1.0 Introduction

Not a Drop to Drink\(^7\) makes water supply, and unsustainable increases in usage and salinity levels, the main headline for news in the daily press. A 1999 report to the Murray Darling Basin Commission estimated that water drawn from the Murray – Darling River system, from which the bulk of South Australia’s water supplies are drawn for agricultural and domestic consumption, will reach salinity levels that will render it unsafe for drinking by World Health Organisation standards within 20 years. The report continued with further statements to the effect that such levels of salinity would make it “increasingly difficult to manage irrigation at this level”. What was not stated was that, given these circumstances, the water supply to Adelaide for domestic use would be dramatically cut. The possibility for developing other sources of fresh water is open to question and changes in water use and consumption seem a likely outcome of the present predicted situation.

In Gardens of the Sun\(^8\) the issue of conservative water use for garden making is argued from a pragmatic and aesthetic approach. Water-wise gardening and landscape design have recently developed a genre of gardening termed ‘Mediterranean’ and gave rise to this book. ‘The Mediterranean’, as a gardening phenomenon, appears recent. Several books published overseas in the last 10 years have been instrumental in raising and developing community consciousness of design features, plants used and overall style. Widely circulated popular authors such as Noailles\(^9\), Latymer\(^10\), Menzies\(^11\), Parry\(^12\) and Gildermeister\(^13\) have raised the concept in Europe and North America that has been seized upon by journalists and designers as a garden fashion to be emulated in Australia.

\(^7\) The Advertiser, Adelaide, Friday, October 22, 1999 front page headline.
\(^8\) Trevor Nottle, Gardens of the Sun, Kangaroo Press, Sydney; Timber Press, Portland OR; Auckland, 1996.
\(^12\) Bob Parry, Landscape Plants for Western Regions, Land Design Publications, Claremont, California, 1992.
But, is the idea such a new one?

The Mediterranean influence, as an historic cultural phenomenon, has had an impact on the domestic and agricultural landscape, and on the relocated landscape of the mind. The suggestion that the Mediterranean as a phenomenon extends beyond the realms of geography and climate is a relatively recent idea that while explored in depth by academics is not a concept that has permeated discussion at the level of popular appreciation. A survey of house and garden style magazines\(^\text{14}\) shows that it is the superficial characteristics of the idea that have taken root; however short lived they may prove to be. Considerations of house paint colours, décor accessories, house trim, plant selection\(^\text{15}\) and other surface characteristics comprise the ‘grab-bag’ of ideas that when coordinated and linked by a stylist or designer somehow become transmuted into a ‘Mediterranean’ style. It is true that other separate features of lifestyle, particularly al fresco dining, café life and a ‘Mediterranean’ cuisine based mainly on tomatoes, char-grilled vegetables, olive oil, basil and pasta has also risen to prominence. Yet the term is accepted and used unquestioningly without any apparent concern to appreciate it’s broader overall application.

The focus here is on Mediterranean influences as a historic cultural phenomenon that has had an impact upon the domestic and agricultural landscape in South Australia, and on the mental landscape of the mind of its residents. This research examines the impact of this phenomenon and assesses the degree to which its component parts have taken hold.

The Mediterranean is a multi-faceted phenomenon, as the eminent French historian Ferdinand Braudel comprehensively explored in his monumental study of 16\(^{\text{th}}\) Century Spain:

*The Mediterranean is not to be defined in hydrographic terms as a sea, or even as a series of seas; nor in ecological terms as the area of sea and land that lies between the northernmost date palm and the northernmost*


\(^{15}\) For example, *Burke’s Backyard*, November 1999; *Artistic License*, by Sarah Guest, p. 8-14.
olive. It reaches across to the Americas for the silver that submerged its price structures; down the Red Sea and across Asia for the spices that dominated its trade; up to England, Germany, Holland, Russia for grain and wool and ships and men; down the West African coast or across the Sahara for slaves, gold and ivory ... Climate, landscape, diet, rhythms of trade, the operations of financiers and the hard life of the peasant and seaman, all the rich variety and colour of this most magnetic area of human history have their place in a brilliant mosaic.  

Braudel’s breadth of vision concerning the history of the Mediterranean, ranging from the age of Philip II to the world of Odysseus and forward almost to the present era, considers the Mediterranean as a key centre of human activity. The connectedness of Mediterranean ideas from issues such as climate, economy, politics, social structures down to the fine detail of landscape, lifestyle, agriculture, diet, are presented as a holistic entity that, at the time of Philip II, was predominant. This included the Mediterranean region mariners, explorers, traders, soldiers, diplomats who went out to the wider world, mastering it, and returning with bounty that established and maintained the Mediterranean as a major power base in the late 16th century. As Braudel explained, he chose the person and the time and the Mediterranean because he saw them at the centre of

... a powerful swing of the pendulum [that] carried it [Spain] towards its trans-Atlantic destiny ... I became interested in this hidden balance of forces, the physics of Spanish society ... I began to ask myself finally whether the Mediterranean did not possess, beyond the long-distance and irregular actions of Spain, a history and a destiny of its own, a powerful vitality, and whether this vitality did not in fact deserve something better than the role of a picturesque background.  

Since the 16th century the locus of power has shifted but the vitality remains, the Mediterranean is still a lode-stone, the very words connote a particular lifestyle, a culture, an architecture, a landscape style, a cuisine, a climate type,

a community of floras, that has moved beyond the physical confines of the geographical region - the Mediterranean - to various zones of at least four other parts of the world: California, Chile, South Africa, Australia.\textsuperscript{18}

Braudel acknowledged the interest aroused by the decline in power described by conventional ‘diplomatic history’ and wanted to know:

\[\text{\ldots what became of the Mediterranean \ldots when the world no longer resolved entirely around it, served it and responded to its rhythms.}^{19}\]

He decided to let that question go in order to retain the focus of his work. However, Braudel did ponder the attractions and temptations of questions regarding how the vitality and ‘exceptional human richness’ of the Mediterranean were maintained when its political power declined before passing on to his own research.

This view of history as a series of shifting planes – social history, diplomatic history and the history of humankind and their relationship with the environment – oscillating, peaking and troughing in a slow, wave-like cadence across the centuries, like the tide, was the question that Braudel raised yet turned from answering.

