

Marcello Fantoni

## Italian Courts and European Culture

Between the fifteenth and the eighteenth century, princely courts dominated the Italian political scene. These courts were effervescent centers of cultural production. As such, they became a model for European monarchies who imported Italian courtly *forma del vivere* ('style of life') to legitimize their power and to define social status. This phenomenon included architecture and painting, theater and music, manners and aesthetics, and all the objects, behaviors and beliefs that contributed to homogenize European culture in the age of the Old Regime. It involved a hemorrhage of art and a continuous circulation of people, texts and symbols. The foundational material for this process was classicism and its purpose was political. This delineates a new geography and chronology of a truly European cultural history. It also provides the key traits for the European cultural identity.

### BIOGRAPHY

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