

**Paolo Galluzzi.** *Libertà di filosofare in naturalibus: I mondi paralleli di Cesi e Galileo.* (Storia dell'Accademia dei Lincei, Studi 4.) 599 pp., illus., apps., bibl., index. Rome: Scienze e Lettere, Editore Commerciale, 2014. €100 (cloth).

Paolo Galluzzi's most recent publication is a deep immersion into the first quarter of the seventeenth century, with a narrative that switches back and forth between Florence and Rome and between Federico Cesi, founder and soul of the Accademia dei Lincei, and Galileo Galilei, member of the same academy. The book begins with an outline of the research program of the world's oldest scientific academy, the Accademia dei Lincei, from its foundation in 1603 until Galileo's membership in 1611. Galluzzi, however, immediately does away with the historiographical image of the Accademia dei Lincei as having shaped its programs and visions after 1611 around Galileo's goals. Galluzzi shows clearly how the initial objectives of the Accademia, animated for instance by the works of Giovanbattista della Porta, Telesio, and Paracelsus, marked not only the main direction of the research of its founding members but also its program up until Cesi's death in 1630. In particular, the concepts of nature and the methods of investigation of the Accademia's founders were and remained irreconcilable with those of Galileo. Galluzzi's work has a strong biographical perspective that focuses on Cesi and Galileo and shows that the most relevant *raison d'être* for their common work was ethical: the desire to freely investigate *in naturalibus*.

Thanks to the book's constant switching of perspective, Galileo's aspirations are observed from the context of the court(s) of Rome, where Cesi was an able and recognized protagonist. The reconstruction of the events during Galileo's first three visits to Rome and of the role played by the Accademia dei Lincei at all levels during the dispute on the comets—which finally led to the publication of *Saggiatore*—are all original and detailed pieces that will certainly enter into future reconstructions of the entire Galileo Affair.

The vibrant pages that deal with Galileo's ethical motivations for fighting uncompromisingly to avoid the condemnation of Copernicus's work, despite Cesi's well-grounded invitations to prudence and patience, constitute one of the highlights of this book. From now on, Galluzzi's reconstruction of the role of the Accademia and works like the *Carteggio Linceo*, whose importance he emphasizes, will be essential instruments for both scholars of Galileo and for all early modernists.

Seen from Galileo's perspective, the scientific work of Federico Cesi is depicted as secondary. From time to time, even Cesi's role, for instance during Galileo's visits to Rome, seems comparable to that of an event manager. In the last chapters, however, Galluzzi is able to fully disclose the richness of Federico Cesi's original research program, the results he was able to disseminate, especially after 1625 and during his last years of life, as well as the fundamental contributions of other members of the Accademia such as Fabio Colonna. Particularly impressive is Galluzzi's reconstruction of Cesi's all-encompassing conception of nature and of the role the world of vegetables plays in it. From the beginning of mathematically oriented botanics to a view that assigned a soul to all plants, Galluzzi explores all aspects of and the possible and impossible relations between the fundamentals of Cesi's philosophy of nature and Galileo's ideas, especially in reference to the corpuscularism expressed in *Saggiatore*.

Galileo and Cesi's collaboration was not simply motivated by ethical reasons. Galileo's visions also exerted a direct and content-related influence on Cesi's research, although its general frame remained far removed from Galileo's. While Cesi worked "to reconcile truths of nature with the Holy Scriptures," Galileo claimed "a full autonomy of natural investigations from the statements of the Holy Scriptures" (p. 514). Although Galluzzi does not specifically address questions concerning the mechanisms and functioning of the academy or, more generally, the running of an institution like an academy in the frame of the scientific developments of the early seventeenth century, his work certainly represents an important contribution in this direction, too.

The Accademia dei Lincei rotated around the figure of Prince Cesi, who provided all of its funding, and therefore functioned similarly to a small early modern court. But the reasons for the existence of the

academy were clearly based on the need to protect natural philosophical investigations from the interference, if not intrusion, of other much more powerful institutions such as the church. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, this attitude implied avoiding debates involving issues dealt with by such powerful institutions. At the end of the century, however, this endeavor turned out to be of primary importance for the pursuit of “*libertà di filosofare in naturalibus*.”

Matteo Valleriani

**Douglas D. C. Chambers; David Galbraith** (Editors). *The Letterbooks of John Evelyn*. Two volumes. lxiii + 1,236 pp., illus., bibl., index. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. €195 (cloth).

Letterbooks in which individuals preserved copies of their letters to (and often from) others represent a fairly common seventeenth-century genre. Yet, among such compilations, that kept by the virtuoso John Evelyn is exceptional—as exceptional as the diary that he also compiled over many years and that has long been familiar. In this case, the work extended to two substantial folio volumes, including nearly a thousand letters dating from the time of Evelyn’s travels in Italy in the 1640s to 1698, not long before his death in 1706. Obviously a personal anthology like this is rather different from what might be edited as the “correspondence” of an individual—which would include all letters to or from him or her, gathered from all the repositories in which they survive—a major task that no one has yet carried out in Evelyn’s case. But in this instance the letterbook is such a self-conscious artifact that it is worth publishing in its own right rather than simply as a milestone toward such a complete edition, and it is precisely this that Douglas D. C. Chambers and David Galbraith have done in the two volumes under review.

The contents are indeed remarkable, illustrating almost every facet of Evelyn’s long and eventful life. There are thus many letters to his wife, father-in-law, and son; others deal with his work as a government official in the Restoration period, while one of the most striking dates from November 1688 and reflects on the Glorious Revolution and its implications. Others deal with religious issues, including some passionate diatribes addressed to converts to Roman Catholicism during the Interregnum. A significant number relate to Evelyn’s intellectual pursuits, with a particular feature being what the editors describe as “instructional essays” dealing at length with topics ranging from travel to biblical criticism and gardening. A number of letters are to the various ladies whom Evelyn befriended during his career, while in his later years his fellow diarist Samuel Pepys emerges as one of his leading correspondents. For readers of *Isis* the letters that will perhaps be of greatest interest are those illustrating the evolution of Evelyn’s virtuoso interests and the development of his role as a kind of cultural consultant to the English court and aristocracy. Also crucial are his letters to Robert Boyle, not least one of 1659 that advocates a kind of collegiate research institution that foreshadows the Royal Society; there are also some striking letters reflecting on the fortunes of the Royal Society when it came under attack in the 1670s.

The edition is in many ways exemplary. It is well produced and beautifully illustrated with both color and black-and-white plates. The letters are meticulously annotated, and issues concerning errors in numeration and dating, or the relationship between these texts and the letters actually sent (which often survive), are appropriately explored. The actual text of the letterbooks is preceded by a brilliant introduction, which not only deals with the making of the work and its relationship with the diary but also explores its implications for Evelyn’s self-perception and for his broader role.

One issue on which perceptive comments are made concerns the way in which the letterbooks evolved, and particularly the extent to which Evelyn returned to a fresh bout of work on them in the early 1680s, having evidently neglected them for some years before this. But their inception is by comparison dealt with more cursorily. It is true that matters have been obscured by the removal (presumably by Evelyn) of the opening pages of the first volume, but more could have been said about the origin of the