. His edition was noted in passing by Emanuel Miller, who cited it in his work on the minor Greek geographers in order to illustrate the meaning of the Greek grammatical term “psychagogia.”¹¹⁵ The only reference to Theseus’s edition in modern scholarship is due to Filippomaria Pontani, who, in an important study of the Greek exegetic tradition of Homer’s *Odyssey*, notes that Theseus was the first to describe and collate the texts transmitted in Laurenziana’s Pluteo 32.1.¹¹⁶

NOTES

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1 On the early history of the Laurenziana, two prefaces in the earliest of the imposing volumes of the catalogue of the manuscript collections of the library are of fundamental importance. See *Bibliothecae Medicae Laurentianae Catalogus* 1752, IX–XXXVIII, and Bandini 1754, 1:IX–XXIV. On the manuscript collection that became the kernel of the library, see Fryde 1996. On the collecting of Greek manuscripts by the Medici see also Pfeiffer 1976, 48, and on the significance of the Laurentian collection for the transmission of classical literature, see Reynolds and Wilson 1968, 146–149, 297. A short but very informative introduction is *Biblioteca Medicea*

Laurenziana 1974, esp. 3–10. See also Ângelis d'Ossat, Tesi, and Morandini 1986, 15–33 (A. Morandini).

2 See *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana* 1974, 37–47 (G. D. Angelis d'Ossat). The study of Michelangelo's architectural achievement in designing the Laurenziana has a long history, going back at least to Rossi 1739–55. Other contributions include Wittkower 1934 and Appolonj 1934; Ackerman 1964–66; Catalano 1992; and Barocchi Cittadella 2002; see now Silvia Cattiti's chapter in this volume.

3 See Baldi 2007.

4 See Biscioni 1752.

5 On Bandini, see Rosa 1963.

6 Bandini 1764–70 and 1774–77. To these Bandini added one volume of the *Catalogus codicum italicorum* (Florence, 1778), which also includes the codices of Santa Croce and the Gaddi collection, and in three more volumes the *Supplementum ad catalogum codicum graecorum, latinorum, italicorum* (Florence, 1791–93).

7 Bandini 1990, 321–419: "L'archivio storico della BML dal 1757 al 1802. Regesto delle filze."

8 Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (hereafter BML) Archivio Storico, *Album dei Visitatori* (hereafter AV). The opening of the visitor book in 1771 could certainly be connected with the greater accessibility of the holdings of the Laurenziana to the public, following the extensive changes regarding ecclesiastical property and control of the clergy in the context of the broader reform of church-state relations introduced in Tuscany in the 1760s under Duke Pietro Leopoldo of the House of Lorraine. The cultural goods of the chapter of San Lorenzo became public property, and this meant opening them up and making them visible and visitable. A record of the new status and greater accessibility to the library this involved was thus needed, and this need was fulfilled by the visitor book. On the broader background of the change see Venturi 1976.

9 See Belsey 1996, 133–136. Coffin 1974 is excellent in providing a complete survey of the range of writings recording the impressions of two nations' travelers on the Grand Tour.

10 Stoye 1989, 87–88, on Hobbes, who in 1636 visited Galileo in Florence. Shackleton 1961, 94–95, and Juppé 1999, 100–103.

11 Burnet 1686, 174.

12 The problem of the decline of Greek in Italy following the Counter-Reformation is noted by Momigliano 1950, reprinted 1955, 94, confirming the earlier judgment by Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1982, 29–34). See also Momigliano 1960, esp. 256–257, 264–271, and Gaston 2002, esp. 367.

13 Veryard 1701, 241.

14 See Spence 1975, 340.

15 *Ristretto* 1767, 74–77. This was the seventh impression of a work that had originally appeared in 1689.

16 BML AV, 1: fol. 4r.

17 Ibid., fols. 42v–43r.

18 Ibid., fol. 45v.

19 Ibid., fol. 49r.

20 Ibid., fols. 57v, 58r.

21 Ibid., fol. 60v.

22 Ibid., fol. 65v.

23 Ibid., fol. 162.

24 AV, 2: fol. 1. In contrast to volume one, volume two of the *Album dei Visitatori* has been left with its pages unnumbered. I have therefore judged it preferable to refer to it only by the date of the signatures I am discussing in the text. On Del Furia see Scarlino Rolih 1988.

25 AV, 1: fol. 4v.

26 Ibid., fol. 32.

27 Ibid., fol. 37.

28 Ibid., fol. 37v.

29 Ibid., fol. 55v.

30 Ibid., fol. 72v.

31 Ibid., fol. 93v. Richard Chandler was a distinguished antiquarian, made famous by the meticulous accounts of his travels in the classical heartlands undertaken at the expense of the Society of Dilettanti: *Travels in Asia Minor* (London, 1776) and *Travels in Greece* (London, 1776), both works reprinted and translated many times. In 1787–88 he was traveling in Italy to consult manuscripts of the works of Pindar. See Ingemelles 1997, 195. Obviously he went to the Laurenziana to study Plutei 32.52, 32.37, and 32.35.