What did happen to ‘The Mediterranean’ when its power declined? When the surging tide and rising foam of other events on the political ocean subsided and ebbed. What happened to the culture, the lifestyle? The answer, broadly speaking is that it adapted and went on, for while the diplomatic power of Kings and Prelates, and their generals and priests may have waned, the day to day lives of all the ordinary folk went on: they ploughed, they planted, they harvested, they crushed grapes (\textit{Vitis} ssp) and made wine, they gathered olives (\textit{Olea europaea}) and pressed them for oil, they hunted, gathered wild foods (herbs and vegetables), cooked and ate, sang and danced, lived, loved and died according to the basic rhythm of the environment that swelled and lapsed

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{18} Peter Dallman, \textit{Plant Life in the World’s Mediterranean Climates}, University of California Press / California Native Plant Society, Berkeley, 1998; see extended sub-title on cover and contents.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{19} Braudel, \textit{The Mediterranean}, p. 19.}
season by season, year by year in a cycle – a ‘Mediterranean’ pattern of life. In the
tide of daily living things did not change that much. That pattern of living still
has currency today and finds expression in a much wider international context
as Mediterranean cooking, Mediterranean gardening, and Mediterranean décor.
However much altered, however much the authenticity has been de-based, or
redefined by the world of consumerism and fashion, the Mediterranean
influence is, at the end of the 20th century alive and prospering mightily.

Braudel concerned himself with ‘what happened to the Mediterranean’ as a
physical, social, political, and economic complex. The changes he pondered
were centred on Mediterranean Europe. But what of the changes brought about
by those places in the New World the Mediterranean influence had touched?
The places to which the Mediterranean had reached were changed forever by
the contact; changes in patterns of trade, in techniques of production, in
religion, social organisation, even in language where the contact had been a
long one as in South America. When the political tide turned and the
Mediterranean was no longer the centre of the world it continued to exert an
influence, not in the diplomatic sense, but in a myriad of small ways perpetuated
in the day to day lives of those the Mediterranean (as a figurative, collective
entity) had touched.

There were, also, later events in the 19th century, natural disasters, wars,
religious persecutions that created hordes of refugees and brought about
migration from the Mediterranean region; events of traditional diplomatic history
that forced themselves on the lives of the people and pushed them to seek
refuge in countries far from the warm, sunny shores of the Mediterranean Sea.
The exodus of Mediterranean peoples took the broadest aspects of the culture
out to the New World – to the Americas, to Australia, to South Africa and to New
Zealand. In some places the transplanted culture could only survive
superficially; geography, climate politics and culture conspiring to prevent
Mediterranean culture finding a firm foothold. But there were some places
where conditions allowed the culture to adapt, thrive and maintain strong bonds
with the Old World. Simple things like the cultivation of the grape and the olive
allowed the cuisine to continue, and to be added to, interpreted, innovated as
shown by a number of publications. The social cultural aspects of the relocated Mediterranean cuisine has been thoroughly explored, particularly in South Australia it seems, but cuisine depends upon ingredients and fresh ingredients at that. If the Mediterranean cuisine has been successfully transposed to South Australia can it be assumed that the requisite vegetables, grapes, olives, nuts, grains and herbs have been successfully acclimatised too?

To continue in the style of Braudel’s extended marine simile: There were too, strong undercurrents that came about from the time when the Mediterranean was the centre of everything. Even when the tide goes out it leaves things on the shore, things that may look like scurfy foam and flotsam and jetsam alongside the conventional view of history. But left also are things that have considerable significance when looked at from the perspective of social history and the relationship of humankind with the environment in which they reside. However interesting these questions may be, concerning what was left behind in the New World (specifically the Americas) when the Mediterranean powers lost their dominance of world events, they are but a side issue here and must be left for others to investigate, as they undoubtedly have.

Predrag Matvejevic, writing in Mediterranean: A Cultural Landscape, takes another interpretation on the Mediterranean as being a much greater phenomenon than the watery entity itself. Like Braudel he luxuriates in complex cultural details, giving his attention to the Adriatic region in the 20th century rather than 16th century Spain. In contrast to Braudel’s macrocosmic presentation, Matvejevic relates a series of highly personal observations in an almost lyrical style to convey his sense of the Mediterranean’s mutable cultural dimensions drawn in neither space nor time.

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22 Metvejevic, Mediterranean, p. 10.
While Braudel developed the Mediterranean as a global identity, Matvejevic provided an insight on the Euro-centric nature of that identity. Matvejevic presented aspects of the Mediterranean that derived from the southern and eastern ends of the place. His Mediterranean was global; more so since it encompassed cultural dimensions that are Arabic, Semitic, Slavic, Turkish and more.

There is … no way of drawing them: they are neither ethnic nor historic, state or national; they are like a chalk circle that is constantly traced and erased, that is winds and waves, that obligations and inspirations expand or reduce.\textsuperscript{23}

A further pattern of Mediterranean influence, of the successful biological and environmental Imperialism of things European, has been explored by Alfred Crosby in \textit{Ecological Imperialism}\textsuperscript{24}. Of particular relevance is his discussion of

\textsuperscript{23} Metvejevic, \textit{Mediterranean}, p. 10.
the paradox that

… the parts of the world that are most like Europe in terms of population and culture are far away from Europe.

In relation to the Mediterranean and its influence it can be extrapolated from his discussion that the ‘Neo-Europe’s’, as he termed the countries of Australia, New Zealand, parts of South America and parts of America, are more successful, in terms of agriculture, horticulture and production than the place (the Mediterranean) itself. Somehow the transplanted Mediterranean contained within the Neo-Europe’s have over-run the local flora and fauna because the competition has been too strong, too well adapted to the new climates and environments. They are, of course, very similar but none the less show variations from the original. Indigenous plants and animals, supposedly best adapted to their own places, have succumbed to a literal European / Mediterranean colonisation.
2.0 Methodology

In order to develop the fullest possible understanding of the real and cultural landscape in South Australia and to consider any relationship or semblance it may have with that of the Mediterranean it was desirable to employ a research model that would best accommodate that goal.

