

Spaces, Objects and Identities in Early Modern Italian Medicine



Edited by
Sandra Cavallo and David Gentilcore



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Introduction

Spaces, objects and identities in early modern Italian medicine

SANDRA CAVALLO AND DAVID GENTILCORE

This collection, by an international team of scholars, presents some exciting examples of research currently being undertaken on early modern Italy with the aim of questioning and drawing back the conventional boundaries of medical history. It brings together historians of medicine and scholars of different backgrounds who are re-visiting the field from new perspectives and with the support of new questions and unexplored sources.¹ By examining crucial areas of intersection between the territory of medicine and that of law, politics, religion, art and material culture, their work highlights the connections between these apparently separate fields and challenges our understanding of what we regard as medical activities, medical identities, spaces and objects.

We hope that historians of medicine will be attracted by the novelty of these approaches, and not just those who study Italy. Chapters in this volume address the study of medical careers, medical identities, and the spaces where medical activities were performed, in new ways, using a range of methodologies and approaches, and over the whole span of the early modern period. But the re-creation of these under-researched urban spaces, of their physical and material environments, and of the range of social exchanges that took place around them, will also appeal to historians of the city and, more generally, to social and cultural historians, increasingly intrigued by the possible usages of the spatial and material dimensions in historical inquiry. Equally innovative is the way in which the chapters address issues of gender: from the perspective of the visual and tactile representations of the female

¹ The essays in this collection are a selection of the papers given at a one-day conference on early modern Italian medicine, held at the Wellcome Centre for the History of Medicine, UCL, in June 2004. We should like to take this opportunity to thank Hal Cook, director of the Centre, for both the idea and the opportunity, Sally Bragg for doing so much of the organizational work, John Henderson for chairing one of the sessions, Peter Burke for acting as a respondent to the conference, and all those who gave papers. We are also grateful to the anonymous reader for *Renaissance Studies* who assisted us, and the authors, in the process of turning conference papers into articles.

body, of everyday perceptions of the pregnant body; from the perspective of female authorship and of female role in medical consumerism. The collection will therefore be relevant also to historians of gender and of the body.

Medical historians have often paid disproportionate attention to the canonical settings where medicine was practised – hospitals, universities and anatomical theatres – to the detriment of other spaces. While not ignoring these, the articles in this collection seek to redress the balance, shedding light on the multiplicity of contexts in which medical expertise was exercised: the court and the aristocratic households, the convents, the academies, the tribunals, the domestic environment. Even an apparently obvious site for the practice of medicine, the apothecary's shop, has not received enough attention from historians. We may now know a fair amount about Renaissance and early modern pharmacy; but we know far less about pharmacists, and less still about what went on in their shops, in addition to the preparation of drugs. De Vivo explores the roles these shop spaces could play in a city like Venice, by no means limited to the medicinal or the economic. He demonstrates the political and social functions of pharmacies; places where people, prevalently males, socialized, gambled, gathered political information and exchanged views about politics and religion. The apothecary's shop was also a place of social mingling and inter-class encounter, which allowed young professionals (not just physicians and surgeons but lawyers, for example) to meet potential clients. Workplaces, like domestic spaces, were multifunctional and such diversity was not just the outcome of necessity but, as De Vivo suggests, strategic to increasing their commercial allure.² This is why some care was taken in furnishing such places in pleasant and appealing ways. The confectioner discussed in Cohen's contribution likewise went to great lengths to decorate his shop, complete with wall hangings. The study of the workplace interior is an important new avenue of research, but its material culture should not just be regarded as functional to the preparation and storage of the products on sale.³ The furnishings and fittings of Venetian pharmacies reveal the strategies of self-presentation and self-promotion pursued by the apothecary and the aim to create a hospitable and interesting environment where exotic objects, for example, were displayed to stimulate the curiosity of clients and advertise the intellectual credentials of the apothecary.

The focus on canonical medicine has, in turn, limited our appreciation of the variety of actors engaged, in professional and non-professional forms, in medical activities. This extended scope of observation highlights, in particular, the medical role played by a range of female figures. Convents, which often functioned, as shown by Pomata, as centres of physical and religious

² On the home as place for work and business in Renaissance Italy, F. Franceschi 'Business activities' in M. Ajmar-Wollheim and F. Dennis (eds.), *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London, 2006), 166–71; S. Cavallo, 'The artisan's casa', in *ibid.*, 70–1, 74.

³ Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy, 1400–1600* (New Haven, 2005), Chapter Five.

healing, were also often endowed with pharmacies where nuns produced and sold drugs.⁴ In those convents, like the Corpus Domini in Bologna, which hosted the un-decayed body of a saint, the nuns also supplied the community with healing objects related to the saint's body: her cowl, the washcloth, the carpet kept under her feet. Law courts are another space where women performed important medical roles: in canonization trials secular gentlewomen were entrusted with the task to inspect those parts of the female saint's body which, for reasons of decency, male doctors could not see and then report to the court; midwives and lay women, as shown by Cohen, acted regularly as expert witnesses in legal proceedings concerning abortions, miscarriages and infanticides.

Investigating a case of miscarriage, Cohen uncovers precious evidence to illustrate the extent to which medical care was entrusted to lay women in households of middling rank: for weeks it was female neighbours and a wet-nurse who took care of the patient, only when the miscarriage had taken place a midwife was summoned, with the specific task of removing the dead foetus; a male practitioner was called in only when the conditions of the patient had become life-threatening. Hence, women without a social identity as 'healers' turn out to be important 'medical agents':⁵ by contrast, not only the role of the male practitioner appears to be very limited but the territory of the female professional, the midwife, turns out to be restricted to specific, specialised functions. As well as throwing new light on the relationship between household care and professional care in relation to a female patient of modest social background, this case is therefore relevant to the debated issue of female competence in questions of reproductive knowledge.⁶ Moreover, Cohen's detailed investigation of one specific case provides interesting evidence to document the long-denied involvement of husbands, and, more generally, of male acquaintances (the shop-boy, the neighbour, the fellow countryman) in women's pregnancies, another area which is attracting increasing scholarly attention.⁷

The role of women appears to have been crucial also in the running of the apothecary's shop and of similar health-related establishments. The high compensation demanded by the confectioner Rossi for the loss of his wife's managerial and productive abilities demonstrates the appreciation in which

⁴ See for example G. Pomata, 'Practicing Between Earth and Heaven: Women Healers in Early Modern Bologna', in *Dynamis*, 19 (1999), 119–44.

⁵ The expression 'medical agents' has been recently used by Monica Green to refer to those who were not formal medical practitioners but 'acted as agents of health' in contexts in which 'formal medical titles were not used'. M. Green 'Bodies, gender, health, disease: recent work on medieval women's medicine', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 4 (2007), 12–17.

⁶ S. Broomhall, *Women's Medical Work in Early Modern France* (Manchester, 2004), Chapter 8, and Green, 'Bodies, gender, health, disease', 15–19. For a full discussion of 'women healers beyond midwives' see Mary Fissell, 'Women, Health and Healing in Early Modern Europe: An Introduction', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1 (2008) and articles therein.

⁷ See for example U. Rublack 'Pregnancy, childbirth and the female body in early modern Germany', *Past and Present*, 150 (1996), 84–110.

a woman's contribution to the shop was kept, at least in the event of a legal action. In the domestic setting, women fulfilled roles that were economically, socially and even scientifically significant. In her home Morandi became a skilled dissector, thus acquiring the anatomical knowledge which she will then employ in the production of medical related wax models, similarly carried out in her house. These cases invalid the persistent tendency to associate women, and Italian women in particular, with purely domestic tasks and the assumption of a female absence from roles of public significance. More broadly, these examples challenge the identification of the domestic with the private and the non-public already questioned by recent work on the rise of private book collections and museums such as the cabinet of curiosities.⁸ The home is charged with wider, outreaching functions in this period:⁹ the displacement of dissections from the impersonal space of the anatomy theatre to the more intimate setting of the private lesson (Dacome) is another example of this use of the domestic environment for scientific purposes.

The permeability of living space is confirmed by Cohen's analysis of the Roman confectioner's premises. They display the overlap between domestic and work space which was typical of the artisan's dwelling: products were stored in the living space, even underneath the beds, and shop employees had free access to this area where productive processes also take place. We should be cautious, however, to conclude that the notion of privacy and private domestic space was entirely insignificant among these groups. The inspection conducted by guild officers in the upstairs apartment of the family was perceived and represented by the victims as an intrusion and a violation of the head of household's prerogative to decide who should and who should not be allowed within the premises. It was, in other words, an affront to his sovereignty and honour, an event that was so upsetting to bear fatal consequences. Concepts of privacy may have been different from our own, but were not unknown in the early seventeenth century, in spite of the enduring narrative that depicts the early modern period as the age in which a notion of private life progressively emerged.¹⁰

If we extend our discussion of 'space' to include 'place', it is striking how the studies in this collection stress the importance of the local cultural context in differentiating the opportunities and choices of medical practitioners active in different Italian states and cities. They invite us to refrain from generalizing and seeing specific cases as emblematic of an 'Italian' way of

⁸ Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, (eds.), *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 1985); P. Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, 1994).

⁹ For a valuable synthesis of the studies A. Cooper, 'Homes and households', in *The Cambridge History of Science, Volume 3: Early Modern Science*, edited by K. Park and L. Daston (Cambridge 2006), 224–37.

¹⁰ For a classic example of this narrative, P. Ariès, *A History of Private Life*, Vol. III *Passions of the Renaissance* (Harvard, 1989), Introduction. On thresholds between private and public space, E. Cohen and T. Cohen, 'Open and shut: the social meaning of the Renaissance Italian house', *Studies in the Decorative Arts*, IX (2001–2), 61–84.

being a physician or an apothecary. For example, although clinical teaching and research have often been seen as the hallmarks of Italian Renaissance medicine, De Renzi demonstrates that anatomical dissections for research purposes were not particularly appreciated in the courtly environment of early seventeenth-century Rome. Medical identities were strongly tied to the geographical setting and these impelled practitioners to forge their careers in specific ways. For example, the role of catalysts of political gossip and discussion adopted by pharmacists and pharmacies in Venice may have been the outcome of a specific political culture, favoured by the relatively wide participation in policy-making that characterized the Venetian republic.

This strong sense of place combined, however, with a high level of geographical mobility. It was not just the medical ‘charlatans’ who moved from place to place.¹¹ Migration emerges in fact as a typical experience of all medical occupations in the Italian states. Practitioners moved frequently, both within Italy and Europe, or were even employed for periods in the Mediterranean colonies, spurred not just by economic difficulties, war and confessional division but by ambition and intellectual aspirations.¹² Although repositories of specific scientific cultures, Italian cities display a considerable ability to absorb foreign practitioners: the success in Rome of the Ligurian confectioner studied by Cohen, who even holds civic offices in the hosting city, the two physicians examined by De Renzi (one Bavarian and one Sienese), and De Vivo’s information-gathering apothecary Cerutti (a native of Parma) are a case in point. These findings beg the question of how influential origins were. Foreignness can even be a boon in a practitioner’s self-promotion, for it favours the import of secret recipes (such as that for the *pan di Genova* and for the *confetti reali*), and contact with debates and scientific developments abroad. However, a foreign nationality may become a source of discrimination, as the biography of the German-born and Catholic physician Faber suggests, especially when one’s origins are in a Reformed country. On the surface, the Bologna of Dacome and Pomata comes across as the more ‘provincial’, where the key players are all Bolognese. But scratch the surface and it becomes clear that many of them have had life experiences elsewhere.

The factors determining the outcome of a career were therefore diverse. Articles in this collection reveal in particular the important links that existed between a medical practitioner’s professional and non-professional undertakings. The two Roman physicians studied by De Renzi, for example, were also art dealers and political agents, and these were not simply additional or later activities, as the interpretive framework of ‘occupational diversity’ would

¹¹ D. Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism in Early Modern Italy* (Oxford, 2006), especially Chapter 8.

¹² On the mobility of community doctors (*medici condotti*) employed by the towns of the Venetian mainland, see the examples in D. Bartolini, *Medici e comunità. Esempi dalla terraferma Veneta dei secoli XVI e XVII*, *Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie, Miscellanea di Studi e memorie XXXVII*, (Venice, 2006), especially Chapter 4. On the mobility of barber-surgeons in relation to their life-cycle, S. Cavallo, *Artisans of the body in early modern Italy. Identities, Families, Masculinities* (Manchester, 2007), Chapters 6 and 10.

suggest.¹³ The composite identity of medical practitioners echoes the diversity of functions of the spaces in which they operated. By acting in these other arenas, Roman physicians, like the Venetian apothecaries examined by De Vivo, also extended their pool of clients and gained powerful patrons. Historians of medical occupations have stressed the fact that medicine was rarely a full time activity in pre-modern times and was not the only source of earning, yet non-medical activities were far more integral to the building of a successful medical practice than it has been recognized.

There has been a marked tendency in studies of medicine and medical men in Italy to focus on the sixteenth century. This collection concentrates instead on the important novelties of the seventeenth century, and then tracing some of the effects of these new developments into the following century. It examines how the identity of a variety of medical agents – men and women, learned practitioners as well as artisans of medicine – was transformed in a period in which the boundaries between medicine and religion, public and private, male and female domains were shifting, new patterns of consumption were developing and specific arenas were emerging which favoured the formation of a political culture and of public opinions. Both De Renzi and Pomata identify the seventeenth century as a period of expansion of the physician's role. The physician's activities and intellectual scope were no longer exclusively defined by the range of interests pertaining to humanist scientific culture, but came to include art competence, on the one hand, and anatomical research on the other, medico-legal functions, and the authority to discern what was natural, preternatural and supernatural. As shown by the increased responsibilities attributed to physicians in canonization processes, in the last decades of the seventeenth century doctors were entrusted with the faculty to provide a scientific explanation for sanctity and hence to give a rational basis to religious faith. The strict procedures introduced by ecclesiastical authorities to ascertain sanctity signal a more general process of contraction of the domain of what was deemed supernatural. This also affected the material culture of medicine. We see it in the desacralization of waxworks, which, in the eighteenth century, were increasingly seen as a reflection of the knowledge of the human body acquired through anatomical observation rather than as result of divine inspiration.

Pomata and Dacome, however, also point to the limits of the transformations taking place in this period. The process of secularization of faith promoted by religious authorities progressed very slowly. Despite the lack of official recognition, the incorrupt nature of Caterina Vigri's body continued to be the object, not just of popular devotion, but of a civic cult in early eighteenth-century Bologna. And, later in the century, the renown of Anna Morandi as dissector and anatomical wax-modeller co-existed with the fame of nun

¹³ We owe this expression to Margaret Pelling, who first formulated it in relation to barber surgeons. See her 'Occupational diversity: barbersurgeons and the trades of Norwich, 1550–1640', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 56 (1982), 484–511.

Laura Chiarini, whose prodigious production of devotional waxes was universally regarded as the sign of her sanctity. Another area of caution concerns the legitimization that, on the surface, women's access to theoretical and practical scientific knowledge received in the eighteenth century: only within the reassuring boundaries of the domestic environment, and under male supervision, can a figure like Morandi develop her skills as an anatomist and wax-modeller. Only in widowhood would she be granted permission to perform these activities more publicly and independently, legitimized, as tradition dictates, by the aim of pursuing the legacy of her deceased husband. Moreover, her achievements as a modeller were justified by reference to the time-honoured belief in the impact of maternal imagination on the unborn foetus (while her merits as a scientist were systematically played down): women's scientific and artistic creativity continued to be conceptualized as an extension of their generative powers in the age of Enlightenment.

The articles in this collection therefore confirm the importance of paying attention to the material culture of medicine, to the spaces in which medicine is performed, and to the intersection of medical and non-medical activities. These perspectives add important dimensions, not only to our understanding of early modern medicine and medical practitioners, but to current debates regarding definitions of private and public and the existence of devoted male and female social, spatial and bodily territories.

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Miscarriages of apothecary justice: un-separate spaces of work and family in early modern Rome

ELIZABETH S. COHEN

In December 1608, as Rome prepared to celebrate Christmas, rumour came to the ears of the *Conservatori*, communal overseers of trades and commerce, that 'false' candy was for sale.¹ Charged with supervising the Roman guilds, these administrators prodded the responsible corporation of apothecaries, which set out to banish the offending sweets with a systematic inspection of the shops under its jurisdiction. When these visitors proved his wares illicit, one specialist confectioner, Guglielmo Rossi, became incensed. Storming off to seek protection from Cardinal Scipione Borghese, the papal nephew, Rossi left his agitated and six-months pregnant wife, Ginevra, to cope with the inspectors and the disruption of their shop and home. That evening Ginevra sickened; a week after she miscarried and several days later died of fever. The irate candy-maker brought a criminal lawsuit against the guildsmen for causing him grievous loss, both professional and familial. The records of Guglielmo Rossi's lawsuit offer an intimate view of the tangled themes of work, health, gender, and the law.²

While historians have sometimes analyzed groups of Italian trial records, the rich specificity of these documents also allows fruitful use as single case studies.³ No one story, any more than an exemplary anecdote, will represent in all respects a class of historical phenomena. Nevertheless, one amply documented tale, carefully read with attention to complexity and nuance, can give texture to past transactions and experiences that we otherwise see

¹ Scholars of diverse expertise have generously supplied information and suggestions to the benefit of this paper. My thanks to: Rosemary Cass-Beggs, Sandra Cavallo, Thomas Cohen, David Gentilcore, Thomas Kuehn, Laurie Nussdorfer, Bryan Reuben, James Shaw, Evelyn Welch, and Joseph Wheeler.

² Archivio di Stato di Roma (hereafter ASR), *Tribunale criminale del governatore*, Processi 1600–1619, busta 74, ff. 138–79. (Hereafter all notes with only f. or ff. refer to this trial.) Efforts to track this trial in the parallel series of the court's archives have not yielded. In particular, the sentences are missing for this year.

³ Examples of studies using multiple judicial records: C. Ginzburg, *Night Battles* (Baltimore, 1983; Italian 1966); G. Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros* (New York, 1985); D. Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch* (Manchester, 1992); J. Ferraro, *Marriage Wars in Late Renaissance Venice* (New York, 2001). For microhistory, a short introduction: E. Muir, 'Introduction: Observing Trifles' in *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe*, (eds.) E. Muir and G. Ruggiero (Baltimore, 1991); and some examples: C. Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms* (Baltimore, 1980; Italian, 1976); F. Tomizza, *La Finzione di Maria* (Rizzoli, 1981); G. Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna* (Berkeley, 1986), R. Merzario, *Anastasia, Ovvero la Malizia degli Uomini* (Rome, 1992); E. Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring* (Baltimore, 1993); T. Astarita, *Village Justice* (Baltimore, 1999).

only through abstracted schemas or de-contextualized commonsense. The contradictions inherent in human relationships and embedded in the cultures that gave them form emerge from such microhistories and make them a valuable complement to other modes of historical inquiry. Narrative exposition can highlight the web of connections that are the stuff of real life, in the past as now. Gaps come to light between deceptively tidy norms, delineated in myriad prescriptive sources, and the untidy diversity of real behaviour. Here also is terrain for examining the pervasive tensions and contradictions among coexisting cultural precepts and among customary practices.