32 AV, 1: fol. 101r.

33 Ibid., fol. 107.

34 Ibid., fol. 146.

35 Ibid., fol. 169v.

36 Ibid., fol. 177r. The prince had been to the library at least once before, as Bandini had noted on 2 August 1785. See Baldi 2010, 175.

37 AV, 1: fol. 177v.

38 See Domenici, Luciani, and Turchi 2003, 336–337, entry no. 97.

39 AV, 2: fol. [6v].

40 On Guilford's library see Bobou-Stamati 2008. The collection is now in the British Library.

41 Haskell 1976, 95.

42 Duppa 1828, 7–13. See also Duppa 1807, 217.

43 On the background of the visit see Turchi and Volpi 2000.

44 See Becker 1821, 1: iv. Cf. Bandini 1768, 2: coll. 622–623.

45 Savigny, professor of Roman law in the University of Berlin, was at the time close to the end of his monumental *Geschichte des römischen Rechts im Mittelalter*, which began appearing in 1815 at Heidelberg. His visit to the Laurenziana was part of his extensive year-long stay in Italy in connection with the completion of this imposing project. After his return to Berlin in October 1827 he worked on volumes five and six, which completed the project in 1831.

46 Ranke 1834. Leopold Ranke had undertaken extensive research in Venice in connection with this project and had discovered important new documentary material in the Venetian State Archive. See *ibid.*, 59–68. In Florence he consulted a manuscript of the Magliabecchiana collection. See *ibid.*, 136 n. 1.

47 See his own account in Tischendorf n.d., 18.

48 See Althaus 1907, 47–50. See also his letters from Florence during the same period in Hönig 1922, 222–226.

49 On his passion for Greek manuscripts, see Curzon 1983, *passim*.

50 On the Laurenziana's Armenian holdings, see Uluhogian 2010, 73–77, 78–137. On the editorial activity of the Armenian Mechitarists at San Lazzaro, see Abbiati 1984, 23–49.

51 Kopitar had been to the Vatican Library in connection with his work on his bilingual edition of the New Testament in Latin and Slavonic.

52 Palacky had just published the first volume of his *Geschichte von Böhmen* (Prague, 1836) and had undertaken a research trip to Italy in search of source material. In Florence he was disappointed. He visited the museums, churches, and monuments, but in the two most famous libraries at which he worked, he wrote to his wife, the holdings of *Bohemica* did not offer him anything. See Koralka 2007, 192–193.