The methodology used by Fernand Braudel appealed as a model that would not only permit a wide ranging and dense level of inquiry but would actually require it. Given that any evidence to support the research was consider likely to be scattered, piecemeal and discontinuous an approach to the research that accommodated that situation was necessarily adopted in order to arrive at a body of information that could be discussed and evaluated. Hence Braudel’s model of research, based on taking soundings of a wide range of subjects that could impinge on a study of social history, was chosen as the jumping off point for this research.

By sampling a diverse range of archival, printed, painted and other evidentiary material, examining leads and developing a series of perspectives it should be possible to arrive at an insight about the degree to which Braudel’s *historie événementielle* and *longue durée* might be demonstrated in the development of Mediterranean associations in the South Australian context.

Further, it would enable an assessment to be made of the limitations that such an approach might have in the South Australian context and uncover refinements of his approach that have grown out of the work of other researchers in cultural and mental landscapes.

Finally the material gathered by this research would, in itself represents an accessible body of work and a point of departure for further investigation.

It is the influence of this relocated social, cultural and environmental phenomenon, ‘The Mediterranean’, that fascinates. Its background and how it found expression through gardening and landscape captures the imagination, engages the mind and compels us to ask how the Mediterranean influence came to South Australia; why it found a place to grow here, and if it was altered
by experiences here?

Just what influence did ‘The Mediterranean’ have here in South Australia?

And beyond that, and not attempted here, the bigger question of, how may it develop in the future?

To define the extent of this research, in compliance with Crosby’s dictum

\[
\text{Ask simple questions, because the answers to complicated questions probably will be too complicated to test, and even worse too fascinating to give up.}^{25}\]

This research begins with the first settlement of South Australia in 1836 and concludes with the Depression of 1938 enabling the documentation of Mediterranean influences from the earliest moments of European settlement until the great financial crash that virtually suspended significant landscape commissions until after World War 2. Particular reference will be made to South Australian’s architect Walter Hervey Bagot (1880-1963) and landscape designer Elsie Cornish (1870-1946) who were significant local players in declaring the Mediterranean nature of the South Australian climate, and who advocated for, and demonstrated through their designs their interpretation of how that sensibility might best find expression.

\[^{25}\text{Crosby, Ecological Imperialism.}\]
3.0 TRANSPLANTED MEDITERRANEAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

The transplantation of Mediterranean culture has happened almost imperceptibly, piece-meal, and with each component aspect separated from the other by the particular interests of the groups with which they are associated in the professions and in the fields of study and research. Multi-disciplinary approaches, still in comparative infancy, are not much in evidence within the period of this thesis. It is appropriate then to investigate the principle, separate strands for which the whole is made.

3.1 Architecture

The advantageous adaptability alluded to by Crosby could be construed across a wider range of subjects than biology and the environment. In broad terms might not the idea be tested at levels of art and architecture? It is not hard to trace, for instance, some of the design features of Mediterranean architecture: thick cool walls, arcades, loggias, shuttered windows, patio/terraces as outdoor work spaces and living areas, orientation for shade and sun protection, and reflective whitewash. Outward appearances may vary but the general idioms find expression from Algeria, through Spain, France and Italy to the Adriatic, Greece, the Levant and around to Egypt.

An exploration of the Mediterranean built environment, traced back to Roman times, could demonstrate linkages between the idealised lifestyle of the Roman villa urbana and villa rustica, the Renaissance concepts of the villa of Palladio\textsuperscript{26} and Cornaro\textsuperscript{27}, and the academic framework around the Italianate villas of mid-19\textsuperscript{th} century Europe, America and Australia. Tenuous and untried as these links may seem on the surface there appear to be threads of commonality ranging from shared architectural motifs to a generalised lifestyle ethos of the ‘gentleman’ farmer cultivating himself and his country estate\textsuperscript{28}. Attaining peace of mind and repose for contemplation in a country villa, while retaining a

\textsuperscript{26} Andrea di Pietra [known as Andrea Palladio (1508-1580)], Paduan Italian architect, \textit{Il quattro libri dell’architettura}, Venice, 1570.

\textsuperscript{27} Alvise Cornaro (c.1484-1566), Venetian patrician, writer, engineer, patron of the Arts.

\textsuperscript{28} Shareholder/investors in the South Australian Company received a land order from the company that entitled them to 1 town acre [0.40ha] and 80 acres [54.2ha] of country land, all at 1 £ per acre. The ‘country’ section allocated was later increased to 134 acres to help increase sales.
townhouse to keep in touch with the world, are ideals rooted in Renaissance thought. This approach to living almost certainly conveyed to the Western world a concept of lifestyle that originated around the shores of the Mediterranean in Roman times. From the grandeur of Villa Adrianna at Tivoli, outside Rome, to the rustic charms of the humblest *pagliaro*\(^29\) in the furthest reaches of the Pax Romana in southernmost Lusitania, Roman patricians sought to follow the precepts set down by Pliny the Younger\(^30\), and other Roman writers.

The idea has descended to us today via the Classical Revival in 18\(^\text{th}\) century Europe, and the resurgence of the ideal during the mid-19\(^\text{th}\) century, that spread from Europe across Anglo-European colonies in Australia and the Americas\(^31\). Current research\(^32\) has explored the links between the villa ideal and the development of Italianate architecture in Australia\(^33\) (and elsewhere) as a result of Royal patronage by HRH Prince Albert of Saxe Coburg Gotha, Prince Consort to HRH Queen Victoria that found expression in Royal villas such as Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.

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\(^{29}\) *Pagliaro*, Italian term referring to a 2 roomed peasant hovel; one room for farm animals and one room for the farmer and his family; typically found in southern Italy provided as accommodation for indentured rural labourers – *contadini*.