A microanalysis of the prosecution initiated by Guglielmo Rossi opens a window onto the little-seen internal dynamics of a specialist artisan's household. This study yields historical insights in several registers. First, with a view rare for this city and time, we learn about the ambiguities of corporate discipline and personal autonomy in the domain of guild-ordered trades. The trial shows the College of the Apothecaries exercising unwonted correction over a member of a subordinate craft. Though master and *paterfamilias*, Rossi wielded no uncontested control of his house and household. He did not enjoy the freedom in his backroom (*arrièreboutique*) that Montaigne, the gentleman essayist, rhetorically imagined for a shopkeeper. Nevertheless, by several tactics, the candy-maker resisted legitimate corporate authority in order to defend both his livelihood and his own, not the guild's, view of occupational honour. Against the institutional strictures of the commune, when his first impulsive resort to patronage proved vain, Rossi turned strategically to the criminal courts for redress. Furthermore, he did not labour, prosper and confront crisis alone. Although historians of the Italian economy have often disregarded women's work, Rossi relied significantly on his wife, not merely as family overseer, but as producer and auxiliary shop manager.⁴ The crisis of her pregnancy disrupted not only domesticity but also livelihood. The lawsuit's attention to the medical management of Ginevra's miscarriage offers interesting details of another, usually obscure, area of family life.

These several lessons specific to the story of the Rossi family also speak to a larger historical conundrum about the emergence of the culture of modernity: the conceptualization of private and public domains and associated norms and social practices. Historians of the 'modern' world have articulated a highly gendered vision of 'separate spheres' that during the nineteenth century, both in rhetoric and in behaviour, divided public from private, male from female, work and commerce from family and domesticity. In this literature, the public and private categories also organized thought in other important areas including law, power, rights and the distribution of resources. While claimed by twentieth-century theorists of the modern, this binary pattern also appeared as natural and universal in many commentaries

⁴ For a recent revisionist overview of Italian women's work, see J. Ferraro, 'Representing women in early modern Italian economic history', in *Structures and Subjectivities: Attending to Early Modern Women*, (eds.) J. Hartman and A. Seeff (Newark, DE, 2007), 75–88.

tinged with implicit essentialism. Therefore, a sharp gendered split between private and public realms has often been projected backward onto earlier, more 'traditional' societies. While feminist scholarship has since contested the utility of a public/private dichotomy to explain even more recent periods, it has become clear to students of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries that in many respects the 'separate spheres' model does not fit. Nevertheless, in those centuries European culture did move toward the modern. Rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater, it is worth trying to track the early modern conceptual and experiential muddle of private and public that led in due course to ideological transformation.

A highly creative project of that sort by Michael McKeon, a scholar of English literature, offers not only a sense of rich textual variety, but also a very useful formulation. For early modern England, McKeon characterizes the conceptual relations between public and private as 'a distinction without separation'.⁵ That is, unlike more recent Europeans, early modern people understood differences between private and public that did not assume physical or spatial separation. 'Private' and 'public' inhered more in persons and their roles in particular situations than in spaces. I propose to transplant this conception from England to Italy into order to highlight the complexities and contradictions of Guglielmo Rossi's behaviour during his family's crisis of 1608. In Italy, social rules about who should behave in what ways might take account of place, but clear thresholds seldom separated family from outsiders, or men from women. Both inside and outside houses, spaces often served multiple purposes and might be occupied by diverse people going about various businesses. Some spaces were more private, others more public, and behaviour adjusted accordingly. However, both routinely and during times of stress, shifting social situations made spatial boundaries porous.⁶ In the Rossi household, not only did manufacture, commerce, and domesticity share close quarters, but outsiders – both men and women – came and went, some living in, others on occasional errands. In culturally distinguishable but spatially overlapping private and public domains, Guglielmo had to negotiate for the interest and honour of himself and his family.

TRIALS INTO HISTORY

In recent years, Italian judicial records from both ecclesiastical and secular courts have attracted historians' scrutiny. Transcripts produced according to Roman inquisitorial procedure include extensive oral testimonies, scribally

⁵ M. McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity* (Baltimore, 2005), xix–xx.

⁶ On gender and Italian urban spaces, R. Davis, 'The geography of gender in the Renaissance', in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, (eds.) J. Brown and R. Davis (London, 1998), 19–38 surveys earlier discussions; since then, see also: A. Smith, 'Gender, ownership, and domestic space: Inventories and family archives in Renaissance Verona', *Renaissance Studies* 12 (1998), 375–91; M. Chojnacka, *Working Women of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore, 2001); T. Cohen and E. Cohen, 'Open and shut: The social meanings of the Cinquecento Roman house', *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 9 (2001), 61–84.

recorded verbatim as part of the 'trial for information' that prepared for later stages of lawyerly arguments and adjudication. Speaking alone before the investigating magistrates, witnesses, both the accused and others, reported at length and in their own words on events and circumstances that interrogators deemed pertinent. Especially in the preliminary phases of the inquiry, as the courts fished for information, witnesses also often had considerable leeway to tell their stories. These procedures thus generated rich accounts of the otherwise little accessible lives of ordinary, frequently unlettered people, both men and women. For historians, these testimonies told not only of the conflicts at the trial's centre, but also of situational and incidental material around the edges.

A scholar who undertakes to write history from judicial transcripts must read analytically. Like many other forms of documents, trials are at best translucent. Initial impressions of their meaning are often wrong. Court testimony, then as now, was contingent, marked by the constrained setting of its delivery. It must be understood in light of the particularities of the law and of the legally more or less exposed positions of the witnesses. In early modern Rome, on the one hand, witnesses testified under oath to speak truly. On the other, even for those not accused, risks were high and words could put them and others into jeopardy. Wielding the threats of routine jailing and occasional torture, investigating magistrates shaped their questions in legal language and categories.⁷ Depositions, in response, varied in accuracy, completeness, and tone, and in earnestness, naiveté, or duplicity. Witnesses, some coached by lawyers and some relying on popular familiarity with the law, typically answered the judges in a way that, they hoped, protected themselves and their allies and inculpated only their enemies or those they thought deserved blame. No more than did the judges should historians read these testimonies literally or transparently. Nor should they discount them all out of hand as lies. Rather, strategic speech invites strategic interpretation.

Beyond reading testimonies cannily, historians must assemble as full as possible an account of the trial itself before attempting a picture of the events and circumstances that precipitated it. Although for many reasons records may be incomplete, it is important to read all available documents and to situate both their form and contents in relation to trial procedures. For example, where some witnesses speak at cross-purposes to others, it helps the scholar triangulate on a plausible narrative. From such a careful composite reading unfolds an understanding of what probably happened and why. The story can then be worked in conjunction with complementary materials from other sources into a microhistory. When done well, analysis of trial records, like Rossi's story reconstructed below, can fruitfully complement other historical methods for illuminating the past.

⁷ For cautions about reading judicial testimonies, T. Kuehn, 'Reading microhistory: The example of *Giovanni and Lusanna*', *Journal of Modern History* 61 (1989), 514–31, and A. Del Col, Introduction to *L'Inquisizione nel Patriarcato e Diocesi di Aquileia, 1557–1559* (Trieste, 1998).

Keeping these guidelines in mind, let us turn to the particulars of Guglielmo Rossi's case, transcribed in the archives of the criminal court of the Governor of Rome. The city's residents habitually used their several parallel judiciaries, in conjunction with direct self-help measures, to pursue their myriad personal conflicts. The candy-maker's prosecution follows this pattern, but with several less usual twists. The Governor's tribunal, though headed by clerics appointed by the pope as temporal prince, exercised secular jurisdiction over the conduct of most ordinary Romans. This court dealt in a broad range of lesser and greater offences; among the latter were violence, theft, fraud, morals offences like blasphemy or defloration of virgins, and misuse of public office. Much of its business came from routine, petty misconduct that it dispatched with summary justice. Serious malfeasance called for a formal trial that produced the much longer paperwork that is a boon to historians. Invoking serious losses to life and property, Rossi's complaint moved the judges to launch a full investigation. The charge recorded by the officials, 'aborto' – meaning here causing a miscarriage rather than, in the modern sense, an abortion – was rare. It was uncommon, too, if perfectly legal and typical of Rome's judicial niceties, to bring criminal charges before a papal magistrate to counter the authority of guild officials that depended from the communal government. Guglielmo also inserted into the standard transcript an unusual document in which 'private' and 'public' well-being intersected, as he claimed for hefty damages to his income, his professional honour and the lives of his wife and child.⁸ These anomalies in the trial were not necessarily all of Rossi's invention. Even if he did consult lawyers – and there is no sign one way or the other, the whole proceeding shows an ordinary man acting to defend his sense of right and enrolling the legal resources of the state to his own ends.

Especially for a trial over a private wrong, rather than a major offence against public order, the length of the transcript and the unusually full roster of witnesses likewise mark the candy-maker's concerted campaign. Forty folios contain the original complaint and depositions by nineteen other male and female witnesses, including five accused and three medical experts. Although Rossi tried to stack the deck against his opponents, the number and variety of testimonies yield a good picture of what happened. If many witnesses were called to supply evidence sympathetic to Guglielmo's claims, each still spoke with a distinct voice and perspective. For the accused, the story is told by five inspectors in several variant versions. While all sought to exonerate themselves and to some degree their associates, the inspectors differed significantly in their previous personal relations with Rossi. These connections affected the testimony on both sides. The initial complaint spoke collectively and vaguely against 'six or seven' visitors, but, when asked, Guglielmo singled out only two by name: Antonio Suerdos, with whom he

⁸ ff. 174r–v.

had had a legal confrontation six years before, and Mario Stefanone.⁹ When pressed, he could name, reluctantly, only one other, Marcantonio Ciappi. Guglielmo tried to downplay the involvement of this neighbour and ally with references to Ciappi's 'compassion' for Ginevra at the time of the inspection. In the candy-maker's accusations, honour culture's categories of friends and enemies complicated the corporate alignments.

To follow Guglielmo's strategizing, we need also to reconstruct the interactive timing of events, professional, medical, and judicial. To judge by retrospective testimony, the guild's inspection occurred on 16 or 17 December 1608. Before dawn on 30 December Ginevra miscarried, and later that day Rossi started proceedings at the Governor's office. Although infuriated by the apothecaries' unprecedented intrusion into his shop and much troubled by his wife's subsequent illness, Guglielmo had waited two weeks to take legal steps. To bring charges before the Governor, he needed not a civil tort, but a crime – the loss of the baby through violence. After recording the candy-maker's complaint at the public office, a magistrate and a notary went directly back into Rossi's shop and home where they formally interviewed the midwife, a woman neighbour, and, most importantly, the suffering Ginevra in her bed. The next day, the officials returned to the house to inspect the aborted foetus and to question several other witnesses that Rossi had gathered: two more local women and two medical men, a physician and a surgeon, who had recently examined Ginevra. As the prosecution unfolded, these male experts lent weight to the candy-maker's claims. In the following three days, the court took further depositions from employees and neighbours who had witnessed the inspection and its aftermath. It also heard from four other guildsmen, all *droghieri* or sellers of dry goods, who insisted that they had never faced such corporate intrusion. Since the *droghieri* had won formal exemption from inspection by the apothecaries, Rossi's ploy in getting these particular men to testify to their immunity from search appears disingenuous.¹⁰ At the same time, the confectioner may indeed have felt that his trade should enjoy the privileges of the *droghieri*.

THE CANDY-MAKER AND HIS WARES

Guglielmo Rossi's several public identities shaped the circumstances in which his family crisis of 1608 played out. Like many Roman residents, he was a foreigner. A native of Liguria, by 1608 he had lived fourteen years in the city. In that time he married, probably within a year or two of his arrival, and then fathered an unusually large brood – five living children and a sixth anticipated

⁹ f. 138. The list of defendants, evidently filled out by the magistrates, named the five principal inspectors: Antonio Suerdos; Marco Stefanone; Marcantonio Ciappi, first consul of the *Speziali* and neighbour and friend of Rossi; Constantino Giorgione, guild chancellor; and Hippolito Ceccarelli, warden of the confraternity.

¹⁰ As two inspectors noted, by official order in 1601 the *droghieri* were not liable to inspections by the *speziali* (ff. 161v, 164). Their inexperience of inspection was thus not surprising.

shortly.¹¹ His wife may have been a native Roman or perhaps from a village in the nearby hinterlands. The fact that she had a sister Cleria living in the city in 1605 suggests roots not too far afield.¹² Yet, we hear nothing more of her family and cannot be sure that Guglielmo chose his bride to help secure his position in the city.

In Rome's skilled workforce, foreigners of many sorts were common. On occasion, the pope invited specialists such as silk weavers to develop new trades in his capital. Some trades became associated with immigrants from particular regions: around 1625, for example, lace-makers and pastry cooks hailed typically from Lorraine.¹³ Accordingly, citizenship and even guild membership could be relatively accessible. A 1611 redaction of the municipal statutes specified established residence and ownership of real property as principal qualifications. According to its admissions criteria of 1618, even a closed corporation like the College of the Apothecaries subordinated native birth to 'intelligence', local continuity, and good reputation in the trade.¹⁴ Enterprising foreigners, like Guglielmo, might enjoy considerable opportunity to put down roots in Rome.

Attracted to the papal capital by its flush and voracious market for luxuries and comforts, Rossi opened a sweet shop where he sold cakes – both spicy fruitcakes and *pan di Genova*, made with milk and eggs and flavoured with almonds – as well as the fancy *confetti* that were his forte.¹⁵ He had evidently prospered as one of a handful of specialist confectioners in the city.¹⁶ While likely unlettered in Latin and without the apothecaries' aspirations to semi-professional status, Guglielmo built a substantial business at a highly skilled and well-paid art and nurtured pretensions to superiority over many other craftsmen. In the trial, he presented himself as well-established, a purveyor to gentlemen and the client of prominent patrons. He claimed to have been 'introduced' in the city by the Duke of Sessa, then the Spanish ambassador.¹⁷ Over a decade later, he decked his shop with hangings borrowed from the wardrobe of Cardinal Farnese.¹⁸ Rossi had also acquired sufficient status within the mobile Roman world to serve in local office, albeit a minor one.

¹¹ f. 139. Latin formulae in his complaint identify Rossi as 'ligorinus.'

¹² ASR, Tribunale criminale del governatore, Investigazioni, busta 353, f. 16.

¹³ R. Ago, *Economia barocca. Mercato e istituzioni nella Roma del Seicento* (Rome, 1998), 19–20.

¹⁴ E. Canepari, 'Mestiere e spazio urbano nella costruzione dei legami social degli immigrati a Roma in età moderna', in *L'Italia delle Migrazioni Interne*, (eds.) A. Arru and F. Ramella (Rome, 2003), 34–5.

¹⁵ ff. 139, 168v, 169v.

¹⁶ It is unclear exactly how many specialist confectioners kept shop in the city. Two inspectors identified three *confettieri* who had been visited: Rossi; a Portuguese near the 'fratelli di N. Signore'; and another called 'il Gobbo' at Quattro Fontane (ff. 158v, 164v). One of these witnesses mentioned another *confettiere* on the corner of the 'piazza della Minerva' who was not there and so escaped inspection. A third witness said 'che non ci sono altri confettieri che Guglielmo, et un altro in banchi quale fu simulmente visitato in quel med.mo giorno' (f. 162); this second was apparently the same Portuguese whom the others said they had inspected that same day.

¹⁷ f. 139. Rossi must have arrived in Rome in the mid 1590s; the Duke of Sessa served as ambassador there from 1592 to 1603: T. Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome, 1500–1700* (Berkeley, 2001), 127

¹⁸ f. 151.

As overseer of his street (*capostrada del caporione*) during the Vacant See of 1605, he overturned a shoemaker's bench that presumably impeded circulation. However legitimate his action, the incident led to heated words and the next day an exchange of blows in which Rossi was wounded.¹⁹ The candy-maker was evidently more ingratiating with his lordly customers than with his artisanal neighbours. Impatience with his peers would surface again during the disruptive guild inspection.

Made from cane sugar, produced for Italians beginning in the thirteenth century in Cyprus, Crete and Sicily, and from spices, fruits, nuts, and other ingredients, *confetti* featured at banquets and as gifts on many ritual occasions.²⁰ Cristoforo da Messisbugo rounded out his elaborate sixteenth-century menus with platters of goodies, including *confetti sciroppati*.²¹ Weddings and births called for *confetti*.²² In Rome, as in other cities, municipal dignitaries received distributions of *confetti* at the New Year and on other civic holidays.²³ While a few recipes appeared in cookery books, it has proved difficult to pin down what the range of *confetti* looked like and what went into them.²⁴ Because sweets often figured in official displays of largesse and public merry-making, sumptuary laws in Venice and probably elsewhere told consumers what they could buy.²⁵ Other local regulations must have told confectioners what they could make. At the same time, the case of Guglielmo Rossi shows that it was tempting to attract business by offering novel delicacies – the product of 'secret' techniques and perhaps of ingredients that lacked official sanction. 'Invention' graced culinary design as well as the visual arts and musical performance. Rossi indeed boasted that his 'art' included 'many inventions and sorts of *confetti reali* that the apothecaries of this city do not know how to make, nor is it licit for them to do so.'²⁶ This candy-maker did not hesitate to define his wares as superior by reason of private knowledge and to define himself as distinct from other purveyors in his guild, and indeed above the law that governed them.

A material logic linked the early modern producers of medicines and candies. *Speziali* routinely sold sweets along with medicines and many other

¹⁹ Investigazioni, b. 353, ff. 16–17. This series of actions and reactions, while a routine bit of artisan bravado on both sides, tells us that Rossi was no stranger to confrontation. Interestingly, for reasons not wholly clear, he sent his wife to enter the 1605 complaint at the Governor's office.

²⁰ S. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, 1986), especially 28–9, 82–92.

²¹ C. da Messisbugo, *Banchetti, Composizioni di Vivande e Apparecchio generale* (Vicenza, 1992), 56, 76, 82, 86, 95.

²² M. Montanari, *Nuovo Convivio: Storia e cultura dei piaceri della tavola nell'età moderna* (Rome, 1991), 107; J. Musacchio, *Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, 1999), 41–2.

²³ J. Delumeau, *Vie économique et sociale de Rome au seizième siècle* (Paris, 1959), v. 2, 689–90 and, for price lists for *confetti* and *nocchiata*, 712–5. For examples in other towns, see L. Landucci, *A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516* (London, 1927), 60, and E. Breisach, *Caterina Sforza* (Chicago, 1967), 53.

²⁴ O. Redon, F. Sabban, and S. Serventi, *The Medieval Kitchen. Recipes from France and Italy* (Chicago, 1998), 7, 215–17.

²⁵ Personal communication from Jo Wheeler regarding Venice.

²⁶ f. 139.

goods.²⁷ *Confetti* were a common gift for the sick. With both candy and many therapeutics counting sugar as a central and relatively pricey ingredient, distinctions were not sharp. The sweetener figured in syrups and coatings to make medicines go down easily.²⁸ It also claimed curative powers of its own, to soothe a cough or aid digestion. Sugar pops up repeatedly in apothecaries' recipe books. A good Roman example is the *Antidotario romano latino e volgare* where, in the mid seventeenth century, Pietro Castelli amplified commentaries by Hippolito Ceccarelli, most likely one of the inspectors accused in Rossi's trial.²⁹ This compendium describes electuaries as 'medicines composed of various select simples, prepared in various ways with sugar or honey or syrup, mixed and carefully combined according to the measurements of the art.'³⁰ The literally heavy weight of sugar comes clear in a later section specifying proportions: for 'ordinary electuaries' use one pound of sugar for three ounces of 'spices'.³¹ This antidotarium also gives space to a cornucopia of related preserves (*conditi*), some of which are said to have medicinal effects and others to serve more as foodstuffs (*companatico*). Such preserves include:

those of fruits, flowers, leaves, sorts of roots and the like, preserved in the correct and best way . . . either with honey, or sugar, or verjuice, or vinegar, or other liquor. . . . And among *conditi* some are suitable for the stomach and heart such as [those of] plums, lemons, pepper, peaches, and the peels of citron and orange, as well as of quince. For the liver [those of] stems of lettuce and plums, and for the head serve jellies of rosemary [and] of sage.³²

This syrupy jumble of overlapping ingredients and techniques that confectioners shared with apothecaries gave regulators of city commerce good reason to associate the two groups institutionally. During the late Middle

²⁷ An example: E. Cropper, 'New documents for Artemisia Gentileschi's life in Florence', *Burlington Magazine*, xxxv, 1088 (Nov. 1993), 760 and n. 9. cites an apothecary's bill from 1616–17 for therapeutics and sweets together. Forthcoming work on apothecaries in Quattrocento Florence by Evelyn Welch and James Shaw has further examples.