- 53 See Deputazione Storia Patria di Toscana, Vieusseux correspondence, CL 1:365, 368, and 2:133, 333.
- 54 Cf. Darnton 1991, esp. 148–149.
- 55 Pasquin 1838, 2:194.
- 56 AV, 1: fol. 50r.
- 57 Ibid., fol. 77r.
- 58 Ibid., fol. 97v (Hieromonk Arsenios/Dorotheos Prois).
- 59 On Proios we still have to rely on the older but authoritative account by Amantos 1946, 206–216. He offers a record of his studies in a letter to Adamantios Korais dated 30 November 1804, in which he notes that before 1792, when he left for Paris, he was pursuing a course of philosophical study in Pisa and Florence. See Korais 1966, 2:211.
- 60 AV 1: fol. 104v (Dorotheos Prois from Chios/Deacon Agapios from Chios).
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 AV 1: fol. 114.
- 63 On Litinos and his engagement with the philosophy of John Locke, see Kitromilides 1994, esp. 226–227.
- 64 AV, 1: fol. 118v (Hadjikyriakos from Constantinople: 11 December 1790).
- 65 Ibid., fol. 122v.
- 66 Ibid., fol. 136v.
- 67 On the Greek community of Livorno, which later played a very important role in the politics of the Greek war of independence, see Panessa 1991. I am indebted to Mathieu Grenet, PhD, European University Institute, for information on the Greek community of Livorno. See Grenet 2010.
- 68 AV 1: fols. 157 and 164v.
- 69 Ibid., fol. 163v.
- 70 Ibid., fol. 165. See Panessa 1991, 59–60.
- 71 AV 1: fol. 166.
- 72 Ibid., fol. 167. He had been awarded a scholarship by the confraternity of Livorno in 1794 to study in Pisa.
- 73 Ibid., fol. 167v.
- 74 Ibid., fol. 177 (Marinos Kladou Athenian/One thousand eight hundred and two September 27/Monday/Ioannis Kladou Athenian 27 Sept.)
- 75 Ibid., fol. 180v (Andreas Mustoxydis Corfiot 18 August 1804).
- 76 AV 2: fol. [4r]. Extensive evidence on Mustoxydi's further involvement with Italian intellectual life is recorded in his correspondence with Emilio Tipaldo. See Mustoxydi and Tipaldo 2005. Mustoxydi also maintained extensive correspondence with G. P. Vieusseux. See Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Firenze, MSS Vieusseux 73, cc. 75–108 and 125, c. 56, and Gabinetto Vieusseux, Copialettere 2:663; 4:475; 7:404; 8:726, 927; 14:1705; 23:663.
- 77 AV 2: fol. [3v].
- 78 See Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Firenze, MSS Vieusseux, 77, cc. 144–145, and Gabinetto Vieusseux Copialettere 2:201, 248, 257, 327, 329, 656; 4:185; 5:182, 400, 401, 479, 490; 6:36, 37, 231, 232, 500, 509; 7:428, 574; 8:798; 9:517; 10:893, 1024, 1090; 13:915; 15:756, 945; 16:1087, 1554, 1571, 1774, 1781; 17:53, 166; 18:1070, 1083, 1145, 1162. A significant part of this extensive correspondence refers to the publication and sales of the novel *Alessio* by Panagiotis Pallis's sister Angelica Palli-Bartolomei, whose proceeds were donated to the Greek struggle for liberation.
- 79 AV 2: fol. [11v].
- 80 On Ignatius's life and many-sided activity, see Protopsaltis 1959–61.
- 81 On this aspect of his activity see Kitromilides 2011, 81–88.
- 82 AV 2: fol. [12r].
- 83 See Codrikas 1818, lxxix.
- 84 See Échinard 1973, 99–102, 175–176.
- 85 Panessa 1991, 69.
- 86 AV 2: fol. [24v].
- 87 Ibid., fol. [27v].
- 88 See Valvi 1833. On his political activism in the cause of the liberation of Greece, see Ceccuti 1997. See also Vlami 2000, 313–314.
- 89 See Kokkonis 1828.
- 90 See Argenti 1955, 2:217, no. 45.
- 91 See Kozakis-Typaldos 1839. See Argyropoulos 2003, 197–209.
- 92 Tsitselis 1904, 1:9–10.
- 93 Constantine Asopios had served as a teacher of the Greek community of Livorno in 1817–18. He was appreciated by Lord Guilford, who had met him perhaps during his visit to Italy, which had brought him to the Laurenziana in 1816, as we saw above. Guilford selected Asopios for a scholarship to Göttingen to study classics, and for this reason he left the school at Livorno in 1818. He continued his studies in Paris in 1822–23. His visit to the Laurenziana in 1823 formed part of a return journey from Paris to Corfu, where he was to assume the duties of professor of Greek literature at Guilford's newly founded Ionian Academy. See Betis 1991, 176–178.
- 94 The township is recorded under the toponym *Piana dei Greci* in the *Grande Encyclopédie* 26:838 and as late as 1935 in *Enciclopedia Italiana* 27:101.
- 95 Theseus 1811–12.
- 96 Ibid., 1:111.
- 97 Ibid., IX.
- 98 Ibid., X–XI.
- 99 The codex is described by Bandini, *Catalogus manuscriptorum graecorum*, 2: coll 121–122. Among the extensive references see, e.g., Allen 1895, 252 n. 1a and passim; Fryde 1983, 218; Rizzo 1984, esp. 225 n. 1, 234–238, plates 3–8; Ângelis d'Ossat, Tesi, and Morandini 1986, 196–197, plate CLIV; Eleuteri and Canart 1991, 184; Cortesi and Maltese 1992, 24, 224; Pontani 1992, 114–117; Cavallo 1994, 175, no. 54; Fryde 1996, 95; Buonocore 1996, 17.
- 100 Theseus 1811–12, VI.
- 101 On N. Theseus see Kitromilides 2002, 146–148.
- 102 See Argyropoulou and Kitromilides 2007, 59–75. The significance of the city in the history of Greek culture is noted by Toynbee 1923, 121–122.
- 103 Didot 1826, 385–387.
- 104 Theseus 1811–12, XI–XII.
- 105 Ibid., XI.
- 106 *Homeri Ilias* 1802.
- 107 D'Ansse de Villosion 1788.
- 108 Theseus 1811–12, XV.
- 109 Ibid., p. XVII. Cf. Bouvier 2000, 305–317.
- 110 Fontani 1804. The following year, Don Francisco Fontana (1806) collaborated with an Italian edition of the work. See also Carpinato 1988, 143 n. 16.
- 111 Theseus 1811–12, XXII.
- 112 Fifty known copies are listed in Iliou 1997, 343.
- 113 BNCF, Pal. E.1.6.4.
- 114 See, e.g., Allen 1931, 1: Prolegomenon, 248–272.
- 115 See Miller 1839, XIX n. 1.
- 116 Pontani 2005, 367–368 n. 844.

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