\(^{33}\) See Appendix 2
Marine villa in a mural at Herculaneum broadly following the concepts laid down by Pliny for making the most of the Mediterranean setting and climate. (photo. Vatican Museum, Rome)

The architecture was supported by landscape settings to match the Romantic ideal of a Classical Italian landscape along the lines suggested by influential landscape painters who took up the theme. Within these scenes, Arcadian temples and ruins abounded set in a picturesque manner among 'wild' groves of trees and along 'natural' reflecting waters. As the idea grew the landscapes became more stylised adopting in appearance, though not usually in substance, the architectural themes demonstrated in Italian Renaissance gardens. Steps, stairs, waterworks, terraces, urns, statues, balustrades, grottoes and other built features proliferated in showpiece Italianate gardens like 'Witley Court', Worcestershire, by William Nesfield (1793-1881), and 'Shrubland Park', Suffolk, by Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860). Illustrated in style pattern books by E. Adveno Brooke and others the images encouraged wealthy colonists in Australia to extemporise on the Italian theme. 34 A prime example in Adelaide is 'Holmwood' in Devonshire Avenue, Gilberton. In this setting it was found possible to recreate the ideal more perfectly than in Europe as the plants necessary, particularly evergreens such as Laurel or Bay (Laurus nobilis), Holm Oak (Quercus ilex), Carob (Ceratonia siliqua), Oleander (Nerium oleander), Laurestinus (Viburnum tinus), Olive (Olea europaea), and pignol, derive from

the Mediterranean region with a climate similar to our own.

Plants introduced to the Mediterranean from Asia and Asia Minor, and naturalised there as a result of Arabic trading activity in Roman times, such as the Lemon (\textit{Citrus limon}), Orange (\textit{Citrus sinensis}), grape (\textit{Vitis} ssp), Pomegranate (\textit{Punica} ssp), Peach (\textit{Prunus persica}), Fig (\textit{Ficus} ssp), Almond (\textit{Prunus dulcis}) and Walnut (\textit{Juglans regia}) also flourished here and were seen as decorative cropping plants well suited to this Mediterranean climate region. While architectural pattern books promoting Italianate building\textsuperscript{35} styles may have led the way here in Australia the visual features of the landscape were well understood also.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{shrubland_park.png}
\caption*{\textit{Shrubland Park}, designed in the High Italianate style by Sir Charles Barry (1851) as illustrated in \textit{The Gardens of England} by E.Adveno Brook (1857)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{35} John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843), \textit{Country Residences}, London, 1806, also Loudon, \textit{Encylopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture} (1836), and Loudon, \textit{The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion} (1838).
3.2 The Grand Tour

First hand experience with Mediterranean landscapes was common among educated, cultured middle and upper class people as a result of many having undertaken ‘Grand Tours’ of Europe as a finishing point to their upbringing. Generally such tours focussed on Rome and sites of Classical antiquity with attention being paid to sketching and painting the landscape and ruins, collecting archaeological specimens, visiting museums, inspecting great buildings and attending concerts, theatrical performances and observing the great cultural assemblies in aristocratic salons in Rome, Venice and Naples.

*Rome was the high point of the Grand Tour in Italy, de rigueur for so many artists and general travellers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even at the end of the eighteenth century the thrill of the encounter with the Eternal City had lost none of its force … Rome presented itself to the traveller as the only place in the world where past and present were fused into a single entity.*  

With guidance from widely read art books, such as Meason’s *The Landscape Architecture of Ancient Painters of Italy*[^37], tourists, budding landscape artists of watercolours and oils, could try to imitate the vision of Claude Lorrain[^38] and Nicolas Poussin[^39]. More telling, perhaps in terms of spreading the influence of the Mediterranean, was the sumptuous volume of lithographs, published by the Scottish artist David Roberts after his sketching and painting trip to Egypt and Palestine in 1838–39. His *Views of the Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia and Nubia* were wide ranging and topographically accurate.

Somewhat lesser art forms brought Mediterranean memories back to the masses in the form of trinkets, mementoes, souvenirs and gee-gaws. Among the studious and more seriously minded travellers

[^38]: Claude Lorrain, properly Claude Gelle, French landscape painter, (1600-1682).
[^39]: Nicholas Poussin, French landscape painter, (1594-1665).
… visitors snapped up terracotta and alabaster replicas of museum sculptures; Venetian glass vases and beads; mosaic and cameo brooches; copies and photographic reproductions of Old Masters; bronze models of the temples of Tivoli and Vesta; paperweights in the form of the Parthenon; and marble miniatures of the tomb of Scipio and the Trajan Column.  

Luigi Mayer, *Fragments at Ephesus* (1810). Europeans on the Grand Tour are captured by the artist viewing and sketching Greco-Roman ruins in Turkey.

While for the mere tourists there were

… antiquities from Central Italy, made by the best modern houses in that department of industry; bits of mummy from Egypt (and perhaps Birmingham); model gondolas from Venice; … Morsels of tessellated pavement from Herculaneum and Pompeii, like petrified minced veal; ashes out of tombs, and lava out of Vesuvius; Spanish fans, Spezzian straw hats, Moorish slippers; Tuscan hairpins, Carrara sculpture,

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Trastaverini scarves, Genoese velvets and filigree, Neapolitan coral, Roman cameos … Arab lanterns, rosaries blessed all round by the Pope himself … There were views, like and unlike, of a multitude of places, and there was one little picture devoted to a few of the regular sticky old saints, with sinews like whipcord, hair like Neptune’s, wrinkles like tattooing, and such coats of varnish that every holy personage served for a fly trap.\textsuperscript{41}

A plethora of 19\textsuperscript{th} century Mediterranean memorabilia and Victoriana are sufficient to stock the ‘antique’ shops of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century worldwide. Long forgotten and generally without provenance, all these and more serve as silent evidence of the pervasive influence of the Mediterranean in the lives of many 19\textsuperscript{th} century families – the same social stratum of families who sent sons, daughters, grandchildren and even the entire family to South Australia as colonists, administrators, military, entrepreneurs, legists, religious and settlers.