²⁸ Mintz, *Sweetness*, 96–103.

²⁹ Pietro Castelli, *Antidotario romano, latino e volgare. Tradotto da Ippolito Ceccarelli, Li Ragionamenti, e le Aggiunte, Dell'electione de' semplici, e Pratica delle compositioni, con annotationi del Signore Pietro Castelli romano* (Rome, 1668). This composite work had a rich seventeenth-century history of interest here. A Latin edition with a core text and no mention of Castelli appeared in Rome (1583) and Milan (1607). In Rome (1612) was published a new bilingual edition with a vernacular translation by I. Ceccarelli. In Rome (1624) another edition specifies additions by Ceccarelli of c. forty-five pages of material, including 'Conditione e regole appartenenti al buon spetiale', 192–7. While library catalogues yield no information on Ceccarelli, I propose here that he was the same man who was warden of the guild church in 1608–09 and one of the accused in Rossi's trial. The first edition of Castelli's redaction of the book appeared at Messina (1635); in the next forty years, there were four more editions in Rome (1639, 1651, 1668, 1675), three in Venice, and one in Cosenza.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 306.

³² *Ibid.*, 16–17. Preparations laden with sugar for various specific botanical products follow, 17–23. While the work's table of contents says nothing of *confetti*, it does list several *confettioni* – 'al chermes', 'amech', 'anacardina', and 'di iacinto.' In a personal communication James Shaw reported for Quattrocento Florence medicines called *confetti*, e.g. 'chonfetto chordiale, chonfetto di choralli, chonfetto di rebarbero.'

Ages, in Sicily and in some cities of northern Italy, the *confettieri* had been sufficiently prominent to have a guild of their own.³³ Later, as in eighteenth-century Rome, for example, guilds became more specialized and confectioners boasted their own body, but often the modest numbers of candy-makers were subordinated to the sizable and well-established corporation of apothecaries.³⁴ In 1608, Rossi with his few specialist competitors had to accept this unbalanced affiliation.

THE GUILD

During the inspection and in his subsequent lawsuit, Rossi as individual confronted corporate discipline by the guild and, through it, the commune. Casting this tension in McKeon's terms, we see a distinction – private understandings of interest pitted against collective prescriptions for the public weal. At the same time, since all the players came together on Rossi's turf, there was no separation. On the one hand was the family economy, where – as still in many crafts – home and workshop overlapped in space and no sharp boundaries divided domesticity from market-oriented work. On the other hand, at the bidding of the city government, guild officials marched into Rossi's domain to impose conformity with their professional rules.

Early modern guilds had evolved from medieval roots. Formed as brotherhoods to protect the economic and spiritual interests of members and their families, early craft organizations prescribed and oversaw high standards of production and obstructed capitalistic competition and innovation. By the seventeenth century, many guilds had restricted the terms of membership, enhanced the privileges of male masters, and subordinated the claims of family and especially of journeymen. These trade corporations, adapting to the consolidating hierarchies of the early modern state, became public bodies often with close ties to city government. In Rome's relatively fluid economic environment, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, new guilds formed and others revised their statutes.³⁵ Their members had to conform to local regulations, including those that opened their premises to inspectors. Thus, the intersection of work and family roles brought public authorities in person into the spatial core of the domestic realm. From his corporate affiliation, an individual master like Rossi secured status and links to local power bases, but at the same time, in the conduct of trade, faced restriction in his own house and shop.³⁶

³³ F. Desportes, 'Food trades' in *Food. A Culinary History*, (ed.) J.-L. Flandrin and M. Montanari (New York, 1999), 282.

³⁴ On early modern Roman guilds, especially in the eighteenth century, see Carlo Travaglini, 'Ognuno per non pagare si fa povero': Il sistema delle corporazioni romane agli inizi del Settecento', in *Corporazioni e gruppi professionali nell'Italia moderna*, (ed.) A. Guenzi, P. Massa, and A. Moioli (Milan, 1999), 277–305.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 278.

³⁶ Canepari, 'Mestiere', 34–6.

In the early seventeenth century, the *Nobil Collegio delli Spetiali dell'Alma Città di Roma* was developing along these general lines. Ivana Ait's social and institutional study of late medieval apothecaries, which includes two fifteenth-century redactions of guild rules, suggests considerable continuities.³⁷ A renewed set of statutes, published in 1607, provided for thirteen councillors, representing the *rioni*, and three sworn consuls who sat regularly as judges in the guild court and presided in rotation over three local offices sited by tradition at the Pantheon, Campo dei Fiori, and Sant'Angelo in Pescheria. The associated confraternity held the church of San Lorenzo in Miranda in the Forum.³⁸ The early modern corporation enrolled, as in the past, sellers of a wide variety of products – those we would call apothecaries, druggists, grocers, spice and dry goods merchants, as well as specialists like Guglielmo, the candy-maker.³⁹ However, as in natural families of the period, not all guild brothers were equal.

Rossi's individual gripes partook of a broader potential for uneasiness between Roman candy-makers and the College of Apothecaries. The diversity of knowledge, skills, and interests inside this corporation's jurisdiction spawned tensions throughout the early modern period. As elsewhere, battles over authority were chronic between a hegemonic guild and smaller, often more specialized crafts that answered to it. Among the Roman *speziali* and their dependents, debates persisted about who was qualified and entitled to discipline whom.⁴⁰ For example, the emergent health officers (of the *Proto-medicato* tribunal), backed by the papal prince, gained the right to supervise at least the medical part of the apothecaries' work.⁴¹ The *droghieri*, dealers in dry goods, on the other hand, resisted intervention by the *protomedicato* or by the apothecaries themselves and litigated successfully in 1601 against their inspections.⁴² The *confettieri* too had their problems with the parent guild. Some might argue – as did Rossi – that their confections required refined skills that

³⁷ I. Ait, *Tra Scienza e Mercato. Gli Speziali à Roma nel Tardo Medioevo* (Rome, 1996): on statutory provisions concerning 'foreigners', women and Jews, 156–8, 160–1, and concerning regulation of internal competition, 159; for the statutes of 1473 and 1487, including rules about false or bad goods, 179–234.

³⁸ *Statuti del Nobil Collegio delli Spetiali dell'Alma Città di Roma* (Rome, 1607), 1–6. This publication reflected the revision of the 1487 statutes undertaken in 1596.

³⁹ Ait, *Tra Scienza*, 140, notes from the 1526 census that of the 222 labelled producers in this 'sector' 38% were *speziali* and 3% *preparatori di dolci*. On the later period, see A. Kolega, 'Speziali, spagirici, droghieri e ciarlatani. L'offerta terapeutica à Roma tra Seicento e Settecento', *Roma Moderna et Contemporanea* 6 (1998), 311–47.

⁴⁰ In the early seventeenth century Rome counted seventy-one trades and only forty-three organized corporations: Ago, *Economia*, 10. These bodies commonly embraced one or several subordinate crafts. For example, the sixteenth-century Università dei pittori included gilders and embroiderers: S. Rossi, 'La Compagnia di San Luca nel Cinquecento', *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma* 5 (1984), 369. As in the case of the *speziali* with the *droghieri* and *confettieri*, the relative status and privileges of the dependent tradesmen were often contested and obscure.

⁴¹ Kolega, 'Speziali', 315–16, 327. Apothecaries also risked criminal charges of poisoning. In August 1610 Flaminio di Tommaso Donzetti, an apothecary at Tor di Specchi, was accused of killing his girlfriend, Artemisia d'Europa, by administering 'un beverone' (1378v) made with 'sciropo d'acqua di boragine' (1380) to cause her to abort: ASR, Tribunale criminale del governatore, Processi 1600–1619, busta 89, ff. 1376–84v.

⁴² ff. 154, 161; see also, ff. 152v, 153. On the *droghieri*, Kolega, 'Speziali', 330.

the ordinary *speziale* could neither understand nor judge.⁴³ Plausibly, the confectioners could feel that, like the *droghieri*, they too deserved exemption. Yet, few in numbers, they had too little leverage to duck the larger guild's oversight.⁴⁴

Although inspection of shops and inventories was central to the economic discipline exercised by guilds, such policing was a chronic source of stress. Statutes carefully spelled out who was allowed and obligated to inspect how and when. For the Roman *speziali*, Chapter 16 of their *Statuti* laid this task on the three sworn consuls, who were to carry out the duty twice during their one-year term of office. To distribute the burden, they might request help from the councillors.⁴⁵ The rules instructed the inspectors to check weights and to view both raw goods and prepared products. Faulty inventory earned a fine: for example, one lira for using 'spoiled or bad ingredients.'⁴⁶ Refusal to admit the visitors, on the other hand, brought a hefty penalty of five lire, authorized by the Senator, a communal judge, for each occasion.⁴⁷ Furthermore, insulting the officers could cost five lire, payable to the confraternal church.⁴⁸ These norms directed the guildsmen's conduct when they went to assay Guglielmo's candies. We know little, however, of actual inspection practices for this or any other Roman corporation and so lack basis for gauging Rossi's experience.

The guildsmen prosecuted following the confectioner's complaint were well aware of their official duties. Before the court, to justify their activities, the accused inspectors cited the general constitutions and privileges of the Arte.⁴⁹ They also invoked the December orders from the municipal Conservators to search out the adulterated candy.⁵⁰ The concern about sweets was timely, since they were a customary treat during Christmas and New Year celebrations. In contrast with modern product recalls, no one seems to have feared poisoned consumers; more likely, the threatened damage engaged the commercial interests of producers and sellers. The apothecaries dubbed their target 'porcarie'; while the word's roots suggested literally 'pig stuff', its broader usage alluded to deception or falsification.⁵¹ In Rossi's case, the

⁴³ f. 173.

⁴⁴ In 1693, when presumably their numbers had grown, the *confettieri* reached an accord with the apothecaries' guild that gave them full rights and protections and allowed them to elect two consuls to help oversee the particular interests of their trade: Kolega, 'Speziali', 330. In a 1708 register of tax payments by guilds, the *confettieri* with the *biscottieri* are listed separately from the *speziali*; see Travaglini, 'Ognuno', 278–80.

⁴⁵ *Statuti . . . delli spetiali*, 12–13. The modest fine of five soldi levied on those who refused to serve when asked suggests that the mission seemed to some time-consuming or otherwise unpopular: *Statuti . . . delli spetiali*, Cap. 17.

⁴⁶ 'Semplici guasti o non buoni': *Statuti . . . delli spetiali*, 7. One *lira* (or *libra*) equalled 20 soldi.

⁴⁷ *Statuti . . . delli spetiali*, 12–13.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁹ f. 163r–v, 173, 177.

⁵⁰ f. 162v, f. 157. On the role of the *Conservatori*, see L. Nussdorfer, *Civic Politics in the Rome of Urban VIII* (Princeton, 1992), 129–31 and F. Caselli, 'La disciplina del mercato romano nel Seicento', in *Corporazioni*, (eds.) Guenzi, et al., 261.

⁵¹ In the words of First Consul Marcantonio Ciappi, 'detti Conservatori ci ordinorno che andassimo à visitare tutte le spetiarie, drogare, et confettarie di Roma, havendo inteso che in quelle si faceva gran porcarie' (f. 160; also 168v, 177). On inspecting for fraudulent ingredients, specifically sugar substitutes, E. Merlo, 'Gli speziali milanesi nel '700. Storie di antidoti e affari di droghe,' in *Corporazioni*, (eds.) Guenzi, et al., 689–92.

culprit turned out to be starch or flour, harmless but deemed an illicit substitute for more costly sugar.

Prompted by the Conservators, the guild consuls assembled a weighty official party: three consuls as specified in the statutes, a fourth man in the office of chancellor, a warden from the guild's confraternity, its substitute notary, and its executor (*mandatario*).⁵² First consul was Marcantonio Ciappi, apothecary 'al Drago' in Banchi, neighbour and friend of Rossi. The others were Antonio Suerdos, apothecary at Traspontina Vecchia, with whom Rossi had had previous trouble, and Marco Stefanone, apothecary in Piazza Montanara, below the Campidoglio. The chancellor was Constantino Giorgione, apothecary at the Greci in Campo Marzio, and the warden at San Lorenzo in Miranda was Hippolito Ceccarelli, apothecary in Regula toward Piazza Giudea.⁵³ Following a list prepared by the notary and moving from the centre of city government at the Campidoglio in a big clockwise circle through the neighbourhoods, the large posse of inspectors proceeded to visit all candy sellers, general *speziali* and *droghieri*, as well as specialist *confettieri*.⁵⁴ Entry of this troop of seven male officials into a single master's shop, while fully legitimate, did work an extra-ordinary rearrangement of familiar social hierarchies and spatial boundaries.

HOUSEHOLD AND SHOP

Rossi's home and shop, with its interwoven private and public functions, was the spatial hub of this story.⁵⁵ During his fourteen years in the city, he had, with his wife and children, lived and traded at several locations in the densely populated central districts in the Tiber bend. In 1608, the family was installed in a modest two-story building in Via dei Corsori, the well-sited base of the long-distance couriers that led into the busy financial hub of the Banchi Vecchi and the 'Papal Way' to the Ponte S. Angelo.⁵⁶ The ground floor served for trade, with workrooms behind and the shop in front. The facade likely had a fairly wide opening, perhaps with a counter onto the

⁵² f. 157.

⁵³ ff. 140v–1, 157, 159v, 163, 165v. Ceccarelli kept shop at the sign of the Vecchia (Old Woman) and wore glasses, ff. 156, 160, 172v; also, see above, n. 29.

⁵⁴ f. 158v, 160, 168v.

⁵⁵ In his complaint, Rossi stated 'non mi hanno fatto mai visita in bottega ne meno cercata la casa' (f. 140). These words suggest some distinction in his mind between 'bottega' and 'casa', but also reflect the linkage of the two for the conduct of business. For other Romans as well, especially when thinking about gendered spaces, asserting such a conceptual boundary figured in an on-going negotiation about the reality of spatially overlapping male and female domains. For an example concerning the womenfolk of a lutemaker, see T. Cohen, *Love and Death in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 2004), 138–9.

⁵⁶ Rossi says he has lived in 'piu e diversi luoghi' in Rome; the now suppressed Via dei Corsori lay near the Sforza Cesarini palace, identified in the trial with Signora Fulvia Sforza: f. 139. For the location, U. Gnoli, *Topografia e Toponomastica di Roma Medioevale e Moderna* (Foligno, 1984), 92. In 1605, the family lived at the Pasquino statue, southwest of Piazza Navona: Investigazioni, busta 353, f. 16.

street.⁵⁷ Trial testimony indicated that it was easy to see in, both from the street and from nearby second-floor windows. Quite readily penetrated casually or purposively, by the eyes of neighbours and the feet of customers, the outside walls marked a boundary, but a porous one. Inside, as typically with the cramped quarters of working families, urban and rural, rooms served many purposes in the course of a day and even places to sleep were not always distinctly private. A stairway, probably inside the building, did provide a second, still permeable spatial filter. At the top were rooms where the family slept. While this space was more private than that below, it did double duty as storage for stock and shop assistants went up and down as part of their work.⁵⁸

On the fateful afternoon in mid December, several people were at work in the candy-maker's shop. Besides Rossi, his wife was helping him to arrange merchandise. In the trial and especially in his claim for damages, Guglielmo portrayed Ginevra's work as crucial to success of their business. She served as deputy manager in house and shop, as probably – without much recognition – did many wives. More unusually, Rossi said he had trained her in the candy-maker's special arts. He claimed that her services specifically as a confectioner were worth the substantial sum of two hundred scudi a year.⁵⁹ Having also borne him five surviving children, she was now much pregnant with the sixth. In dictating his judicial complaint, it suited Rossi to describe his brood as 'useless', that is, too young to help with the work. If the couple had married perhaps twelve or thirteen years before, the eldest would be at most twelve years old.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ A. Modigliani, *Mercati, Botteghe e Spazi di Commercio a Roma tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna* (Rome, 1998), 123–34. On the structures of apothecary shops, see also E. Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance* (New Haven, 2005), especially 151–8.

⁵⁸ f. 151v. Another witness spoke of the 'casse sotto i letti' in an upstairs room (f. 156v).

⁵⁹ f. 174v. On this item Rossi's claim for damages demanded 'at least two thousand scudi', or the equivalent of a decade's work. This high price assigned to Ginevra's work is surprising given the devaluation of women's labour usually noted by historians of Italy. While Rossi's claims should not be taken literally, his assertion in the context of legal proceedings suggests that the concept was at some level plausible.

⁶⁰ The size and composition of the households of Roman apothecaries of the period varied. Fitting the more general Roman pattern in which many households did not have the standard nuclear family at the core, not all of Rossi's peers lived with a wife and children; for a survey of Italian urban demography, see G. Da Molin, *Famiglia e matrimonio nell'Italia del Seicento* (Bari, 2000), especially 73–4, 83, 90. The earliest surviving *stati delle anime* for the parish of SS. Celso and Giuliano dates to 1610, when Guglielmo's family does not appear. The record does include four *speciali* households that varied in size from four to nine members: Francesco Soracini lived with his wife, a female servant, and another man, presumably a helper; Joseffo Zani headed a mixed household of nine adults, none of them labelled as family members; Brandimarto Boninfanti had a wife, an adult son, and three younger children; Marcantonio Ciappi, Rossi's friend and a guild inspector, kept shop 'al Drago senese' with Madonna Madalena Ciappi (by naming likely a kinswoman rather than his wife) and four other men. The single *droghiere* listed in the parish counted three generations of family plus other people to a total of fourteen. A cluster of four *pasticcieri* households numbered two small ones and two nuclear families with five and six members. See Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma, SS. Celso and Giuliano, *Stati delle anime* 1610, ff. 11v, 13v, 16, 113v; 59; 137, 139–9v. Across town in the large parish of S. Lorenzo in Lucina in 1609, there were fourteen *speciali*, half of them living in the Corso, with households ranging in size from two to eight and averaging 4.3 persons. See S. Lorenzo in Lucina, *Stati delle anime* 1609.

As common in Rome, this household included several members who were not kin. These auxiliary workers moved throughout the building. In this holiday season, Rossi employed three *garzoni* – male assistants. That day one had been sent to the wardrobe of Cardinal Farnese to borrow hangings and rugs to decorate the shop.⁶¹ Another was upstairs handling *confetti* stored in the family's sleeping rooms.⁶² When the inspectors arrived, unannounced, in mid afternoon, a third *garzone* was assisting his master and mistress below. In Rossi's words, the place was 'topsy-turvy as he was setting up the usual Christmas display'.⁶³ Ginevra was handing *pan pepato*, a spice cake, to a shop assistant, who stood at the counter.⁶⁴ Close by too was a visitor, Laura, a widow from the village of Poli. Called 'balia' by Ginevra, in the past Laura had wet-nursed two of the couple's children and now, in anticipation of the coming baby, she was helping out. She was washing clothes in the room 'with the tubs', perhaps also where candies were made, when she heard loud voices in the shop and went to see what was happening.⁶⁵ All told, at that December moment Rossi's premises not only sheltered the labour of six adults, including three men and one woman not family, but also, at least in part, contained those workers' domestic lives.⁶⁶

THE INSPECTION: A PROFESSIONAL CRISIS

To the prosperous Rossi shop preparing confidently for a big season, the sudden appearance of guild inspectors was a shock. According to the candy-maker's later legal complaint, never before, in all his years in Rome, had he received such a visitation.⁶⁷ To his mind, the very fact of this unprecedented inspection impugned his professional integrity. Envy (*invidia*), he averred, had singled him out for the guild's vendetta.⁶⁸ So superior were his products that, 'many princes and lords of this city, that before bought confections from their [local] *speziali* now come to my shop, finding themselves better served and satisfied, as they will attest.'⁶⁹ So, in the confectioner's view, resentful rivals were using the guild to persecute him. Rather than acknowledging a corporate affiliation with the inspectors, let alone their authority,

⁶¹ f. 151; P. Waddy, *Seventeenth-Century Roman Palaces* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), 39–40.

⁶² f. 151v: 'stando io a lavorare alcune confetture in casa di m. Guglielmo Confettiero, cioè nelle stanze di sopra dove lui dorme, et con me ci lavorava Giulio pittore . . .'

⁶³ f. 139v.

⁶⁴ f. 168v.

⁶⁵ ff. 139v, 142v, 148v, 160.

⁶⁶ Lacking an Easter census record of the Rossi household, we do not know how its more temporary members might be counted. Laura the *balia* clearly slept there during her time of employment. Practice varied for *garzoni*. Nevertheless, wherever the assistants slept, they would have passed long days chez Rossi, working both downstairs and up.

⁶⁷ f. 139.

⁶⁸ f. 140v.

⁶⁹ f. 139.

Guglielmo, at least in hindsight, read their mission as an unwarranted intrusion into his individual domain.

Rossi's *ad hominem* interpretation was far from the views of the inspectors. Despite Guglielmo's theory that he had suffered personal vengeance, the campaign of inspection clearly had broader scope. According even to the accused consuls, candies had indeed never before been an object of corporate scrutiny. One consul, who had also served some years earlier, acknowledged that in the past there had been no fear of adulteration in candy.⁷⁰ If the twice-yearly general rounds of inspection mandated in the apothecaries' statutes actually happened, they appear to have skipped over the confectioners. On the other hand, the visitors of December 1608 had been in several shops before coming to Rossi's door, and they pursued their course in still other locations afterwards. They had indeed made their very first call at the shop of one of the inspectors, the *speciale* Mario Stefanone.⁷¹ Guglielmo may have been the first specialist *confettiere* visited, but that, according to one witness, was a matter only of the convenient route through town. A Portuguese candy-maker in the same neighbourhood received the inspectors later the same day.⁷² Therefore, although the guild's inquiry into sweets was in fact a novelty, the visitors had not singled Guglielmo out.

To conduct their publicly sanctioned business, the inspectors had to enter the shop and all other parts of the building where the candy-maker stored his materials and inventory. Thus, not only the familiar *garzoni*, but also male strangers – at least three of them in this case – legitimately, if less routinely, penetrated the coinciding work and domestic spaces that were Rossi's upstairs rooms.⁷³ Ginevra's testimony confirmed Guglielmo's complaint that the inspectors, not content to visit the shop alone, had penetrated 'the whole house.'⁷⁴ Even if translucent and porous, there was a sense, at least in the fraught minds of the householders who felt it transgressed, that a conceptual membrane should protect the space of the family and its enterprise.

The proceedings began correctly, as the consuls cited their authority and asked to see all the stock. Soon, however, among the 'curly' candies (*colandri ricci*), someone spotted – or tasted, in one version – something suspicious and called for a test.⁷⁵ For this resort to professional empiricism, one of the guildsmen took the lead, but apparently it required little special skill to identify or assay 'false' candies. Indeed, this sort of manipulation must have been routine for apothecaries. Placing a sample in a metal vessel, perhaps with a bit of water, the inspector exposed it to fire, whereat the candy melted.⁷⁶ A

⁷⁰ f. 162.

⁷¹ f. 160.

⁷² ff. 158v, 162, 164.

⁷³ f. 152.

⁷⁴ ff. 139v, 143v.

⁷⁵ f. 143, 156, 157v, 160v, 163v, 169v; for tasting, 169v.

⁷⁶ Witnesses used different words to designate the metal vessel: 'stagnatino', 'cazzoletta di rame' (ff. 157v, 163v); one mentioned the addition of water (f. 169v).

glance then detected the forbidden flour or starch.⁷⁷ Once the illicit ingredients showed themselves, the offending box was sealed and set aside for further assessment.

By this time, Guglielmo was becoming more heated than his molten wares, and his anger singed his wife as well. Risking big fines for his resistance, the candy-maker shouted at the visitors. When asked to show further boxes, he reportedly shot back, 'Get them yourselves.' Then he announced that he would alert Cardinal Borghese, the papal nephew. Rossi may have regarded Borghese, noted for sumptuous hospitality that likely included *confetti*, as a personal patron.⁷⁸ The confectioner's tactic invoked the prestige of the pope and perhaps individual ties of clientage against the corporate authorities of guild and commune. The inspector Stefanone retorted by instructing the *mandatario* to report Guglielmo's obstruction to the Conservators and to fetch the police.⁷⁹ The candy-maker then turned to his wife and told her to show the inspectors 'everything' (*ogni cosa*), and stormed out to seek the cardinal's help.⁸⁰ Dismayed by the ruckus and frightened at the threat of her husband's arrest, the pregnant Ginevra was left to confront the male guild officers on her own. While accustomed to serving as her husband's deputy in the family shop, she had never faced this kind of crisis.

As a thorough inspection progressed, the consuls' zeal likely reinforced by the candy-maker's resistance, Ginevra became visibly upset. The arrival of police compounded her troubles.⁸¹ An accused inspector reported that the matron 'lamented and moaned and feared that they would carry off the whole shop'.⁸² Her employees described her as shaking, crying, and red in the face.⁸³ While all agreed about Ginevra's distress, accounts varied about its provocation. The consuls mostly tried to exculpate themselves with suggestions that they had been polite and not strenuously demanding. One, Marcantonio Ciappi, neighbour and friend, had tried to reassure Ginevra, as he also had sought to minimize Guglielmo's breaches of the rules. Testimony mustered for the Rossi family countered that the beleaguered wife was asked to shift heavy boxes, to retrieve stock from high shelves, and finally to lead the visitors to inspect the goods upstairs. Laura *la balia* protested against the guildsmen for lacking compassion and 'making a woman go up and down in that way'.⁸⁴ One *garzone* reported that his mistress had failed three times to climb onto a stool in order to open a high cupboard.⁸⁵ The later

⁷⁷ f. 143. After melting, cloudiness may have been the telltale sign. For this suggestion, I thank chemist Bryan Reuben and cookery expert Rosemary Cass-Beggs in London.

⁷⁸ L. von Pastor, *A History of the Popes* (London, 1952), Vol. 25, 63–4.

⁷⁹ f. 139v.

⁸⁰ f. 161.

⁸¹ f. 149.

⁸² f. 176.

⁸³ ff. 141v, 150, 152.

⁸⁴ f. 139v.

⁸⁵ f. 150v, 176v.

sorry consequences of these events, coupled with the oppositional dynamics of the trial, coloured the hindsight of testimony from both sides. In context, neither her husband's expectations of Ginevra nor the inspectors' were unreasonable, even if not routine. A particular concatenation of circumstances produced an uncommon tragedy, but the ambiguous conjunction of familial and marketplace tasks was an everyday challenge.

Ginevra's pregnancy complicated contemporary readings of the inspection's abusive impact. During the crisis, her belly formed a particularly intimate space where domesticity and work intersected – in McKeon's terms, an early modern private/public distinction quite unseparated. Guglielmo, in his wrath, seemed to have no qualms about leaving his pregnant wife to cope. Carrying her sixth, Ginevra had been with child during a good part of their more than twelve-year marriage and working partnership. Yet, by its denial or invocation, witnesses on both sides of the trial suggested that the pregnancy did have meaning in the unfolding of events. Two of the inspectors disclaimed knowing of it at the time. While Ginevra's clothed body may or may not have given clear evidence to onlookers, the accused's omissions seem to signify more than literal ignorance. Feeling perhaps regret, even if not guilt, at the sad outcome, these men found denial exonerating, emotionally as well as legally.⁸⁶ By implication, had they known of her condition, they might have behaved differently. On the Rossi side, a sense that a pregnant woman deserved special care came from Laura, the mother's helper, who testified that she had urged compassion and reproved the guildsmen for 'harassing one who is six months pregnant'.⁸⁷ These testimonies suggest that pregnancy created ambiguities in how to treat a woman as worker, but not that the two roles could or should be separated.

As drama, the inspection ended anticlimactically. Winding down their search, the consuls sealed a box with the fraudulent candies. Rather than taking it with them, they deposited it with Guglielmo's neighbour, Vincenzo the hatmaker.⁸⁸ According to one consul, these would later be brought before a tribunal of the thirteen guild councillors. If judged indeed faulty, the sweets – or more likely the resulting fines – would be distributed to charity, presumably through the apothecaries' confraternity.⁸⁹ In the meantime, the police had left and the guildsmen headed off to inspect other premises where candies were sold. Presently, having sought in vain for aid at Cardinal Borghese's palace, Rossi returned home.⁹⁰ He found his shop in disarray, part of his stock confiscated, his workers aflutter, and his pregnant wife shocked and in pain.

⁸⁶ f. 176. In his testimony Hippolito Ceccarelli avoided acknowledging the pregnancy, but did hear Laura urge 'che si volesse havere compassione a quella donna et che havessero riguardo alla povera famiglia.'

⁸⁷ ff. 139v–40, 149.

⁸⁸ ff. 143v, 144, 158, 161v, 169v, 173.

⁸⁹ f. 164.

⁹⁰ f. 139v. We hear no more about it this ploy to find support.

A self-defined specialist artisan had been struck suddenly in his honour and, in lesser measure, in his livelihood by public forces – guild and civic – of economic discipline. His shop, his self-assigned professional identity as a specialist producer, his home, his wife – none were inviolate. Willingly or not, the confectioner had to answer to the officials of the apothecaries' guild. Very clearly, he had made and sold candies that pleased his customers, but broke the rules. With due authority the inspectors did their job in identifying the 'false' sweets and preparing to penalize him; and when Rossi resisted their efforts, he risked additional, much heavier fines. In calling on the cardinal nephew, Rossi tried to flank the system, but in this instance the informal power of patronage failed to back individual interest. Communal and corporate order claimed the day. In succeeding weeks, while the professional costs of the inspection continued to rankle in Guglielmo's mind, other more personal damages piled up, and he turned to the criminal courts to wrest his compensation.

THE MISCARRIAGE: A MEDICAL CRISIS

Here our story still occupies the same un-separated spatial site of work and family, but the focus shifts from the first to the second domain of the Rossi lives. As the occupational helpmate and mother first sickened, then miscarried, and then died, the tale of tensions between the individual shopkeeper and his guild becomes one of family catastrophe. The success of Guglielmo's prosecution rested on drawing out the causal consequences of this intersection of work and domesticity and on linking the inspection to his wife's illness and miscarriage. To this end, he added several medical specialists to the roster of witnesses. Legally, their professional expertise bolstered the bereft husband's revenge against the guildsmen. Medically, these testimonies spoke about female stewardship of reproduction and about male obstetrical intervention and reserve. To enrich a scholarship on Italian obstetrics that jumps from Renaissance prescriptive treatises to studies of midwifery mostly in the eighteenth century, Rossi's judicial ambition thus provides rare documentation of early seventeenth-century practice.⁹¹ Here we see McKeon's formula resonate with suggestions about early modern medical practice from Barbara Duden's study of the eighteenth-century German Dr Johan Storch, a physician to women ranging from nobles to peasants.⁹² Despite differences of time and place, striking parallels appear between the experiences of Storch's patients and those of the seventeenth-century Italian Ginevra.

⁹¹ Treatises summarized in R. Bell, *How to Do It. Guides to Good Living for Renaissance Italians* (Chicago, 1999), 73–123. On midwifery, see N. Filippini, 'The church, the state, and childbirth: The midwife in Italy during the eighteenth century', in *The Art of Midwifery*, (ed.) H. Marland (London, 1993), 152–75; n. 2 summarizes the literature in Italian.

⁹² B. Duden, *The Woman Beneath the Skin* (Cambridge, MA, 1991), Chapter 1 and passim. While Duden's formulations are variably clear and compelling, her approach to the body and boundaries is suggestive in this context.

The first stage of Ginevra's illness was ordinary women's business. Similarly, Duden writes, 'Self-diagnosis and self-therapy run through Storch's cases like a red thread of everyday experience.'⁹³ Taking to her bed as soon as the inspectors departed, it was from there two weeks later that the matron testified to the magistrates about her ailments. Laura, her hardworking 'wet-nurse', who had tended her all along, elaborated the account. Almost immediately, the harassed shop mistress had vomited; though feeling a strong urge to urinate, she could not. Later, she started to bleed. Laura shared her bed that night and got up to fetch linens when Ginevra feared she would miscarry.⁹⁴ However, for a week, nothing further happened. Uncomfortable and continuing to discharge blood, Ginevra was much in bed, but sometimes got up to walk around.⁹⁵ She met no other special burdens or disruptions, since throughout this time Laura not only cared for the sick woman, but also did all the cooking and housework.⁹⁶

Medical experts, especially male ones, had little to offer someone in Ginevra's predicament. A regime of rest, with a mild diet and no sex, was the best that obstetrical treatises could propose when an involuntary miscarriage threatened. Beyond inveighing against the wickedness of women who tried to induce abortions or who miscarried through mere heedlessness, Italian authorities, evidently feeling impotent to save a premature foetus in the womb, wrote more about how to expel a dead one.⁹⁷ Nor for many days did Ginevra think a midwife could help. She called for one only on the day after Christmas, but presumably could have done so earlier if she had thought it necessary.

While his wife lay stricken in bed, probably upstairs, Guglielmo carried on in the shop during this disrupted holiday season. While he had Laura to substitute for Ginevra's housewifely and child care duties, he was without his assistant manager of the business. His delay before sending for medical assistance need not have signalled husbandly negligence or chill preoccupation with his schemes for legal revenge. Consensus decreed that there was little for men to do. Interestingly, however, two males, neither of them Ginevra's kinsmen – one of the shop assistants and the nearby *speciale* Ciappi – heard of her bleeding.⁹⁸ Such male conversation about gynaecological symptoms, especially outside the family, surprises our modern assumptions about shame's past boundaries. Perhaps a distressed Guglielmo intemperately discussed matters normally left unspoken. More likely, early modern propriety drew its lines differently from that of later, more euphemistic eras. The eighteenth-century Dr. Storch was quite accustomed to diagnosing women's ailments based on second-hand reports including ones brought by men.⁹⁹

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁹⁴ ff. 143v–44, 149v.

⁹⁵ f. 150v.

⁹⁶ ff. 149v, 151v.

⁹⁷ Bell, *How to Do It*, 82–6.

⁹⁸ ff. 151v, 162v.

⁹⁹ Duden, *Woman Beneath the Skin*, 81–3.

When on 26 December, St Stephen's Day, Ginevra's condition worsened, other people, including several medical practitioners, then rallied to her bedside. Here another set of needs enabled the porosity of domestic space. Alerted by Guglielmo, a neighbour Lavinia came to keep company. To her the wife railed against the 'betrayal' by the guild consuls.¹⁰⁰ When a bit of umbilical cord began to emerge, Ginevra at last sent for her midwife, Giulia.¹⁰¹ A familiar presence with long obstetrical experience, this widow offered both psychological support and physical care. To ground the authority of her testimony, Giulia said that she had practiced in Rome more than twenty-five years, during which 'I have seen so many deaths (*tante morti*)'.¹⁰² Having examined Ginevra and determined that the foetus was dead, she informed Guglielmo and reassured her patient. Yet, seeing further peril, the midwife called for a priest to give confession and communion. Then Giulia settled in to wait. She assisted later in the day when two medical men, a physician and a surgeon, visited Ginevra at Guglielmo's behest. Renaissance medical authors Michele Savonarola and Giovanni Marinello urged the intervention of male surgeons to deal with extracting a stillbirth, although the friar Girolamo Mercurio in his vernacular manual recognized that often the dilemma would fall to a midwife to resolve.¹⁰³

The trial record suggests that a compassionate Rossi went to some lengths and expense to tend Ginevra's health. As a measure of his devotion, his claim for damages demanded a hefty 4,000 scudi for the loss of his 'most dear' wife's companionship.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps through his professional association with the apothecaries, the candy-maker knew local practitioners and sought out their more weighty male expertise. However, we may wonder whether male doctors' house calls to miscarrying women of modest rank were common. Not only the fact but also the timing of these medical visits suggest that the husband, who was just then preparing his lawsuit, had legal as much as therapeutic matters on his mind.

When Guglielmo decided to bring in medical men, he first summoned from across town the Magnificent Pietro Bresciani, by title a university-trained doctor of medicine. While the physician entered the Rossi home, his exchanges with the patient showed considerable reserve. Here again we see an anticipation of practices Duden attributes to Dr Storch many years later, 'The importance of words and the public nature of the complaint stand in sharp contrast to the unimportance of a medical examination and what one can almost call a taboo against touching'.¹⁰⁵ Bresciani's testimony stated that

¹⁰⁰ f. 142.

¹⁰¹ f. 144.

¹⁰² ff. 144v-5. Giulia is identified as the widow of Hippolito Vallecuro romano.

¹⁰³ Bell, *How to Do It*, 85-6.

¹⁰⁴ f. 174v. Note this claim was notionally double the substantial amount claimed for Ginevra's services in the confectioner's trade.

¹⁰⁵ Duden, *Woman Beneath the Skin*, 83-4.

he first spoke with Ginevra at her bedside about her symptoms. She reported feeling feverish, thirsty, and troubled by pains in the kidneys and head and by a heaviness under her navel. Only when told by the midwife that the patient was pregnant – here, as for Storch, words rather than observation were the signal – did the doctor proceed to touch Ginevra to learn the state of the foetus.¹⁰⁶ Even so, his hands-on technique most likely extended only to feeling the abdomen through clothing, for again it was Giulia who informed him of the prolapsed umbilical chord. From this predominantly verbal evidence, he agreed with the midwife that the foetus had died and asked Ginevra what might have happened. This, of course, provided the opening for rehearsing the story of the disruptive inspectors, which Guglielmo needed verified for his lawsuit. The physician, most gravely concerned to purge the womb, recommended a medical remedy, lozenges (*trocisse*) of myrrh.¹⁰⁷ Later the same day, a surgeon, Giovanni Battista Bolognini, an immigrant from Genoa twenty-four years earlier, happened to pass the shop. Guglielmo called this compatriot in as well. The surgeon, too, consulted with the midwife and instructed her to touch the extruded umbilical cord. When she reported it swollen and turning black, Bolognini concurred that the foetus was dead and the womb required cleansing, but proposed instead a procedure from his own specialty. If called, he promised to bring his *speculum* for the task.¹⁰⁸ Instead, Bresciani continued to care for Ginevra, although it is unclear whether he attempted therapeutic purgation.