Tobias Smollett made direct references to gardens seen while on his Grand Tour giving us some insight as to why colonists may have found the prospect of garden making in South Australia daunting:

\textit{In a fine extensive garden or park, an Englishman expects to see a number of groves and glades, inter-mixed with an agreeable negligence, which seems to be the effect of nature and accident. He looks for shady walks encrusted with gravel; for open lawns covered with verdure as smooth as velvet, but much more lively and agreeable; for ponds, canals, basins, cascades, and running streams of water; for clumps of trees, woods, and wildernesses, cut into delightful alleys, perfumed with honeysuckle and sweetbriar, and resounding with the mingled melody of all the singing birds of heaven; he looks for plats of flowers in different parts to refresh the sense and please the fancy; for arbours, grottos, hermitages, temples and alcoves, to shelter him from the sun, and to afford him the means of contemplation and repose; and he expects to find the hedges, groves, and walks, and lawns kept with the utmost order and propriety. He who loves the beauties of simple nature, and the charms of

\textsuperscript{41} Charles Dickens, \textit{Little Dorrit} 1857
neatness, will seeks for them in vain in the groves of Italy.\textsuperscript{42}

\textit{Ceres} 19\textsuperscript{th} century terra cotta garden sculpture of the Roman Goddess of agriculture and harvests, now removed from Panmure, Sturt Valley Road, Stirling. (author’s photograph).

Smollett’s opinions of Italian landscapes and gardens were hardly flattering. It was a view that long coloured the view of English gardeners that their gardens were most superior alongside those of the Mediterranea. There were others also who gained their Mediterranean and Italian experiences directly by means of their participation in trade, especially the wine trade such as did Thomas Hardy (1830-1912), and by military action in the region as did Colonel William

\textsuperscript{42} Tobias Smollett, \textit{Travels Through France and Italy}, Letter 31, Nice, 5 March 1765.
Light (1786-1839)\textsuperscript{43} and Governor Hindmarsh. These influential early settlers would doubtless have recalled their impressions of the landscape among their memories when they saw the shores of South Australia. One can only wonder at the source of visual information that inspired Henry Watson:

\begin{quote}
We rode over a fine rich plain from the town to the foot of the hills. We ascended ‘the tiers’ with some difficulty the road being very steep. The views down the different ravines become very grand and reminded me of the scenery of Wales & Cumberland to which in this country is super-added the climate of Italy\textsuperscript{44}.
\end{quote}

It would have to be assumed that Watson was referring to the rolling grassed hills with comparatively few trees and big sky vistas that are typical of the sheep grazing country of the Welsh Marches and Cumberland. Seen in their winter green verdure, when exploration on horseback could be well supplied with surface water and forage for horses, the local scenery may well have induced such comfortable observations.

While Light’s appreciation of the landscape, from his previous experience and occupation, may well have informed his vision of the new city of Adelaide embracing the plains on which it was to stand, did not, in the end take hold of the plain as might have been expected.\textsuperscript{45} Interrogation by Diana Brand of his two plate books speculates that the visual evidence of his images was transposed to his vision for the new city as being at one with the surrounding landscape. This is a most attractive idea but after 150 years whatever unity there may have existed in Light’s mind has long since been obliterated by more crass concerns than those of Light the aesthete. The interests of developers and the consequent urban sprawl have significantly tarnished Light’s vision. The city has no distinct urban-trade rural-trade relationship with Port Adelaide, the coastal villages, the productive soils of the River Torrens and creek flood plains or hills and valleys beyond the plains. The intimacy of the nascent relationships suggested by Light’s visual references to the old cities of Southern

\textsuperscript{44} Henry Watson, passenger on the \textit{Katherine Stewart Forbes}, and settler, journal entry for 24 March, 1838.
\textsuperscript{45} Diana Brand, \textit{Replacing the Garden: the Transposition of Distant Landscapes in Adelaide}, p. 43.
Italy and Sicily were simply not sustainable within the economic outcomes expected of mid-19th century British colonialism.

3.3 Mediterranean Adventures, scandals and romances

One of the more far reaching influences of the Grand Tour culture was the arrival in Britain of the antiquities collected by some of the lordly antiquaries of the day. The arrival in England of the Elgin Marbles between 1803 and 1812 was both loudly trumpeted and equally loudly condemned. Removed from the Parthenon in Athens by Thomas Bruce (1766–1841), 7th Earl of Elgin, and British diplomat at Constantinople, the sculptures from Classical times are still the subject of controversy today. The Greek nation wants them returned.

Ostensibly with Turkish permission, Elgin removed the principal sculptural groups from the great temple and carried them off to England. Lord Byron, then living in Greece as a ‘Greek Patriot’ denounced Elgin’s action as dishonest and rapacious. The controversy of their removal and ownership grew so great that a parliamentary enquiry decided to purchase the marbles for the nation and deposit them in the British Museum. Awareness of such things Mediterranean thus permeated the social, political and cultural fabric of both Britain and Empire.

Aside from these various experiences of the Mediterranean there were other, more subtle, influences that raised awareness of the Mediterranean and the constituent parts of its entity. European wars and newspaper reports of them, especially the English campaigns against Napoleon, particularly in Spain, meant that Mediterranean place names and scenic descriptions were familiar to many. Likewise, the war between the English and the Russians over the Crimea and in Egypt and the Sudan meant that many military men were familiar with the Mediterranean terrain and climate. With wives and families safely ensconced at British naval-military bases on Malta and Cyprus, or at Gibraltar, there was a great deal of Mediterranean exposure in letters to family members at home in England, and in the English newspapers provided by correspondents based at the main strategic garrisons and provisioning ports.

The read-aloud books of poetry and prose that were used as evening
entertainment in the 18th and 19th century carried Mediterranean ideas and images into the drawing rooms of middle class England. The geography of the Romantic imagination was stretched beyond Gothic gloom to the sunny shores of Greece, Italy and Southern Spain. Perhaps the most influential in terms of the Mediterranean theme were George, Lord Byron’s epic poems *Childe Harold* (1811-17), *Don Juan* (1819-24) and *Beppo* (1818) that contain extensive descriptive details and references to his Grand Tour travels that ranged from Portugal and Spain across the Mediterranean to Albania, Macedonia, and Turkey. His dissolute lifestyle, as an adventurer, womaniser and active revolutionary (in Italy and Greece) scandalised and entranced English society so that a degree of Mediterranean consciousness must have seeped into the drawing room gossip of the furthest corners of the country. This Mediterranean osmosis was aided by the works of other well known literati, almost as infamous as Byron, such as Shelley and Coleridge. Their works served to introduce a wide range of subjects and themes based in Classical Greek and Roman myths with Mediterranean settings, even if at times enhanced by their own partisan interludes, dubious escapades and romantic dalliances.

### 3.4 Botanisers and suitable occupations for ladies of quality

Meanwhile, in more respectable society, equally strong interests in matters Mediterranean were developing as more proper pursuits for ladies and gentlemen in search of cultural enlightenment and moral diversions. The study of science, in particular botanising and botanical drawing was a fast rising fashion, especially for ladies and young women of quality. While countryside expeditions satisfied many, examples of foreign excursions were not unknown. In particular Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762) was one of the first and most striking solo lady travellers. Her book *Letters from the Levant During the Embassy to Constantinople* (1716 – 1718) details her travels in mufti as she followed after her diplomat husband to his posting to the Ottoman capital. Other ladies who wrote of their travels in the Mediterranean region were Flora Tristan (*Tour de France*), and Amelia Edwards (1831-1892) *Untrodden*.

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46 George Gordon Byron, 6th Baron, English poet (1788-1824).
47 Percy Bysshe Shelley, English Poet (1792-1822).
48 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, English poet (1772-1834).
Accompanying their husbands' on their travels to historical and Classical archaeological sites less forward women botanised, sketched, pressed wild flowers and returned home ready to study things further with the aid of educational books such as *The Naturalist's and Travellers Companion*51, *Conversations on Botany*52 or *Romance of Flowers*53. For those women with a stronger faith there were titles such as *Le Language des Fleurs*54 and the many English books which followed linking Christian symbolism with botanical specimens – quite a few from the eastern Mediterranean. Few emulated the redoubtable Mrs Robb, who collected and carried home in her toilette sponge, the *Euphorbia* species55 that bears her name while travelling solo and botanising at sites in Turkey and the Levant. But there were countless others who found a hobby for idle hours in botany and botanical drawing.

Dutiful daughters also travelled on the Grand Tour circuit, occasionally venturing further than the usual round. One such was Marianne North, who accompanied her father Frederick on a tour of Syria, Egypt and Palestine after he lost his seat as a Member of Parliament in the British Parliament in 1865. This was before she determined on a career as a wild flower painter; that was undertaken as the act of a dutiful spinster daughter who enjoyed sketching and water colour painting. She also enjoyed the exoticism of *Our Egyptian Journey*. In her book, *Some Further Recollections of a Happy Life*56, she gives a lively and detailed account of their wanderings and adventures between Beirut, Damascus, Alexandria, Cairo, Jericho, Tripoli, Bethlehem and encampments beyond. To her great regret, and her father's equal relief, they had to cancel their plans to camp amid the colossal ruins at Baalbek. None-the-less she managed to make hundreds of sketches and water colours that recorded her delight in the quality of the light and shadows, the novelty of the scenery and

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55 The species is: Mrs. Robb's bonnet, *Euphorbia amygdaloides var robbiae*, syn. *Euphorbia robbiae* Turrill
costumes and the mystery of the ruins and ancient towns and villages.

A more recent example of an artist undertaking the Grand Tour to sketch and develop fresh insights and experience opportunities not offered in more urbane societies was Lionel Lindsay, an Australian artist who travelled through Spain and Europe. His etchings, produced from his sketch books of the tour, achieved wide popularity in Australia following a series of exhibitions at the Macquarie Galleries in Sydney in 1927. It is self evident that such images had great appeal to those in Australia enthused by the Mediterranean culture.

NOTE: This image is included on page 43 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Lionel Lindsay, The Old Moorish Market, Granada (1927) (National Gallery of Victoria collection)
3.5 Bible Study, Sunday Schools and Mediterranean realism

In certain circles the descriptions and illustrations accompanying guidebooks for making The Grand Tour familiarised many with distant locales, buildings and plant life. There were also large format books and folios of coloured plates illustrating the sights one might see on a Grand Tour. The likes of *Sicilian Scenery*\(^{57}\) and *Views of Pompeii*\(^{58}\), (drawn on stone by J.D. Harding after drawings by William Light) come to mind as examples with telling connections.

to the theme of this research. High Art also took on a role in capturing true images of the Holy Land and the historical sites of Roman and Greek antiquity and conveying them via great art exhibitions and collections of the day to the religiously minded populace. The Pre-Raphaelites, particularly William Holman Hunt and Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, and the Orientalist school, went in search of truth in representation and determined to do away forever with the Italian Renaissance artistic conventions of background and costume and character that tied religious painting to Ravenna and the orthodoxy of Byzantine iconic art. Most famous of these images is Holman Hunt’s *The Scapegoat*\(^{59}\) with its authentic background of Palestinian desert scenery from around the Dead Sea.

Savannah grassland and eucalypt (*Eucalyptus ssp*) forest in winter, near Rhynie, Mid-North of South Australia. Big skies, broad horizons and green winter grass may have led explorers to make favourable comparisons with parts of the Welsh Marches and Cumberland. (author’s photograph)

It should be remembered that the ‘authentic’ religious images of Holman Hunt, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Everett Millais were particularly popular with members of the Dissenting churches and chapels – Methodist’s, primitive Methodist’s, Wesleyan’s, Baptists etc., who formed a significant proportion of the population. Reproductions of paintings such as *Behold, The Light of the World* and *The Lamb of God* were used on attendance certificates and text

stickers for Protestant Bible study classes and Sunday Schools.

The study of Biblical plants, those mentioned in the Bible, was also a popular pastime supported by a goodly, and Godly, selection of books and commentaries. One may only wonder, in the absence of any documented evidence, what impressions the dusty Mallee plains and settlements on Yorke Peninsula and Eyre Peninsula made on those well versed in the verbal landscapes of the Holy Land. Did any associations arise? Did the dry sandy soils and barren limestone land formations bring to mind the temptations of St Jerome in the rocky fastness, or for that matter the temptations of Jesus in the Wilderness? Did the similarities in local and Biblical landscapes strike any resonances, strike any chords, generate any insights? Perhaps the local equivalent in Christ’s crown of thorns (*Paliurus spinosa-christi*) was found in sprigs of the Kangaroo Thorn (*Acacia paradoxa*)? A token sample of these numerous titles should serve to illustrate the genre: *Scripture Natural History; The Trees and Plants Mentioned in the Bible – by-Paths of Bible Knowledge*,60 *Bible Natural History; or a Description of the Animals, Plants and Minerals mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures*61 and *The Plants of the Bible*62.