Four days later, two weeks after the inspection, before dawn, Ginevra in great pain expelled a stillborn girl, two palms long. In attendance were again the women: the wet-nurse Laura, a neighbour Orsola, and the midwife Giulia. The last washed the flaccid foetal body with wine and warm water and placed it in a basket. These gestures spoke less of medical efficacy than of quasi-sacramental respect for a creature caught in the murky margins between death and the afterworld.¹⁰⁹ Later, for purposes of Rossi's prosecution, the magistrates themselves came to view the tiny corpse, and the parents, the three medical practitioners, and two neighbour women testified in gruesome detail to the sad, decaying condition of the tissue.¹¹⁰

From the legal standpoint, to ascribe the miscarriage to violence and emotional distress turned especially on timing.¹¹¹ When had the foetus died,

¹⁰⁶ ff. 146v–7. Bresciani lived in Via Giubbonari at some distance from Via dei Corsori.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* On abortifacients and the handling of dead foetuses generally, see J. M. Riddle, *Eve's Herbs: A History of Contraception and Abortion in the West* (Cambridge, MA, 1997), 106–8, 140–8; on this remedy, 145. Storch too was much concerned about purging the womb: Duden, *Woman Beneath the Skin*, 160–6.

¹⁰⁸ ff. 147v–8. Bolognini lived in the Vicolo del Pavone. In another stillbirth case, for the roles of midwife, surgeon and apothecary, see note 41.

¹⁰⁹ f. 145.

¹¹⁰ ff. 145r–v, 147, 148r–v.

¹¹¹ Proving causality in such a case posed problems in other legal traditions as well; see S. Butler, 'Abortion by assault: Violence against pregnant women in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England', *Journal of Women's History* 17:4 (2005), 9–31.

and could the premature stillbirth thus be tied to the mother's turbulent experience of the inspection? A neighbour woman noted vaguely that Ginevra had not felt the baby move for 'several' days.¹¹² Here the testimony of three medical experts was crucial. Based on the condition of the tissue, the midwife and the physician made more specific estimates about the time of foetal death. Giulia, who had herself been called in only four days earlier, placed the death at least twelve days before. Such a date correlated neatly with the immediate aftermath of the inspection. It is hard to know whether this opinion was disinterested, or compassionately tailored to fit Rossi's claims for justice.¹¹³ The views of the medical men, while potentially weightier with the court, were in detail less useful. The physician Bresciani estimated, less precisely, that the foetus had been dead at least a week, and the surgeon deferred, out of respect or convenience, to the *medico*.¹¹⁴ The men's expertise was more telling about the causes of miscarriage. The two acknowledged that 'disgusto, travaglio et fatica' of the sort that Ginevra and Guglielmo attributed to the consuls' visit were among the many possible triggers. To that effect, Bresciani, displaying his superior book-learning, cited Hippocrates on the illnesses of women.¹¹⁵ (Storch, more than a century later, described his own cases to support the tradition that anger and, especially, fear could derail pregnancies.¹¹⁶) As the candy-maker brought his criminal charges, he had to make do with suggestive, but inconclusive expert opinion.

Ginevra, despite five more days of Bresciani's care, died in the early hours of Friday, 4 January. The physician pronounced her demise due to fever following from the miscarriage.¹¹⁷ After her death, she was taken from the Rossi house – at once her home and workplace – to be laid out a few short blocks away in the parish church of Saints Celso and Giuliano, before the altar of the Holy Sacrament. There the court officials, no doubt prodded by Guglielmo, went to view her body. The notary recorded that she appeared forty years old and well garbed in a lace-trimmed silk dress (*sottana*) the colour of dried roses, a black cloak, and red stockings. Laura *la balia*, who had prepared the corpse, uncovered it so that the magistrates could observe that there were no signs of injury.¹¹⁸

Duly convinced that a prosecution was in order, the court then took action against five of the guild inspectors. Over the next two weeks, the magistrates interrogated the accused and tracked records that Guglielmo had signalled

¹¹² f. 146.

¹¹³ The Governor's court summoned midwives as expert witnesses not only to assess virginity and its loss, but also for other gynecological matters. It also consulted male practitioners, especially surgeons; see, for example, ASR, Processi 1600–1619, busta 25, ff. 1–9 (charges against a sodomized wife) and busta 28 bis, ff. 845–66 (another case of violence causing miscarriage).

¹¹⁴ ff. 145, 147, 148.

¹¹⁵ f. 147.

¹¹⁶ Duden, *Woman Beneath the Skin*, 145–9.

¹¹⁷ f. 155v.

¹¹⁸ ff. 154v–5.

of his earlier legal tussles with one of them, Antonio Suerdos.¹¹⁹ With one notable exception, there the surviving documentation ends. Although the transcripts would normally next have been forwarded for lawyers' arguments and then, if the trial was completed, eventual judgment, in this, as in many cases, these steps elude history.

The remaining document – Rossi's bold and unusual claim for damages – deserves our concluding attention, for it very neatly represents McKeon's private and public distinction without separation. Once bereft of child and wife, Guglielmo ramped up his ire and his lawsuit against the officious guildsmen. Protesting that during his wife's dire illness he had been 'in such pain and anguish that he was not enough in his right mind to put everything necessary into his legal complaint', he asserted his right to add further charges.¹²⁰ In this statement of damages, he articulated his view of the full coincidence of professional and private disaster. The apothecaries' unjust intrusion on his occupational autonomy had undone his business and, inextricably linked in physical and bodily spaces, his family. Rossi demanded thousands of *scudi* in compensation – for him an enormous sum – in an itemized list of claims that interleaved injuries professional and personal, material and emotional. In sequence he cited: disrupted business in a peak season and costs for extra help to replace his ailing wife (300 *scudi*); loss of the stillborn child (1000); loss of Ginevra's future services as trained candy-maker (2000); costs to substitute for part of her work as overseer of shop and children (500); loss of her most dear (*carissima*) wifely companionship (4000); damage to his reputation caused by 'public infamy' (1000); and, at the end, illegal seizure of a box of candies.¹²¹ For Rossi, not all of these losses and injuries to his economic, professional, social, and emotional well-being were the same, in degree or nature. However, they were all connected in his mind and in his everyday life.

Sweet and bitter, sugar and gall mixed together through the several miscarriages of apothecary justice of that Roman Christmas season of 1608. Conducting a duly authorized search for candies counterfeit with starch, the inspectors of the *Speziali* guild discovered the confectioner Rossi in breach of the rules. The guildsmen thus prepared to bring him before their tribunal for punishment. To the specialist confectioner, however, he, not general apothecaries, should judge the best ways to make pleasing and novel *confetti*. Therefore, he resisted the – to him – unwarranted violation of shop and home that sharply wounded his professional pride and tragically rent his

¹¹⁹ Stefanone was jailed when he appeared, and Giorgione and Ciappi supplied bonds (*fideiussioni*) that allowed them to remain free, but at the judges' call. On 7 January, when questioned, these three men told their versions. Following a hiatus to recover documents from an earlier prosecution (ff. 166r–v), on 15 January police arrested and jailed Suerdos and Ceccarelli, and the next day the judges interrogated them. On 17 January, after recalling Stefanone who had been ten days in jail, the court completed the trial's investigative phase and signalled that it should proceed to the next stage when the accused offered their defences.

¹²⁰ f. 174.

¹²¹ ff. 174r–v.

family. He sought first the support of a powerful patron and then the redress of the criminal courts. Certainly, the accused inspectors were on legitimate business and intended no criminal harm. However, the Governor's court, generally keen to ensure public order while extending its own jurisdiction, lent itself to Rossi's strategies as a counter to the guild tribunals. Through the lawsuit, the candy-maker propelled his family's tragedy into the public realm of the court in a quest to restore the professional honour that the official visitors had wrested from him. It is unlikely that the judges ultimately recognized Rossi's bold and idiosyncratic claims. Willy-nilly, they could restore neither his confiscated candies, nor his wife and child. But in the currencies of honour and anger, the nuisance value and perhaps bad publicity that the prosecution itself brought may have sufficed, in part at least, to gratify the candy-maker's vengeance against the apothecary guildsmen.

A persistent interpenetration of professional and domestic spaces and of male and female concerns made possible this particular tangle of affronts and injuries. Even without legal or social resolution, the trial affords precious glimpses of the intangible, porous, but none the less culturally potent interface between domesticity and commerce in many seventeenth-century Italian lives. Historians tempted to draw a boundary between 'private' and 'public' for the early modern world would do well to wrestle with the complexities of McKeon's 'distinction without separation'.

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2

Pharmacies as centres of communication in early modern Venice

FILIPPO DE VIVO

Pharmacies (*spezierie*) had a prominent position in Venice's economy, a densely populated city as well as the centre of long-distance spice trading. In 1565, seventy-one apothecaries registered their shops at the newly founded *Collegio degli Speziali*. Only four years later the number had risen to eighty-five, and by the early seventeenth century there were over a hundred shops (roughly one/every 130 inhabitants).¹ Walking around the city it is still possible to see frequent signs of the pharmacies' past ubiquity. The Golden Hercules at Santa Fosca preserves most of its old furnishings (Fig. 1), and many other pharmacies preserve their old names. Some of the original shop-signs indicate the location of pharmacies that have now disappeared, such as the golden head hanging from the eponymous pharmacy's window near the Rialto Bridge. Significantly, too, there are four *calli dello spezier*, streets named after the apothecary who once operated there (and in the nineteenth century there were as many as seven).² Deriving from a time when there was no state planning of toponyms, those names indicate familiarity – pharmacies were so well known that they identified and defined space.³ In this way, they competed with such other places as *malvasia*, the wine-shop where people drank the sweet wine from Greece, and which inspired the naming of six streets.

The parallel between establishments meant to restore one's health and others which no doubt helped to undermine it, however strange to us, suggests that to some extent apothecary and wine-seller provided comparable services in the early modern city. As I will argue, pharmacies too offered

I would like to thank Alex Bamji and John Henderson for very helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article, as well as Federica Ruspio and Federico Barbierato for helping at crucial moments. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated, and original unpublished quotations are given in footnotes.

¹ I derive these figures from Richard Palmer, 'Pharmacy in the republic of Venice in the sixteenth century', in *Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*, (eds.) A. Wear, R. K. French, and I. M. Lonie (Cambridge, 1985), 103 and Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and Traders: The World of the Guilds in Venice and Europe, c. 1250–c. 1650* (London and Sydney, 1987), 88–90. Note that for 1585 Mackenney also records 122 *spezierie da grosso*, which dealt mainly in edible spices. They are never distinguished from the medical *spezierie* in the Inquisitors' files, but every time the latter provide a detailed description, it is clear that they refer to medical shops.

² Giuseppe Tassin, *Curiosità Veneziane* (first ed. 1863) (Venice, 1999).

³ For a similar explanation of informal urban toponyms, see David Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community in Paris, 1740–1790* (Cambridge, 1986), 27–30.

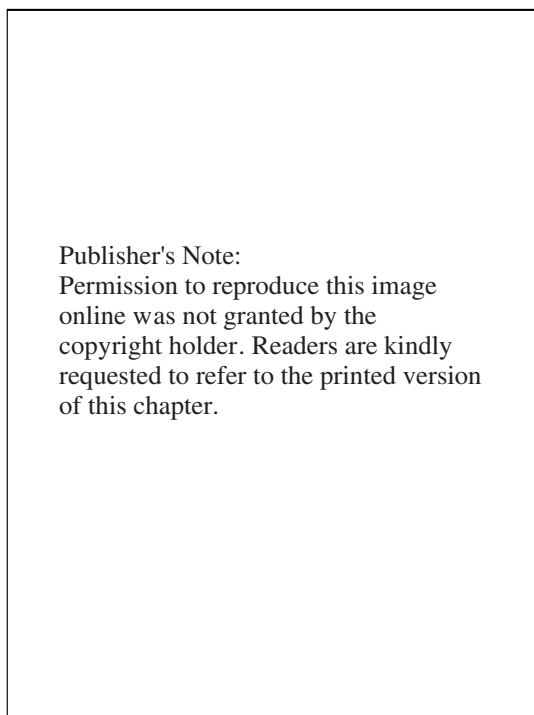


Fig. 1 Pharmacy of the *Ercole d'Oro*, Venice, late sixteenth-century interior (photo: Federica Ruspio, published with the permission of the pharmacist, Dottor Enrico Di Sopra)

shelter for sociability and leisure, comfortable places for gathering, conversing, and for exchanging news. In fact, this function may well couple with the provision of medicines and other important staples such as wax and spices, to explain the pharmacies' proliferation in early modern Venice. Their importance was social and cultural as well as strictly economic. In the city's extended marketplace, they constituted valuable channels for the collection and distribution of both local and international information. Thus, just as pharmacies worked as centres for the diffusion of medical knowledge, so they did for different kinds of ideas – an apt illustration of this special issue's insistence on the plurality of functions performed by early modern medical practitioners.

Recently apothecaries have attracted some attention, as historians have moved – in David Gentilcore's words – from pharmacy to pharmacists.⁴ By

⁴ David Gentilcore, 'Apothecaries, "Charlatans", and the Medical Marketplace in Italy, 1400–1750 – Introduction', *Pharmacy in History*, 45 (2003), 92. Works on pharmacies in Venice include: Girolamo Dian, *Cenni storici sulla Farmacia Veneta al tempo della Repubblica* (Venezia, 1900); Gino Meneghini, *La farmacia attraverso i secoli e gli speciali di Venezia e Padova* (Padua, 1946); Richard Palmer, 'Pharmacy'; Silvia Gramigna, *L'arte dello speciale. Cure naturali e tradizioni al tempo della Serenissima* (Venice, 1988); Michelle Laughran, 'Medicating With or Without "Scruples": The "Professionalization" of the Apothecary in Sixteenth-Century Venice', *Pharmacy in History*, 45 (2003), 95–107.

underlining the opportunities for sociability and communication which apothecaries and their shops provided to the wider social world in which they operated, I wish to respond to Vivian Nutton's call in this journal to study medicine's interaction with other aspects of the cultural, economic, and political life of Renaissance cities.⁵ Furthermore, I hope to demonstrate the importance of medical establishments for the history of public political communication that, following the work of Jürgen Habermas, has concentrated on coffee houses and salons to the detriment of earlier and possibly more inclusive meeting places.⁶ My findings are based on sources which largely differ from those generally used by historians of medicine. The latter include the records of state authorities and professional organizations, which were careful to supervise the quality of medicines and to preserve the boundaries between competing medical categories.⁷ However, apothecaries also incurred the attention of different institutions, the Holy Office and the secular Inquisitors of State, charged with the prosecution of religious heterodoxy and political conspiracy respectively. In other words, if apothecaries were thought to serve the state by offering cures to its citizens, they were also perceived as threatening.

PHARMACIES AND THE INQUISITION

The archive of the Holy Office abounds with evidence of pharmacies functioning as centres of heterodox religious discussion. Over the period 1547–86, John Martin found twenty-four accusations of heresy against apothecaries, a relatively high number compared to other professions.⁸ In 1551, the Anabaptist priest Pietro Manelfi denounced several apothecaries as heretical (mostly as Lutherans rather than Anabaptists), especially in connection to Venice. In fact, the first three heretics Manelfi remembered in the city were apothecaries (at the signs of the Moor, the Angel, and the Falcon), the former two 'con suoi garzoni' (with their assistants).⁹ That he remembered their shop-signs better than their names, suggests that Manelfi spent time in their shops, perhaps engaging in discussions as part of his proselytizing. As he said, he knew their religious ideas 'because we talked together repeatedly', 'in their homes, in the street, and in other places.'¹⁰ Likewise, the fact that Manelfi's

⁵ Vivian Nutton, 'Introduction: Medicine in the Renaissance City', *Renaissance Studies*, 15 (2001), 101–03.

⁶ Cf. for example James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), which makes no mention of pharmacies.

⁷ E.g. Giovanni Marangoni, *Associazioni di mestiere nella Repubblica Veneta (vittuaria – farmacia – medicina)* (Venice, 1974); 'Ordini e capitoli del Collegio de gli spetiali della inclita Città di Venezia l'anno della Redention nostra MDLXV', *Quaderni della Accademia Italiana di Storia della Farmacia*, v. 5 (1984).

⁸ John Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1993), 244–7. More evidence in Palmer, 'Physicians and the Inquisition in sixteenth-century Venice: the case of Girolamo Donzellini', in *Medicine and the Reformation*, (ed.) A. R. Cunningham (London, 1993), 121.

⁹ Carlo Ginzburg, (ed.) *I costituti di Don Pietro Manelfi* (Firenze-Chicago, 1970), 48 and 69–70.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 69–70.

host in Ferrara later looked for him in a pharmacy (to warn him against his imminent arrest), again suggests that Manelfi spent considerable amounts of time there.¹¹

Having checked the spread of heresy, in the seventeenth century the Inquisition continued to keep an eye on apothecaries, and often found them in possession of magical books, which they circulated to others perhaps in relation with healing.¹² As the inquisitors discovered, the problem was not just that apothecaries entertained dangerous ideas, but also that they turned their shops into centres for the discussion of those ideas. Crucially, this was part of normal sociable activities hosted by pharmacies. For example, in the 1580s it was under cover of playing chess that a dissident priest organized meetings of like-minded evangelicals in the pharmacy at the Two Doves.¹³ In 1620, one apostate friar from Dalmatia was heard challenging the pope's power and other Catholic tenets in the pharmacies of the Golden Lion near San Marco and of the Castle in Castello. The witnesses' depositions show that many of the pharmacy's visitors were fellow Dalmatians and this indicates that the shop was a recognized centre for community gatherings.¹⁴

Two years later, another trial sheds light on the way in which another pharmacy served as a centre for sociability. Bartolomeo da Marostica, apothecary at the Charity in the western reaches of the city, was denounced for blasphemy. The witnesses included several people who admitted to 'pratticar' the pharmacy. As one of them, a commercial broker, put it when charged by his interrogators, 'Yes I frequent [the pharmacy]; occasionally I go there after work and stay there for some time – but never in [the apothecary's] home.' He was evidently keen to deny any intimate acquaintance, but considered it acceptable to spend part of his evening leisure time in the pharmacy. As he also explained, he often heard the apothecary swear while playing cards, which the latter did regularly with some of his customers.¹⁵ Once again, although he knew blasphemy to be a crime, the broker considered gambling as part of normal life in the pharmacy.¹⁶

THE INQUISITORS OF STATE AND THE PHARMACY AT THE SIGN OF THE SUN

Unlike the Holy Office, the Inquisitors of State were an entirely secular magistracy. Established in 1539, their remit was (as their official title went)

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹² E.g. Gaetano Platania, *Processi per lettura di libri proibiti in Friuli. Approccio statistico* (Udine, 1988), 32.

¹³ Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies*, 170–71

¹⁴ Venice, Archivio di Stato (henceforth ASV), *Sant'Uffizio*, b. 75, 'Fra Gregorio Nicolich', January 1620.

¹⁵ 'Interrogato se sia solito a pratticar da ms Bartholomeo Spicier, *respondit* "Signori sì, qualche volta dopo spediti li miei negocii mi trattengo per qualche pezzo nella sua bottega, ma in casa sua non son mai stato".'

Deposition of Gasparo Stella, *sanser*, 23.6.1622, in ASV, *Sant'Uffizio*, b. 77, 'Bartolomeo da Marostica'.

¹⁶ On the difficulties of prohibiting gambling, see Jonathan Walker, 'Gambling and Venetian Noblemen, c. 1500–1700', *Past and Present*, 162 (1999), 28–69.

the 'divulgazione', or disclosure, of political secrets.¹⁷ In a republic such as Venice, where nearly two thousand patricians were each more or less closely engaged in the decision-making process, the Inquisitors had frequent occasion either to prevent or to punish the revelation of political affairs. Normally, they busied themselves with patricians or foreign diplomats, but apothecaries also feature prominently in their records. The following illustrates why this was the case.

Late in October 1611, following a denunciation by one of their guards, the Inquisitors ordered several moles to keep special observation over Angelo Cerutti, apothecary at the sign of the Sun and a native of Parma. The guard's suspicions arose because he had seen Cerutti go to the Ducal Palace every time the Senate met, and then take unspecified papers to the Spanish embassy, 'the same evening, or early the next morning'.¹⁸ As the Inquisitors probably realized by looking in previous reports, one unspecified 'Anzolo spicier' had already been seen going to the Spanish embassy regularly a year earlier.¹⁹ There was enough evidence to open a special enquiry, and the Inquisitors immediately posted several spies to follow Cerutti and to keep an eye on his pharmacy, in the *Campo di Do Pozzi*, near the Arsenal (which at the time still opened onto the nearby *Campo delle Gatte*).²⁰

The guards following Cerutti reported him daily hanging around the Rialto area and the *piazza* of St Mark's, two places where he was likely to find out about the latest news. He used to stand close to the Palace's gate, in the area known as *broglio*, where patricians met daily for their informal discussions and canvassing. At times, he took part in the conversation; at other times, he merely exchanged a few greetings with the many patricians he seemed to know.²¹ Meanwhile, other moles also kept watch on Cerutti's pharmacy. They reported the visits of patricians and non patricians alike; the shop was clearly a sociable spot, where people did not just go to buy medicines or other goods but also, for example, to 'gamble' and 'watch the gambling'.²² The pharmacy was a favourite place for the exchange of the manuscript

¹⁷ Paolo Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia* (Milano, 1994), 59–74.

¹⁸ 'Di continuo post'ogni Pregadi, la sera istessa o la matina a buon'hora', denunciation by Girolamo di Cristiani, former captain of the guard at San Marco, dated 29.10.1611, in ASV, *Inquisitori di stato* (henceforth *IS*), b. 638 and report dated 4.9.1614, *ibid.*, b. 608, file 4.

¹⁹ ASV, *IS*, b. 606, file 9.

²⁰ The Arsenal was to be closed with a walled canal after the conspiracy of 1618, note by G. Martinioni in Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima e singolare* (Venice, 1663), 368. The reports, by several moles, are kept (in no order) in a large unbound file marked 'Osservationi della persona di Anzolo Ceruti Spetiale in Campo dei 2 Pozzi a Santa Trinita', in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10, running from 18.11.1611 to 6.4.1612. Although I could find no mention of this pharmacy in the early seventeenth-century records of the apothecaries' guild, the Inquisitors' guard described him as 'spetier di medicina', ASV, *IS*, b. 638, (29.10.1611). In 1610, the pharmacy of the Sun was recorded being held by one Vincenzo De Bachi, ASV, *Giustizia Vecchia*, b. 117, reg. 161, 116v; it is recorded as having ceased activities in a 1650 list published in Dian, *Cenni storici*, 184.

²¹ Reports dated 4 and 5.12.1611 in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10. Cerutti also frequented both the *nunciatura* and the Spanish embassy (reports of 26 and 22.11.1611; confirmed by the informer planted in the embassy, ASV, *IS*, b. 606, file 9).

²² 'Zogar' and 'veder zogar', report dated 4.1.1612, ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10.

newssheets known as *avvisi*, which were the most important source of periodical information at the time.²³ Cerutti welcomed both newswriters and people interested in reading their sheets. For example, on Christmas Eve 1611, the mole reported the visit of 'one wearing a short coat [a commoner] whom I believe to be one of those scribes who write newssheets'; together with Cerutti and an unidentified patrician, they began reading *avvisi*.²⁴

Not all gatherings were harmless. In March 1612, the Inquisitors arrested Cerutti, tortured him and, on the basis of his confessions, accused the patrician Angelo Badoer of treason. Badoer, who had already incurred suspicion in the past for contacts with the papal nuncio, was found to have passed information to the Spanish ambassador, possibly by way of Cerutti.²⁵ No record of the latter's interrogation is extant, but the English ambassador's diary noted that (as he heard) 'the Apotecarie is sayde to have had the corde thrick and in conclusion to have confessed that the Cavalier Badoer had continual recourse unto his house, and by his meanes did give intelligence to ministers of forren princes'.²⁶ Through his revelation, Cerutti gained his freedom. However, his name soon began surfacing again in the reports of the Inquisitors' informers. As the Inquisitors' secretary summed up, 'once freed, they have gone back to their dealings'.²⁷ In November, he was arrested again and expelled from Venice (on what evidence, we do not know).²⁸ Yet, the Inquisitors found it difficult to prevent his pharmacy from functioning as a centre of political information. When Cerutti left, Fausto Verdelli, a professional informer in the pay of both Parma and Spain, who had been one of Cerutti's closest acquaintances, took up the pharmacy's management.²⁹ Interestingly, while Cerutti was an apothecary, Verdelli was primarily interested in the shop's value as an information exchange. As a mole in the Spanish embassy put it (in yet another set of reports), Verdelli procured information for Bedmar 'by *pretending* to be his apothecary'.³⁰ He turned the pharmacy into a centre for writing (not just reading) newsletters, which he was denounced for sending to Savoy, Lorraine, and Flanders.³¹

²³ Mario Infelise, *Prima dei giornali. Alle origini della pubblica informazione (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Bari, 2002).

²⁴ 'Un altro vestito alla curta che credo sia di quelli che scrive alli bancheti et si mise a lezer credo reporti', report of 24.12.1611; also report of 31.12.1611: 'venne un prete forestier che sta a Castello et in bottega si mise a lezer in sun un sfogio di carta credo fosse riporti et poi andò via'; ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10.

²⁵ The connection is summed up in the report dated 13.5.1612, in ASV, *IS*, b. 607, file 1; it was known to contemporary chroniclers such as Girolamo Priuli (quoted in Gaetano Cozzi, *Il doge Nicolò Contarini. Ricerche sul patriziato veneziano agli inizi del seicento* (Venezia-Roma, 1958), 127n.). On Badoer cf. Preto, *Servizi segreti*, 79–82 and 123–125.

²⁶ Diary of Dudley Carleton, entry dated 12.4.1612, BL, Harley Ms. 4298, 28v.

²⁷ 'Liberati, sono tornati nelle pratiche', summary of report dated 5.6.1612, in ASV, *IS*, b. 606, file 11.

²⁸ ASV, *CX, Parti Criminali*, r. 29, 123v; 8.11.1612; this time he was not tortured (*ibid.*, 138v–139, 18.12.1612).

²⁹ The reports concerning Verdelli cover the periods October 1613 to September 1614 and December 1616–January 1617; they are kept in a file marked 'Osservazioni circa Fausto Verdelli' in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 4. A brief mention of Verdelli in Preto, *Servizi segreti*, 127.

³⁰ 'Con finta di essere suo spetiaro', report dated 13.5.1612, in ASV, *IS*, b. 607, file 1.

³¹ Reports of 15.4 and 6.8.1614, signed 'il gran fidelissimo della Patria', in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 4.

The Inquisitors clearly did not consider Cerutti to be a spy, or they would have condemned him. What, then, was his role, and how acceptable or unacceptable was it? It may be said that he acted as a facilitator of contacts between political insiders and outsiders, and possibly, that he entered into a greater game than he either suspected or could handle. However, that he entered the game in the first place suggests that, to some extent, he found it normal to open his pharmacy to the protracted conversation of strangers and, up to a point, did not see as problematic their exchange of political information. In effect, as confirmed by other reports to the Inquisitors of State, Cerutti's pharmacy was by no means extraordinary.

In fact, in the same period as some moles watched the apothecary Cerutti, others regularly followed the Duke of Urbino's representative to other pharmacies: the Two Moors and two unnamed pharmacies near Rialto and San Marco.³² Two years later, Antonio Meschita, a newswriter in the service of the Spanish ambassador, was reported to visit several pharmacies almost daily. They included the Golden Head and the Angel in the parish of San Bartolomeo, the Anchor in Santi Apostoli, the pharmacy near the bridge in the Frari, as well as one in San Polo and one in San Trovaso. Meschita was particularly loyal to the still extant pharmacy of the Golden Hercules at Santa Fosca – in a few days, he went there alone, with the English ambassador's secretary, and with two patricians. He gambled there, and at one point invited the apothecary to play cards in his own home.³³ Similarly, Antonio Calbo, a Venetian patrician suspected of passing information to the Spanish, was repeatedly seen at the pharmacies of the Golden Head near Rialto and of the Chair near San Marco, where he met with agents of foreign embassies and newswriters.³⁴

Clearly, pharmacies were amongst the favourite haunts of Venice's professional informers (newswriters, diplomats' agents, 'spies'). Did they really need the apothecaries' medicines and other wares? It would be more accurate to say that they knew pharmacies to be places where information could be found because different people met there to exchange news and gossip. Thus, the secretive exploits of spies partly fed off information channels that were open and known to many. Contemporaries realized that pharmacies were centres of information. For example, at the time of conflict with the papacy in 1606–7, when the governors of Vicenza wished to find out about the diffusion of anti-Venetian lampoons, they naturally turned to the owner of one of the city's pharmacies. Crucially, they did not do so because they were prompted by any specific denunciation; it seemed to them logical to do

³² ASV, *IS*, b. 638. The quotation from the report dated 20.9.1612.

³³ ASV, *IS*, b. 606, file 10.

³⁴ ASV, *IS*, b.606, file 6, reports from May–June 1614.

so. As the apothecary confirmed, in his pharmacy 'we discuss the affairs of the world, the wars as well as the present troubles [...] words vary, as opinions do, [...] people discuss the reasons of one side and the other'. Moreover, he added, other pharmacies hosted the same kind of conversation, including 'all those on the other side of the *piazza*, such as that of Signor Michele, the Golden Head and the Star'.³⁵

For various reasons – the worsening of Venice's foreign relations, the growth of periodical information – towards the end of the seventeenth century an important shift took place in the degree of control over pharmacies and other public places of political discussion. Rather than watching the pharmacies from a distance, the Inquisitors' informers began taking part in the conversations. It was on this basis that in 1683–84, one of them gave an account of the precise opinions voiced in various pharmacies, where (as he reported) 'gentlemen and people of different status gather every day, and there sitting down as if in private council each one reports what he has heard and seen all day long, discussing foreign kingdoms, wars and peace deals'.³⁶ In 1715, another mole similarly reported that the pharmacies near San Giovanni Grisostomo and San Canziano hosted 'continuous gatherings of news-addicts – *novellisti* – some of whom speak against the emperor, others against France'.³⁷

We should of course bear in mind that the Inquisitors of State only recorded pharmacies that they believed to host dissenting conversations or illicit information exchanges. There is little mention of the many other pharmacies that hosted discussions that the moles did not find suspicious. For example, in 1617 the abbot and patrician Alvise Sagredo denounced the anti-Venetian discussions of the pharmacy at the Hercules, near Santa Maria Formosa, which he described as commonly frequented by 'people who dislike the Most Serene Republic'. However, he could not hide the fact that he had heard about those discussions while in yet another pharmacy, the Madonna near Rialto. There, he admitted, he used to meet with various people who 'have a habit of going there'.³⁸ Similarly, at the height of Venice's victories against the Ottoman Empire in the 1680s, it is in a celebratory printed text, rather than in a police report, that we read about the loyal

³⁵ 'Si discorre delle cose del mondo, delle guerre, et di questi moti, che vanno a torno al presente [...] gli discorsi sono varii, siccome sono varie le opinioni. [...] pare che vadino disputando delle ragioni dell'una et l'altra parte'; 'tutte quelle in là dal capo della piazza, quella del Signor Michele, quella della Testadoro, quella della Stella'; interrogation of Lepido Barbaran, son of the apothecary at the Saracen, 25.9.1606, in ASV, *Consultori in iure*, b. 3, 'Informacioni sopra li disordini occorrenti intorno il presente negozio'.

³⁶ Quoted in Infelise, *Prima dei giornali*, 149; cf. Barbierato, *Politici e ateisti. Percorsi della miscredenza a Venezia fra Sei e Settecento* (Milan, 2006), 60–64.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 142–3

³⁸ 'Pare che vi si riducano persone non così ben affette alla Serenissima Republica', 'sogliono alle volte ridursi in quel luogo'; deposition of Alvise Sagredo of 27.4.1617, in ASV, *IS*, b. 1213, file 30, 'Soldati Olandesi al Lido'.

trepidation of people waiting for news from the front while gathering ‘in the most famous pharmacies’.³⁹

In the eighteenth century, writers and artists reflected on the pharmacies’ renown as haunts for conversation. Thus, Pietro Longhi’s 1752 *Speziale* painting depicts two men (one of them a clergyman, the other a distinguished layman) reading together in the back of a pharmacy, apparently unconcerned by the medical activities taking place in the foreground.⁴⁰ Carlo Goldoni, Venice’s great playwright and theatre reformer, also repeatedly mocked apothecaries for caring about worldly news more than bodily remedies. In the *Speziale* – first performed in 1754 – the shop-boy described his master Sempronio as ‘one of those Apothecaries, who neither minds compositions nor recipes, his only study is the newspapers’. Throughout the play, Sempronio duly read many of the latter, including news of plagues and wars from Paris, Turkey, and India, and he also addressed his customers in what may well have been a pharmacy’s common phrase: ‘Pray, gentlemen, are you fond of news?’⁴¹ In Goldoni’s plays, rather than as spies, apothecaries were described as common, slightly ridiculous, gossips. It is possible that he based his satire on first-hand observation. The son of a doctor, Goldoni is known to have visited regularly the Rialto pharmacy of the Black Eagle in the 1750s. Since he was at that time briefly employed as a consul for the Republic of Genoa, in charge of writing periodical political and commercial reports, it could be that he too saw the pharmacy as a useful source of information.⁴²

A SOCIALLY DIVERSE CLIENTELE

If pharmacies were known to many people as meeting places, what kinds of people met there? On the whole, the Inquisitors of State’s records tend to focus on patricians, because the Inquisitors were interested in leaks originating from inside the government rather than in discussions going on outside. The number of patricians visiting the pharmacy at the sign of the Sun is remarkable – as well as Badoer, their names include Contarini, Briani, Ragazzoni, Pesaro, Priuli, Giustinian, Loredan, Molin. This confirms the surprise of foreign travellers at seeing (as Fynes Moryson did in 1594) noblemen mingle with humble commoners when ‘daily buy[ing] their owne victuals

³⁹ Sebastiano Steffani, *Il Faro della Fede, cioè Venetia supplichevole, e festiva per la liberatione di Vienna, vittorie et Santa Legha tra principi christiani contro Turchi*, 1684, quoted in Infelise, *Prima dei giornali*, 147; cf. also Infelise, ‘The war, the news and the curious: military gazettes in Italy’, in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Dooley and Baron (London and New York, 2001), 216–36.

⁴⁰ See Terisio Pignatti, *Pietro Longhi: Paintings and Drawings, Complete Edition* (London, 1969), Plate 112.

⁴¹ I take the translation from [Carlo Goldoni], *Lo Speziale, the Apothecary: A Comic Opera* (London, 1769), 5, 9.

⁴² Bruno Brunelli, ‘Una Farmacia veneziana del ‘700’, *Il Marzocco*, 12 and 26.7, 9 and 23.8, 6 and 27.9.1925. Many other eighteenth-century texts similarly described apothecaries, for example Goldoni’s *Ventaglio* and *La finta ammalata*, but also Bartolomeo Dotti’s poem on ‘Novellisti’, in *Satire del cavalier Dotti* (Ginevra, 1757), 187–99; cf. Luisa Meneghini, ‘Breve analisi di alcune fra le più significative raffigurazioni dello speziale nella letteratura italiana’, *Atti e memorie dell’Accademia italiana di storia della farmacia*, 18 (2001), 190–202.

and other necessities'.⁴³ However, we also read about other customers and visitors taking part in the pharmacies' conversations, especially clergy and professionals. Amongst the visitors of the Sun, the latter included a notary who had his stall near the belltower at San Marco, as well as various minor lawyers (*sollecitatori di Palazzo*).⁴⁴ Verdelli, the man who settled in the pharmacy after Cerutti's banishment, used to work as a lawyer.⁴⁵ Later, the eighteenth-century diary of the pharmacy of the Black Eagle frequented by Goldoni (himself for some time a lawyer), often mentioned merchants and bankers.⁴⁶

Physicians were also of course a normal presence – a group with remarkable personal as well as professional contacts, both abroad and with the rich and well-connected in Venice itself.⁴⁷ Physicians were naturally welcome in shops to which they were likely to send patients. As one recounted proudly after receiving his doctorate, he liked 'pratticar' in pharmacies, where people mistook him for a nobleman, while 'apothecaries and barbers tip their hat and treat me well and call me *Dottore* or *Eccellente*'.⁴⁸ In turn, physicians also had an interest in frequenting pharmacies, where they found potential patients. In Goldoni's *La finta ammalata*, both doctor Merlino and surgeon Tarquinio advertise their services in a pharmacy. Finally, apothecaries also spent time in their colleagues' shops, a sign of professional cooperation in a world that (as we shall see) was otherwise regulated by fierce competition. Occasionally, apothecaries had a specific commercial interest in visiting other *spezierie*. Cerutti, for example, was seen several times at the Emperor, near Rialto, where he bought wholesale some of the products he then retailed.⁴⁹

From the customers' point of view, there were several reasons for frequenting pharmacies, as indicated by the case of painter Pietro Malombra (1556–1618). He was a regular at the pharmacy of the Sun. Like other customers, he had material reasons for frequenting the shop, where he may have found the pigments necessary for his work (although the date when pharmacies began competing with specialist pigment-sellers in Venice is not clear).⁵⁰ Also, mingling in the pharmacy may have been a way of cultivating social connections, vital for securing commissions. Malombra worked for the doge Marino Grimani, for the Ducal Palace, as well as for some of Venice's guilds. In the same years as he went to the pharmacy in *Campo di Do Pozzi*, he also worked on an altarpiece in the nearby church of San Pietro di Castello, the patriarchal seat which the time was held by the pro-papal Francesco Vendramin, a man

⁴³ Fynes Moryson, *An itinerary*, 4 vols. (Glasgow, 1907–1908), Vol. 4, 96.

⁴⁴ Report of 16.1.1612 ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10; other lawyers mentioned *ibid.*, 11.12.1611.

⁴⁵ Reports of 16.1.1612 ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10 and 6.8.1614, in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 4.

⁴⁶ Bruno Brunelli, 'Una Farmacia', and cf. Goldoni, *Corrispondenza diplomatica inedita*, ed. R. Di Tucci (Milano-Roma, 1932).

⁴⁷ Physicians were a remarkably cosmopolitan group, Palmer, *The Studio of Venice and Its Graduates in the Sixteenth Century* (Trieste, 1983), 40.

⁴⁸ Quoted *ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁹ Report dated 31.8.1612, in ASV, *IS*, b. 638.

⁵⁰ Louisa C. Matthew, 'Vendecolori a Venezia: The Reconstruction of a Profession', *Burlington Magazine*, 144 (2002), 686.

with strong connections to the papal nuncio (who also resided nearby).⁵¹ Even more for lawyers, acquaintances were crucial to professional success. As stated in a mid-sixteenth-century advice-book to lawyers, young practitioners should make a point of publicly talking with others, as if they knew everyone.⁵² Thus, pharmacy sociability allowed some people to mix business with pleasure in the most profitable ways.