There is a further outgrowth of botany that would have brought the Mediterranean and its plants to the notice of many seeking the moral uplift of self improvement through studies in natural history, and that is the impact of the many fine illustrated magazines and tomes relating directly to botanical discoveries. Sibthorp’s magnificent *Flora Graeca*63 may have been too expensive for most to buy but *noblesse oblige* accorded ready entry by respectable folk to the libraries of the grandees where such books were *de rigueur*, and local mechanics (artisans) libraries would have afforded popular botanical works such as *The Botanical Magazine*.64 Each issue brought forth new information, with a coloured illustration drawn from nature, about plants newly introduced to general cultivation from around the world. Among them

61 Francis A. Ewing, *Bible Natural History; or a Description of the Animals, Plants and Minerals mentioned in the Sacred Scripture*, American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia, 1835.
were many from the Mediterranean that moved from being considered potted rarities for the cold-frames of specialist collectors to general use as half-hardy, frost tender plants in gardens.

Each plant carried with it, for gardener and artist alike, some Mediterranean attachments, some image of what the place was like, some sense of the benign climate, balmy breezes and warm sunshine, perhaps even some perception of the scents and smell of the distant shore.

![Image of a woman dressed in traditional attire](image)

John Stringer Sargent, *Almina, daughter of Asher Wertheimer* (1908), dressed fashionably *a la Turque* complete with jewelled turban and a dulcimer. (Tate London collection)
3.6 Mediterranean Fashion

Though scarcely more than ephemeral to this account, there is a pictorial record that demonstrates an awareness of the eastern Mediterranean as a source of ideas for fashionable dressing, particularly in relation to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, as these few illustrations show, but also to Greece and Naples. Lord Byron has been portrayed in an elaborate Greek costume by Sir Thomas Phillips (after 1835, National Portrait Gallery, London). The Orientalist painter, John Frederick Lewis (1805-76) frequently dressed in Eastern dress (i.e. in the style favoured in the courts of the Caliphs in Istanbul, Cairo and Damascus), while there was a widespread fashion for Neapolitan - Sicilian tasselled caps among men and women that was recorded by George Cruikshank in his elaborate and satirical cartoon The ‘Bloomers’ in Hyde Park - An Extraordinary Exhibition of 1852. Apart from headwear and gowns worn by women of fashion men adopted loose fitting bulging pantaloons similar in silhouette to the trousers worn by Greek and Turkish men, fezzes and quilted silken smoking jackets, and most importantly adopted taking snuff and smoking tobacco in a manner that aped the ‘Arabic’ coffee houses of Istanbul, Cairo, Alexandria, and Athens.

The enthusiasm for such eastern and southern Mediterranean exoticisme spread to the rooms of private homes too where smoking rooms decorated in a carefree décor mix drawn from Egyptian, Moroccan and Arabic references became very fashionable among the wealthy style setters of the High Victorian era. In hotels, clubs, on luxury liners, at resorts and spas ‘Turkish’ steam baths introduced yet more eastern Mediterranean references to the everyday lives of the upper and middle classes.

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66 Private collection, Adelaide.
Anthony van Dyck, *Elizabeth, or Teresia, Lady Shirley* (1622), suggests that fashion *a la Turque* had a long established tradition in Anglo-European society.

### 3.7 Music and the Mediterranean

The world of music, no less than the worlds of literature, science, politics and the visual arts, also presented images of the Mediterranean. *Opera buffa*, light opera or comic opera was one popular vehicle that carried Mediterranean themes. Reference to the works of Gioacchino (Antonio) Rossini, who conducted his works in England before King George IV in 1823, shows his successful repertoire included *L’Italiana in Algeri* (*The Italian Girl in Algiers, 1813*), *Il Turco in Italia* (*The Turk in Italy, 1814*), *Il Barbiere de Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville, 1816*) and *Le Siege de Corinthe* (*The Siege of Corinth, 1826*) – all with settings around the Mediterranean. At a somewhat grander level Giuseppe Verdi also carried the theme in many of his major works: *Nabucco* (*Nabucodonosor, 1842*), *I Lombardi alla prima crociata* (*The Lombards on the First Crusade, 1843*), *Les Vesperes siciliennes* (*The Sicilian Vespers, 1855*), and *Aida* (1871).

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67 Gioaccino (Antonio) Rossini, 1792 – 1868, Italian composer, especially comic operas.
68 Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi, 1813 – 1901, Italian composer, especially grand operas.
3.8 Travel and travel writers

As the 19th century drew on there appeared an increasing number of travelogues and novels that featured the Mediterranean either as the focus, or as the background. Baedeker’s numerous popular travel guides to countries of the region were supplemented by more personal traveller’s tales that built on well know earlier works, particularly Smollett’s *Travels Through France and Italy*\(^69\), *The Idler in Italy*\(^70\) and *Letters from Cannes and Nice*\(^71\) are typical examples from the period. Of the romantic novels one example should serve to illustrate the many that were published; *Doctor Antonio*\(^72\), a melodramatic tale of tragic love between a Sicilian political exile and an English lady traveller, set in Bordighera on the Italian Riviera. At least the descriptions of the Italian countryside were a relief from the heart-breaking rendition of the plot and action.

With almost daily reference to aspects of the Mediterranean in their existence through the print media and The Arts it is likely that consciousness of it grew whether through the aesthetics of architecture, or through plays on feminine emotions.

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\(^70\) Lady Blessington, *The Idler in Italy*, London, 1839.
\(^72\) Giovanni Ruffini, *Doctor Antonio*, Edinburgh, 1855.
Seppelt family mausoleum, Seppeltsfield, Barossa Valley, South Australia. The severe Classical Greek Doric building stands like an ancient temple among a palm grove on the crest of a hill with a strong reference to the Mediterranean and its influence on the South Australian landscape. (author’s photograph)

3.9 The Mediterranean as an Idea

Braudel’s view of history as wave-like is a useful point of reference here as an aid to understanding of the nature of Mediterranean influences as it has been experienced in South Australia. Extending his simile the waves have perhaps been less influential than the thin lines of foam left in their wake.

While individual and authoritarian enthusiasms for things Mediterranean waxed and waned over that century the threads of the idea remained and appear now to be drawing together in a developing consciousness woven from past associations and developing events that seem almost inescapable.

Conventional methods of exploring and considering the idea of Mediterranean landscape influences would necessarily confine thinking to simple disciplinarian parameters, to patterns of thinking about landscape that would not be helpful to developing an understanding of the depth and richness of Mediterranean-ness.

Separating the landscape into categories, setting convenient boundaries are too limiting. Discussions about landscape as Nature, landscape as habitat, landscape as system, landscape as wealth, landscape as aesthetic, landscape
as ideology or as an aspect of any other categorical discipline denies the complexity of any landscape.

It is too fascinating and important to be left fragmented and obscured in the jargon of specialists. It deserves the broad attention that only ordinary speech allows.\(^73\)

The complexity of the Mediterranean as an entity is made explicit by Braudel and his method has been keenly taken up by many others. Of those specific to the Mediterranean these are but a recent few: *The English Garden Abroad*\(^74\), *The Mediterranean Passion*\(^75\), and more pertinent here *Microcosms*\(^76\) and *Mediterranean*\(^77\).

Simon Schama adds the weight of his book *Landscape & Memory*\(^78\) to the idea that a deep rich study is the method best suited to dealing with complexities such as landscape.

*For although we are accustomed to separate nature and perception into two realms they are, in fact, indivisible. Before it can ever be repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is as much built up from strata of memory as it is from layers of rock.*

Schama does not directly speak much about matters Mediterranean, but for a few pages spent rambling through Pliny’s villas at Laurentium and in Tuscany in order to establish direct links between ancient Roman philosophical and lifestyle ideals and the Arcadian visions of 17\(^{th}\) century landscape painters and 18\(^{th}\) century landscapers; a theme taken up more thoroughly by Pierre de la Ruffini du Prey\(^79\)

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\(^{73}\) D.W. Meinig, *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1979, p. 34.


Matvejevic’s\textsuperscript{80} conception of the Mediterranean as a cultural landscape of ideas also comes into play if we are to understand the complexities played out in the cross currents of experience and threads of memory that have been formative components of our perception. As much as anything:

\textit{The Mediterranean will not abide a scale incommensurate with itself.}\textsuperscript{81}

Measurement of its influence, on landscape here and now, must allow a great degree of scope over which diverse currents may flow for a beginning to be made on understanding the timeless, expansive entity by which we endeavour to describe and attach ourselves to a historiography that increasingly makes meaning for our lives in this place.

A challenge is posed by Matvejevic,

\ldots can anyone who has never smelled the hold of a ship, or unwashed barrels in a wine cellar, or rancid olive oil, or tar in a shipyard, or raw fish gone bad in a port speak with authority about the Mediterranean? Or write of it? None of these questions comes off the top of my head, and hard as they are to categorise, the people who asked them provided a certain classification of their own in their figures of speech and finger, face and elbow gestures – none of which appears in any Mediterranean glossary.\textsuperscript{82}

The challenge neatly encapsulates the question posed in this research: how to describe and assess the situation in South Australia in terms of, or against, a Mediterranean glossary that is complex and richly diverse.

Can a person who has savoured grilled sardines in the Star of Greece café overlooking the Gulf St Vincent at Port Willunga, or has inhaled the garlicky atmosphere of Vari’s Alimentaria Italiana on The Parade at Norwood, or dunked McLaren Vale Extra Virgin Olive Oil with ‘Turkish’ Pide-bread wood-oven baked in Uraidla, claim a bond with Matvejevic’s Mediterranean? Is there a valency

\textsuperscript{80} Predrag Matvejevic, \textit{Mediterranean – A Cultural Landscape}, University of California, Berkeley, 1999.
\textsuperscript{81} Matvejevic, \textit{Mediterranean}.
\textsuperscript{82} Matvejevic, \textit{Mediterranean}.
between a cone of deep fried artichoke hearts eaten on the pier at Santa Cruz and a bowl of *risotto con corciofi* downed in Sermoneta? Do the fingers freeze equally picking wild *asparagi* on the banks of the irrigation ditches around Renmark in mid-winter as they do plucking *bruscandoli* along the laneways of the Veneto? Does *horta* eaten on a sidewalk in Monastriaki have the same astringent refreshing qualities when cooked and served in a Thebarton backyard? More pertinent perhaps than these questions of Mediterranean cuisine are those that relate to small scale operations: does the *amorone* wine making process produce wines comparable between Montepulchiano and Angle Vale; do the *chevres* of Woodside have the same authenticity as those made in Grignan, do the olive oils pressed on esparto grass mats in Norwood rival those made likewise in Torre de Ariant? Simple questions on the surface and yet so complex underneath; so may possible variants, so many possible reactions, so many possible answers. Considering the richness, complexity and diversity of such experiences, how can it be comprehended in familiar terms – Mediterranean terms?

The foregoing extended scene setting could well be considered redundant except for the fact that while many of the experiences, artefacts and products are commonplace, our present way of living rarely allows time for connectivity to be established. Contemplation, reflection and connection are not generally part of everyday interaction and transaction. Woodside goat’s milk cheese may be consumed with gusto and appreciation as a great South Australian food but who takes the time to make the connection with *chevre*, with Provence, Grignan and France, let alone the ancient process of covering soft cheeses with wood ash? The questions just do not get asked. The appreciation just does not go that deep. There just is not enough time for such drawn out refinements in today’s busy lives.

More significantly questions are not asked and connections not made in areas such as architecture, literature, the Arts, health, medicine, psychology and sociology that influence the ways we live and think about ourselves in South Australia and its environment.
Taking time to explore such things is one of the few luxuries permitted in studies by research; indulgence indeed, and one to be savoured slowly and at length across a wide feasting board.

**NOTE:** These images are included on page 56 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

*Villa Kérylo, Beaullieu-sur-Mer on the French Riviera, an extreme historicist interpretation of Mediterranean architecture based on the Greek tradition; an idea that few could follow despite the luxury and sensibility. (photos. Villa Kérylos website)*