Not all of the pharmacies' visitors were part of a social elite. Historians of medicine have recently warned against making overly rigid associations between different medical practitioners and the social background of their patients. The same people had recourse to both physicians and charlatans, while, in turn, charlatans bought some of their products in pharmacies.⁵³ The Inquisitors' reports richly add to this picture of social diversity. It suffices to recount what their mole witnessed one afternoon in mid March 1612 outside the pharmacy of the Sun. A captain with two of his soldiers were playing cards in the shop; soon, a patrician of the Contarini family joined them holding a newssheet, which they all read together. Later, the painter Malombra, the newswriter Emilio Alberghetti and a priest joined them, and (as the mole recounted) 'all of them talked together'.⁵⁴ The next day many of the same group gathered again, but this time, courtesy of the weather, they walked around the *campo* outside the shop.⁵⁵

Lower social groups also frequented pharmacies. Patricians sent their servants to collect the medicines that their physicians had prescribed, and apothecaries employed poor men from the mainland to pulverize the simples for their preparations (in particular, theriac).⁵⁶ In medieval and early modern iconography, apothecary shops are often represented as hosting people of diverse social standing.⁵⁷ The Vicenza apothecary interrogated in 1606 affirmed that he hosted 'every kind of people, both nobles and commoners'. The list he supplied consisted mainly of nobles and rich merchants, but this may have been a way of impressing the governors.⁵⁸ In fact, when they interrogated the apothecary's shop-boy (*garzone*), the latter could not hide his interest in the news. Although he assured them that he was too busy

⁵¹ G. Nepi Sciré, 'Pietro Malombra', in *Da Tiziano a El Greco. Per la storia del manierismo a Venezia 1540–1590* (Milano, 1981), and Peter Humfrey and Richard Mackenney, 'The Venetian Trade Guilds as Patrons of Art in the Renaissance', *The Burlington Magazine*, 128 (1986), 322.

⁵² [Francesco Sansovino], *L'avvocato* (Venice, 1554), 8.

⁵³ Gentilcore, '"For the Protection of Those Who Have Both Shop and Home in this City": Relations Between Italian Charlatans and Apothecaries', *Pharmacy in History*, 45 (2003), 108–21.

⁵⁴ 'Che tutti ragionavan insieme', report dated 17.3.1612, in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10.

⁵⁵ 'Spasizando il campo', report dated 18.3.1612, in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10.

⁵⁶ Marianne Stössl, *Lo spettacolo della triaca. Produzione e promozione della 'droga divina' a Venezia dal Cinque al Settecento* (Venice, 1983).

⁵⁷ Thus, for example, a poor man is shown working in an apothecary's shop in an early sixteenth-century fresco from the Western Alps, reproduced in Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy, 1400–1600* (New Haven and London, 2005), a book that contains much further information on shopping in pharmacies.

⁵⁸ 'Ogni sorte di persone così nobili come non nobili', interrogation of Lepido Barbaran, in ASV, *Cons. iure*, b. 3, see above, p. 511.

to listen to the conversation, he then added 'I haven't heard any news in days, apart from the election of new cardinals'. This shows the shop-boy to have been remarkably well-informed, as the list of newly appointed cardinals circulated in newssheets precisely in those days.⁵⁹ Similarly, two employees in the pharmacy of the Sun also acted as go-betweens in the information exchange, taking manuscript newsletters to the post.⁶⁰

Finally, pharmacies also provided services to the local community. In the case of the Sun, this was one of Venice's poorest areas, a neighbourhood mostly composed of Arsenal workers. People who were seen visiting the pharmacy and conversing with Cerutti included *pegoloti* (pitch-sellers), as well as a *remar* (oarsman) who used to play chess in the shop.⁶¹ Interestingly, the informers planted by the Inquisitors were also workers: one was a chandler at the Arsenal (he did the night shifts in December 1611, probably because he had to work during the day); another one stood inside a shoemaker's shop facing the pharmacy.⁶² Thus, the pharmacy turned into a place of potential cross-pollination of knowledge, where different social groups interacted, including both rich and poor, both insiders and outsiders of Venice's government. Moreover, information could travel both ways. While humble workers heard news concerning distant events, for example, shrewd informers may well have considered the Arsenal workers as a precious source of rumours about the construction of vessels and thus, indirectly, about the Republic's military activity.

The Inquisitors' records mention no women in connection with pharmacies. This, however, may be misleading, a reflection of the fact that their moles were instructed to trace information leaks deriving above all from inside the government, and therefore from male patricians. In the patriciate, public social mixity was largely barred to women and, on the whole, elite women confined themselves to the privacy of the home or the convent. They of course needed the services of apothecaries, who sold cosmetics as well as medicines, but it is likely that they made their purchases by means of servants.⁶³ Further down the social scale, however, a greater degree of gender interaction may have been possible. Were the servants sent to collect medicines for their mistresses always male? And as far as the apothecaries themselves are concerned, we do know that in Venice – unlike, say, in Rome – women were allowed to practise the trade; in 1569, five out of eighty-five registered apothecaries were female.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ 'Sono molti giorni che non è venuta nuova, che habbi sentito se non la ellettione di alcuni cardinali', interrogation of Iseppo Berti, 25.9.1606, *ibid.* See for example the newssheet dated 16.9.1606, in ASV, *IS*, b. 704, file 2.

⁶⁰ ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 4, reports dated 15.4, 2.6 and 4.9.1614 and 24.1.1615.

⁶¹ Reports of 31.8.1612 (ASV, *IS*, b. 638) and 2 and 4.1.1612 (*ibid.*, b. 608, file 10).

⁶² Reports of 22.12 and 25.11.1611, in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10.

⁶³ Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's Crudities* (Glasgow, 1905), v. 1, 404; cf. Welch, *Shopping*, 216–19.

⁶⁴ Mackenney 1987: 88 and Dian 1900: 167. On Rome, Alexandra Kolega, 'Speziali, spagirici, droghieri e ciarlatani. L'offerta terapeutica a Roma tra Seicento e Settecento', *Roma moderna e contemporanea*, 6 (1998), 318. On women in pharmacies, cf. the iconography in Welch, *Shopping*, 66.

Thus, as with most public spaces in Venice, pharmacies were defined by neither exclusiveness nor inclusiveness, but by social and – to a lesser extent – gender interaction. Of course, the potential for interaction does not always translate into actual mixing, let alone equality. The Inquisitors' moles were extremely attentive to the status of pharmacies' visitors, which they judged for example by dress (though their observations occasionally pointed to confusion rather than separation).⁶⁵ Although the evidence presented in this article suggests that people from across a variety of social backgrounds frequented pharmacies, the latter's precious furnishings and contents (discussed in the following section) suggests that they were intended above all for the well-off. Further proof of the pharmacies' selectivity can be had by comparing records concerning different medical practitioners. In the same years as they spied on the pharmacy of the Sun, the Inquisitors also had a mole keep an eye on the tooth-surgeon Alessandro, in St Mark's square. Though Alessandro was connected with the the Duke of Urbino's diplomatic agent, no patrician ever visited him; the visitors to his shop mostly consisted of other traders and artisans, including barbers, shoemakers, the tavernkeeper at the Hat, the mercer at the Golden Tree, and a tailor who had no workshop but only a stall.⁶⁶

INFORMATION AND THE APOTHECARIES' BUSINESS

In understanding the reasons why so many pharmacies became centres of sociability and information exchange, the Habermasian interpretation of the public sphere is unsatisfactory. This is famously based on a notion of communication as information-exchange amongst people whose interaction is dictated by reason rather social status and whose motivation for communicating is entirely devoid of material interests. This interpretation fails to explain why particular establishments should be more conducive to political communication than others in the early modern city. Why should pharmacies in particular have played such a prominent role in the exchange of information? To answer, we must turn to the apothecaries' trade itself: to their economic concerns, and to the ways in which they constructed their shops' commercial reputation and their own professional identity. Furthermore, in line with this issue's special concerns, we must shift away from an idealized notion of communication, to include aspects of the apothecaries' material culture.

First, as traders in long-distance commerce, apothecaries were likely to be themselves the source of information concerning exotic countries. Furthermore, they had both the social and the cultural means for acting as intermediaries between people close to Venice's political power. Though

⁶⁵ One, for example, described a 'tall old man' dressed like a patrician ('manega a comio'), but whom the guard knew to be no patrician; report dated 11.12.1611, in ASV, *IS*, b. 608, file 10.

⁶⁶ ASV, *IS*, b. 201, *cc.* 93–115, and b. 638.

lacking the physicians' university education, they were highly literate and likely to have access to wide-ranging classical knowledge.⁶⁷ Many apothecaries also turned cultural capital into a social asset, establishing contacts that in turn would fortify their ambiguous social position, midway between trading and craftsmanship, the natural sciences and the market.⁶⁸ In the 1550s, for example, the *Accademia Veneziana* welcomed an apothecary amongst its many patrician members.⁶⁹ In the early seventeenth century, many apothecaries were reported to visit the nuncio in his palace.⁷⁰ In terms of wealth, if not in status, apothecaries were peers with the most affluent groups in Venetian society. At his death in 1616, the apothecary at The Two Anchors was worth the large sum of twenty-two thousand ducats.⁷¹ In the same years, following the death of the apothecary at The Peace, the notary compiled a twenty-seven-page-long inventory of 'mercantie, mobeli de casa, ori, argenti, et scritture'; the best rooms in the house were furnished luxuriously, covered in gilded leather and adorned with several paintings.⁷²

Social networks mattered too. Wills and *post-mortem* inventories show that apothecaries had rich networks of vertical and horizontal contacts. They consistently list large number of debtors of both lower and higher status, including artisans, shopkeepers, and noblemen. In 1626, for example, an apothecary's inventory included a long list of 151 pages of credits, including a diamond ring belonging to a 'gentiluomo'.⁷³ From such contacts apothecaries would derive an important status in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, they had personal access to the well-off households that they provided with medicines. This may have been the way in which the information, which they later discussed with their customers, reached their shops in the first place. Physicians provided a further channel. In 1619, for example, the physician Alvise Biscacciante was given a copy of a reserved report while he was 'per occasione di ammalati' in the home of Ottaviano Bon, a prominent patrician. Biscacciante then read the report out to some guests he had for dinner a few days later, and it is likely that he would have done the same in the pharmacies he frequented.⁷⁴ Thus, pharmacies were channels mediating private information into the public domain, while the availability of information was self-reinforcing, because people seeking information also brought more information.

⁶⁷ Palmer, 'Pharmacy', 104 argues that the distance between apothecaries and physicians was smaller than the latter wished to show. Some disparaging contemporary remarks on the apothecaries' education (mostly from the kingdom of Naples) in Gentilcore, *Healers and healing in early modern Italy* (Manchester, 1998), 78–81.

⁶⁸ Cf. Ivana Ait, *Tra scienza e mercato. Gli speciali a Roma nel tardo Medioevo* (Rome, 1996).

⁶⁹ D. Pellegrini, 'Sommario dell'Accademia Veneta della Fama', *Giornale dell'Italiana Letteratura*, 23 (1808), 62.

⁷⁰ ASV, *IS*, b. 644, reports of February 1609, and b. 606, file 2, reports of November 1611.

⁷¹ ASV, *Giudici di Petizion*, r. 316, entry dated 13.4.1627.

⁷² ASV, *Giudici di Petizion*, f. 345, numbers 7 and 8 (1 and 12.7.1612).

⁷³ Inventory of Eustachio Nomico, in ASV, *Giudici di Petizion*, f. 345, numbers 33 and 37 (5 and 17.9.1626).

⁷⁴ Deposition of 16.11.1619, in ASV, *Quarantia criminale*, b. 137, trial numbered 228 against O. Bon.

Apothecaries were not only in a good position for obtaining information. Crucially, they also had excellent professional and economic reasons for channelling information into their shops, just as many of their customers did for frequenting them. Gaining reputation at the local and city-wide level was crucial in attracting more customers. As is known, the provision of medical care was a fiercely competitive market, characterized by sustained and diversified supply.⁷⁵ Competition was strong not just between different categories of practitioners, however, but also between different actors within the same category. As we have seen, the number of pharmacies was high and rising in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Venice. Such was the competitors' pressure – constantly lamented by the apothecaries themselves – that a law was passed to stop shops from opening within a hundred yards of each other.⁷⁶

How was an apothecary to succeed in this market? Lowering the price of medicines was not an option, because that was fixed by the state.⁷⁷ Another way of winning the competition was to innovate in marketing techniques. However, this method was open to charlatans more than to apothecaries, many of whose medicines (and notably the best-selling *theriac*) were centrally produced by few *spezierie triacanti*.⁷⁸ In order to 'get rich and famous' in the early modern medical marketplace, then, apothecaries had to allure clients through additional benefits and services. Some of the latter included gambling tables, mail exchange facilities, and printing tools.⁷⁹ Other pharmacies boasted conspicuous signs of their owners' professional or social worth. The famous Calzolari pharmacy in Verona had a cabinet of curiosities that, as Paula Findlen argued, was a powerful tool of medical self-promotion.⁸⁰ Similarly in Venice, the pharmacy at the Golden Ostrich displayed a long narvalus' horn (now in the Museo Correr). Many pharmacies were furnished with beautiful and expensive items. For example, the 1627 inventory of a pharmacy in Santa Maria Formosa listed goods worth 1200 *lire*.⁸¹ The display of expensive objects helped individual apothecaries advertise their pharmacies as establishments of quality where wealthy customers would find themselves comfortably at home.

This was all the more important because customers were meant to spend time in pharmacies while waiting for their medicines to be prepared. It is not

⁷⁵ Gentilcore, *Healers and healing*.

⁷⁶ An example in ASV, *Giustizia vecchia*, b. 211, file 260, record dated 27.2.1618. On pharmacies' numbers, see above, p. 505.

⁷⁷ Dian, *Cenni storici*, 109, and Palmer, 'Pharmacy', 105.

⁷⁸ Dian, *Cenni storici*, 38–39; cf. William Eamon, 'Pharmaceutical Self-Fashioning, or How to Get Rich and Famous in the Renaissance Medical Marketplace', *Pharmacy in History*, 45 (2003), 123–29.

⁷⁹ In 1620 the pharmacy of the *Pomo d'Oro* in Verona also served as a sorting centre for incoming mail; ASV, *IS*, b. 357, cc. nn., dated 25.5.1620. In 1588 the Venetian printer Camillo Zanelli settled in a pharmacy, Giuseppe Pesenti, 'Libri censurati a Venezia nei secoli XVI e XVII', *La Bibliofilia*, 58 (1956), 28.

⁸⁰ Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994) and cf. the 1622 catalogue in Conor Fahy, *Printing a Book at Verona in 1622: The Account Book of Francesco Calzolari Junior* (Lunenburg, 1993).

⁸¹ ASV, *Giudici di petizion*, b. 350, numbers 77, 78, 82.

surprising that apothecaries went out of their way to make their premises as hospitable as possible, with ample benches and stools for protracted stays (as the few extant examples still show, cf. Fig. 1).⁸² In general, then, this meant that pharmacies were pleasant spaces in which to spend time. Much cleaner than most other public places in the city and less smelly than most workshops, they were likely to be more orderly than the ordinary shop. As the goldsmith Alessandro Caravia put it in 1541, only paradise would smell better than a pharmacy.⁸³ Information and the prospect of an interesting conversation may well have been further treats which apothecaries used to lure customers. Having newswriters amongst his pharmacies' visitors was a potential risk for an apothecary because, as we have seen, it raised the Inquisitors of State's suspicions. However, he may also have seen it as a potential commercial opportunity because the availability of information would attract customers. Much as, later in the century, London coffee house proprietors subscribed to newspapers, so in Renaissance Venice apothecaries may have deliberately invited professional informers to their shops as a perk for their customers. Thus, while Cerutti and his successor Verdelli may have turned the provision of information into a side trade to supplement their main income, most of their colleagues knew that information could be a means of boosting the profits of their primary activity, the production and retail of medicines. The awareness of information, both local gossip and distant news, was a key to success.

As we have seen, the pharmacies' function as communication centres continued well into the eighteenth century. By that time, they increasingly had to compete with other public establishments providing opportunities for sociability, such as coffee houses. The latter's long-term tendency to bring together potentially radical discussions has long been noticed, but the ways in which pharmacies also shaped opinions about politics and religion ought to be studied further.⁸⁴ Is it a coincidence, for example, that *ragion di stato*, the dominant political literature of the late sixteenth century, made ample use of medical metaphors? An explanation may be found by combining intellectual history with the social, economic, and cultural history of pharmacies, the places where people exchanged political information. It may well be that theorists of reason of state, some of whom were practising physicians, found medical language convincing because they were used to talking about politics while standing in shops filled with medicines and medical instruments. Documents originating from the practical political activity show much the same disposition. For example, Paolo Sarpi – Venice's legal and theological adviser in the early seventeenth century, and himself known for

⁸² The late sixteenth-century pharmacy of the *Ercole d'Oro*, in Santa Fosca (Fig. 1) is still extant, and the Museo Rezzonico hosts a reconstruction with original eighteenth-century furnishings of the pharmacy of the *Due San Marchi*. See also G. Boni, 'Un'antica farmacia veneziana', *Archivio Veneto*, 27 (1884), 399–405.

⁸³ *Il sogno dil Caravia* (In Vinegia, 1541), sig. C2v.

⁸⁴ Cf. Markman Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (London, 2004).

his knowledge of simples as well as his anatomical skills – repeated the classical parallel between medicine and politics at length. He could be quite specific, for example by describing the combination of papal authority and Spanish power as ‘diacatholicon’, the electuary which he could see and buy in the pharmacies where, like so many of his contemporaries, he would have talked about ‘the affairs of the world’.⁸⁵ This may raise the fascinating implication that the idea of religion as the opium of the masses was first voiced well before Marx, in the conversation of people gathered for leisure or business in the shops of sixteenth-century apothecaries.

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⁸⁵ Paolo Sarpi, *Lettere ai protestanti* (Bari, 1931), Vol. 2, 12; cf. Filippo de Vivo, ‘Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice’, *Media History*, 11 (2005), 37–51.

Women, wax and anatomy in the ‘century of things’

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In the dedicatory letter to Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle opening his *Newtonianismo per la dame* (*Newtonianism for the Ladies*) (1737), the savant and traveller Francesco Algarotti advocated the coming of an age of things: ‘Let the century of things at last arise among us’, he wrote at the end of the letter, and ‘knowledge serve to improve and adorn society rather than make the soul weep over obsolete rimes and sentences’.¹ Enticing new audiences to the delights of Newtonian optics, Algarotti’s work famously interpreted, encouraged and celebrated a season of novel access of women to natural knowledge. As a distinguishing mark of this new era, ‘things’, the objects of natural knowledge, promised to free women from the tyranny of pedantic and poignant poetry and bring about, instead, useful and pleasurable knowledge.

After his *Newtonianismo* ended up in the Index of Prohibited Books in 1739, Algarotti’s somewhat materialistic sounding invocation disappeared from later editions of the work.² Yet, the things of nature continued to make their way into the life of eighteenth-century women. Paintings, gazettes and the diaries of travellers who toured the Italian peninsula reported how they did so. In the early 1750s, for instance, some significant tools of natural inquiry lay in the hands of a woman in the painting *La lezione di geografia* (*The Geography Lesson*) (Fig. 1) by the Venetian painter Pietro Longhi, a compatriot of Algarotti. Here an elegant woman resting one hand on a globe while holding a compass dominated a domestic scene of learning. A few years later, another geography lesson by Longhi depicted a gathering of women being introduced

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¹ F. Algarotti, *Il newtonianismo per le dame ovvero dialoghi sopra la luce e i colori* (Naples [Milan], 1737), xi. Unless otherwise indicated translations are my own.

² See M. Mazzotti, ‘Newton for Ladies: Gentility, Gender and Radical Culture’, *British Journal for the History of Science*, 37/2 (2004), 119–146 esp. 137–142.

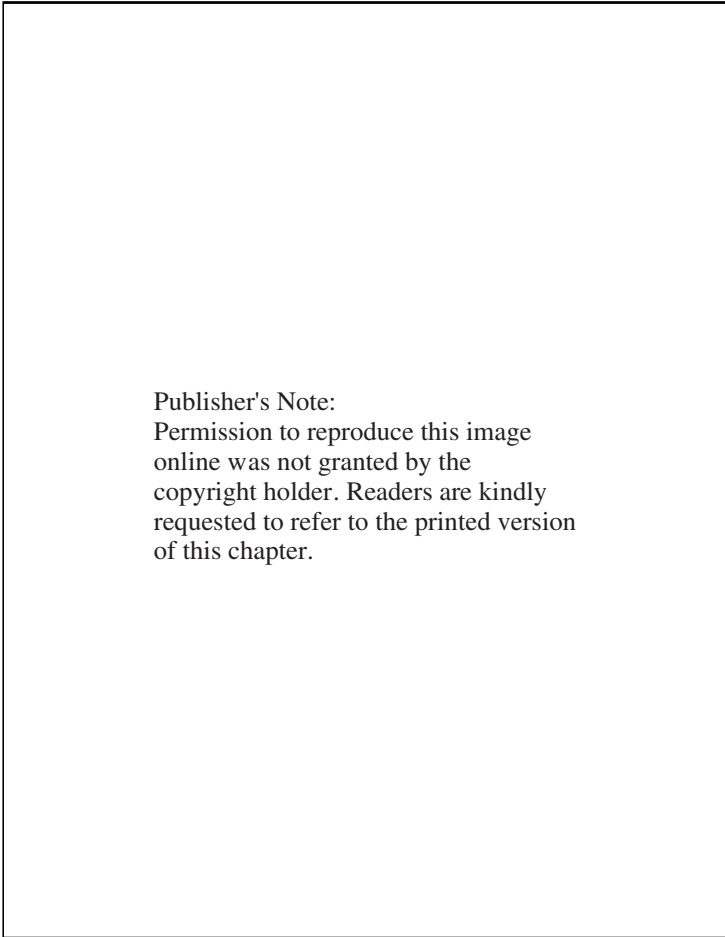


Fig. 1 Pietro Longhi, *La lezione di geografia*, late 1760s, oil on canvas, 60 × 48.5 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Fondazione Querini Stampalia Onlus, Venice, Italy)

to the pleasures of natural knowledge under the vigilant eyes of a clergyman portrayed on the wall (Fig. 2).

This paper considers some of the circumstances of the encounter between eighteenth-century women and the things of natural knowledge by drawing attention to the work of Anna Morandi, who operated in Bologna as an anatomist and an anatomical modeller.³ Morandi was, of course, neither the first nor the only Italian woman to participate in such an encounter. Most famously, the natural philosopher Laura Bassi (1711–1778), a fellow citizen of Morandi

³ Recent works on Morandi's life and work include: V. Ottani e G. Giuliani-Piccari, 'L'opera di Anna Morandi Manzolini nella ceroplastica anatomica bolognese', in *Alma Mater Studiorum – La presenza femminile dal XVIII al XX secolo. Ricerche sul rapporto donna/cultura universitaria nell'Ateneo bolognese* (Bologna, 1988), 81–103;

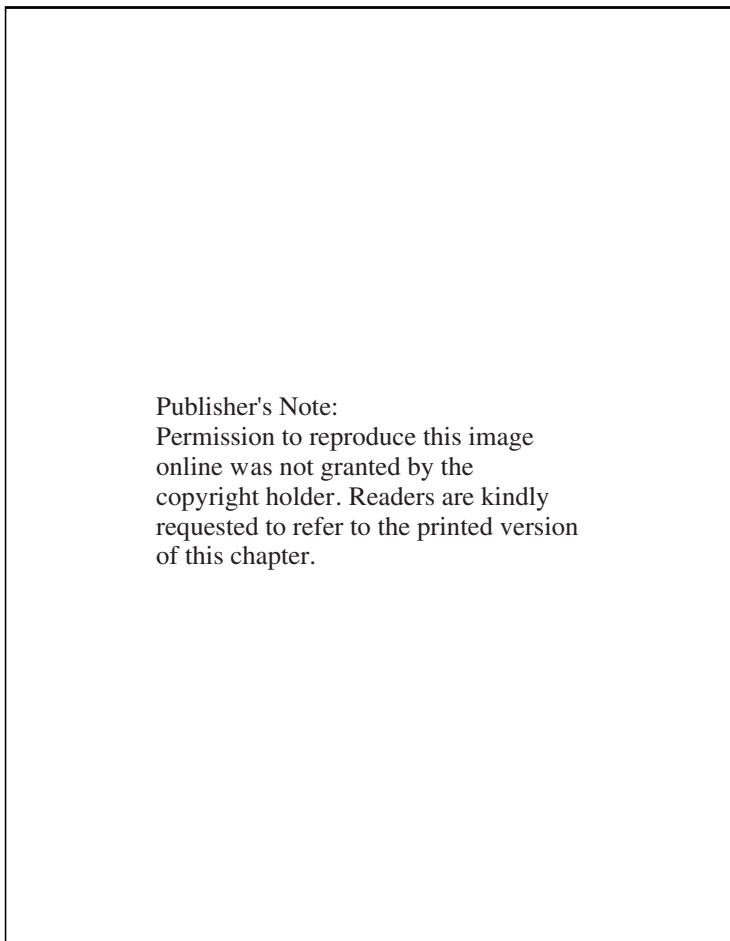


Fig. 2 Pietro Longhi, *Lezione di Geografia*, c. 1756–58, oil on canvas, 63 × 50 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Assessorato ai Musei – Politiche Culturali e Spettacolo, Padua, Italy)

R. Messbarger, 'Waxing Poetic: Anna Morandi Manzolini's Anatomical Sculptures', *Configurations*, 9/1 (2001), 65–97; J. Peiffer, 'L'âme, le cerveau et les mains: l'autoportrait d'Anna Morandi', in T. Chotteau et al., *Rencontres entre artistes et mathématiciennes. Toutes un peu les autres* (Paris, 2001), 72–77; I. Bianchi, 'Femminea natura degli studi sopra i cadaveri. L'arte della scienza di Anna Morandi Manzolini', in *Annuario della scuola di specializzazione in storia dell'arte dell'Università di Bologna*, 3 (2002), 21–41. See also M. Armaroli (ed.) *Le cere anatomiche bolognesi del Settecento* (Bologna, 1981); J. Peiffer and V. Roca, 'Corps moulés, corps façonnés. Autoportraits de femmes', in Chotteau et al., *Rencontres*, 56–91; Pancino, 'Donne e scienza', in G. Zarri (ed.) *La memoria di lei. Storia delle donne, storia di genere* (Torino, 1996), 89–104, esp. 98–101; M. Cavazza, 'Dottrici e lettrici dell'Università di Bologna nel Settecento', *Annali di storia delle università italiane*, 1 (1997), 109–126, esp. 120–122; J. Peiffer, 'La recherche dans et hors ses murs', *Cahiers art et science*, Special issue, *Qu'est-ce qu'ils fabriquent?*, 7 (2002), 47–63, esp. 51–55 and 59–61; G. Berti Logan, 'Women and the Practice and Teaching of Medicine in Bologna in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries', in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 77/3 (2003), 506–535, esp. 512–516; L. Dacome, 'Waxworks and the Performance of Anatomy in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Italy', *Endeavour*, 30/1 (2006), 29–35.

who was mentioned in Algarotti's own *Newtonianismo*, figured prominently as an icon of the novel presence of women in natural pursuits.⁴ Other women were to follow her lead.⁵ A few of them, notably Maria Gaetana Agnesi along with Bassi and Morandi, benefited from the patronage of Pope Benedict XIV.⁶ In 1755, the popular French gazette *Annonces, affiches, et avis divers*, observed that the interest shown by Italian women in natural knowledge was the sign that the sciences in Italy were doing well.⁷ Yet, what was peculiar to Morandi is the fact that she not only investigated the objects of nature, she also made objects in wax that were taken to embody medical knowledge. What follows explores the relationship between Algarotti's advocacy of a 'century of things' in a work introducing women to natural knowledge and the place of women in eighteenth-century natural inquiries. Investigating the setting in which Morandi became famous for her anatomical waxworks, it also examines the shifting meaning of wax as a material that was considered particularly suited to the representation of life.

The practice of anatomical modelling was not new to the eighteenth century.⁸ As it is well known, anatomical votives contributed to a long-standing devotional tradition invoking or acknowledging divine intervention in case of serious accidents and illnesses. Moreover, since the Renaissance, models of flayed anatomical statues (*ecorches*) were to be found in the workshops of artists and the cabinets of medical practitioners. In an early reference to the practice of wax-modelling Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) wrote about artists who completed wax figures of artworks that they would realize in different

⁴ See M. Cavazza, *Settecento inquieto* (Bologna, 1990), Chapter 7; P. Findlen, 'Science as a Career in Enlightenment Italy: The Strategies of Laura Bassi', *Isis*, 84/3 (1993), 440–469; G. Berti Logan, 'The Desire to Contribute: An Eighteenth-Century Italian Woman of Science', *American Historical Review*, 99 (1994), 785–812; Marta Cavazza, 'Laura Bassi e il suo gabinetto di fisica sperimentale: realtà e mito', *Nuncius*, 10 (1995), 715–753; B. Ceranski, 'Und sie fürchtet sich vor niemandem'. *Die Physikerin Laura Bassi (1711–1778)* (Frankfurt-New York, 1996); P. Findlen, 'The Scientist's Body: The Nature of a Woman Philosopher in Enlightenment Italy', in L. Daston and G. Pomata (eds.), *The Faces of Nature in Enlightenment Europe* (Berlin, 2003), 211–236.

⁵ See P. Findlen, 'Translating New Science: Women and the Circulation of Knowledge in Enlightenment Italy', *Configurations*, 3/2 (1995), 167–206; Cavazza, 'Dottrici e lettrici'; M. Cavazza, 'Les femmes à l'académie: le cas de Bologne in Académies et sociétés savantes en Europe (1650–1800)', in D-O. Hurel and G. Laudin (eds.) *Académies et sociétés savantes en Europe (1650–1800)*, (Paris, 2000), 161–175; Berti Logan, 'Women and the Practice'; and P. Findlen, 'Becoming a Scientist: Gender and Knowledge in Eighteenth-Century Italy', *Science in Context*, 16 (2003), 59–87.

⁶ See for instance Findlen, 'Science as a Career'; Cavazza, 'Dottrici e lettrici'; and M. Mazzotti, 'Maria Gaetana Agnesi: Mathematics and the Making of the Catholic Enlightenment', *Isis*, 92/4 (2001), 657–683.

⁷ *Annonces, affiches, et avis divers*, 3 (1755), 11. My thanks to Emma Spary for drawing my attention to this text.

⁸ On anatomical waxworks see, for instance, T. N. Haviland and L. C. Parish, 'A Brief Account of the Use of Wax Models in the Study of Medicine', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 25/1 (1970), 52–75; B. Lanza et al., *La ceroplastica nella scienza e nell'arte* (Florence, 1977), 2 vols.; Armaroli (ed.) *Le cere anatomiche bolognesi*; M. Lemire, *Artistes et mortels* (Paris, 1990); M. V. Düring, G. Didi-Huberman, M. Poggesi, *Encyclopaedia Anatomica. A Complete Collection of Anatomical Models* (Cologne, 1999); N. Hopwood, *Embryos in Wax: Models from the Ziegler Studio* (Cambridge, 2002); R. G. Mazzolini, 'Plastic Anatomies and Artificial Dissections in Models', in S. de Chadaverian and N. Hopwood (eds.), *Models: The Third Dimension of Science* (Stanford, 2004), 43–70; T. Schnalke, 'Casting Skin: Meanings for Doctors, Artists, and Patients', *Ibid.*, 207–241; and A. Maerker, 'Model Experts: The Production and Uses of Anatomical Models at La Specola, Florence, and the Josephinum, Vienna, 1775–1814' (PhD Dissertation, Cornell University 2005).

materials such as marble, and pointed to the sculptor Jacopo della Quercia as the probable originator of this practice.⁹ Around the same period, anatomical models also made their appearance among the objects owned by physicians and surgeons. A portrait of the physician Volcher Coiter (1534–1576) famously depicted him standing next to a small ecorche figure with a hand resting on the life-size model of a flayed arm.¹⁰ Similarly, the physician Theodore Turquet de Mayerne (1573–1655) kept on his table the ‘proportion of a man in wax, to set forth ye ordure & composure of every part’.¹¹ Yet, by the end of the seventeenth century, when the surgeon Guillaume Desnoües and the wax-modeller Gaetano Giulio Zumbo joined forces to realize anatomical waxworks that were to be employed in anatomical demonstrations, anatomical models became an integral part of the culture of demonstration that characterized eighteenth-century presentations of nature, both to students and the lay.¹² Offering a new public face to anatomical practice, they provided worthy complements to the famous ritual of the public anatomy lesson.

Usually carried out in anatomical theatres, early modern public anatomy lessons enacted a highly ritualized ceremony, staging anatomical dissection amidst the pathos of a baroque drama.¹³ By contrast, anatomical models provided for a more intimate and polite ambiance to the encounter with human anatomy. While the spatial arrangement of the anatomical theatre marked the sense of distance between the audience and the dissecting table, anatomical models allowed for proximity with the details of the inner body just as private teaching sessions would usually do.¹⁴ Disposing of the fluids, smells and rituals of physical violation that accompanied anatomical dissection, models furthermore instantiated a domesticated, orderly and to some

⁹ G. Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori* (Florence, 1966), 87ff. See also entry for ‘Jacopo della Quercia’ of the *Edizione Giuntina* of *Le Vite*. On early modern ecorches, see for instance B. Röhl, *History and Bibliography of Artistic Anatomy* (Hildesheim, 2000), 79–82.

¹⁰ On Coiter’s portrait and his interest in anatomical models, see N. Siraisi, *The Clock and the Mirror: Girolamo Cardano and Renaissance Medicine* (Princeton, 1997), 111–113.

¹¹ Quoted in B. Nance, *Turquet de Mayerne as Baroque Physician: The Art of Medical Portraiture* (Amsterdam and New York, 2001), 24. My thanks to Silvia De Renzi for drawing my attention to de Mayerne’s wax model.

¹² See R. W. Lightbown, ‘Gaetano Giulio Zumbo – II: Genoa and France’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 106/741 (1964), 563–569 and Lemire, *Artistes et mortels*, 28–41. On the eighteenth-century culture of demonstration, see G. V. Sutton, *Science for a Polite Society: Gender, Culture, and the Demonstration of Enlightenment* (Boulder: Colorado, 1995); S. Schaffer, ‘Natural Philosophy and Public Spectacle in the Eighteenth Century’, *History of Science*, 21 (1983), 1–43; J. V. Golinski, ‘A Noble Spectacle: Phosphorus and the Public Cultures of Science in the Early Royal Society’, *Isis*, 80/1 (1989), 11–39; and S. Werrett, ‘Spectacular Beginnings: Fireworks and Arts at the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, 1727–1742’, forthcoming. On anatomical demonstrations, see for instance A. Guerrini, ‘Anatomists and Entrepreneurs in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 59/2 (2004), 219–239.

¹³ See G. Ferrari, ‘Public Anatomy Lessons and the Carnival: The Anatomy Theatre of Bologna’, *Past and Present*, 117 (1987), 50–106; A. Carlino, *Books of the Body: Anatomical Ritual and Renaissance Learning*, trans. J. and A. C. Tedeschi (Chicago, 1999); R. Mandressi, *Le regard de l’anatomiste. Dissections et invention du corps en Occident* (Paris, 2003); and C. Klestinec, ‘A History of Anatomy Theatres in Sixteenth-Century Padua’, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 59/3 (2004), 375–412.

¹⁴ On the spatial arrangement of collections of anatomical models, see Schnalke, ‘Casting Skin’, 211. On private anatomical teaching see, for instance, Klestinec, ‘A History of Anatomy Theatres’.

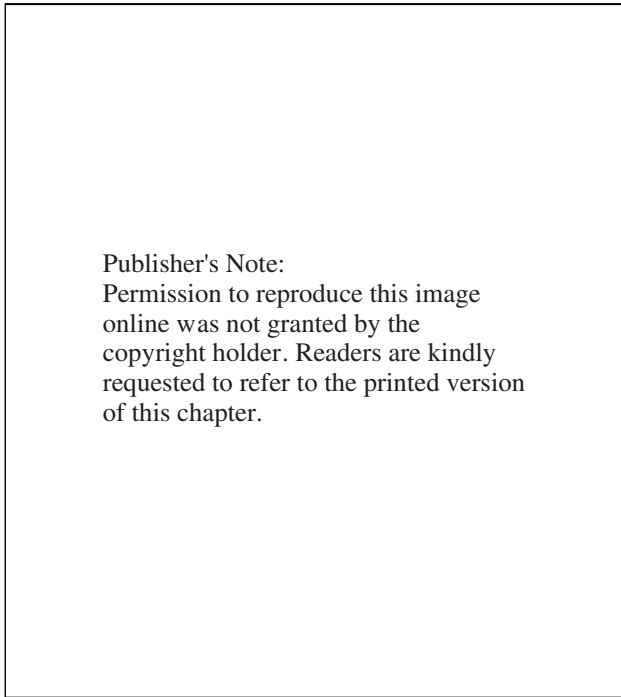


Fig. 3a Anna Morandi, *Self-Portrait*, mid-eighteenth century, wax, 90 × 82 × 68 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

even pleasurable medium of anatomical knowledge. As the anatomist and natural philosopher Luigi Galvani put it in a speech pronounced in honour of Anna Morandi, there was nothing ‘gloomy and putrid’ about her anatomical waxworks. Rather, being ‘beautiful and elegant’, the models would give a ‘certain and almost incredible pleasure’ to viewers, so great a pleasure that they would convince many to undertake the study of anatomy.¹⁵ Morandi’s own self-portrait in wax presented the anatomical modeller busy in the act of dissecting a brain while wearing genteel clothes and jewels (Fig. 3a).¹⁶ As an attempt to portray the anatomist, and anatomy itself, through the codes of polite fashioning, her self-portrait is more reminiscent of the courteous and courting atmosphere of Longhi’s social portraits and domestic interiors than

¹⁵ L. Galvani, ‘De Manzoliniana Supellectili, Oratio, habita in Scientiarum et Artium Instituto cum ad Anatomem in tabulis ab Anna Manzolina perfectis publice tradendam aggredereetur anno MDCCLXXVII’, in *Opere edite*, in *Opere edite e inedite del professore Luigi Galvani. Raccolte e pubblicate per cura dell’Accademia delle Scienze dell’Istituto di Bologna* (Bologna, 1841), 45–58 (quotation p. 48).

¹⁶ On Morandi’s self-portrait, see Messbarger, ‘Waxing Poetic’, 92–95; Peiffer, ‘L’âme, le cerveau et les mains’; and Bianchi, ‘Femminea natura’, 39. See also L. Dacome, ‘Waxworks and the Performance of Anatomy in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Italy’, *Endeavour*, 30/1 (2006), esp. 32–33.

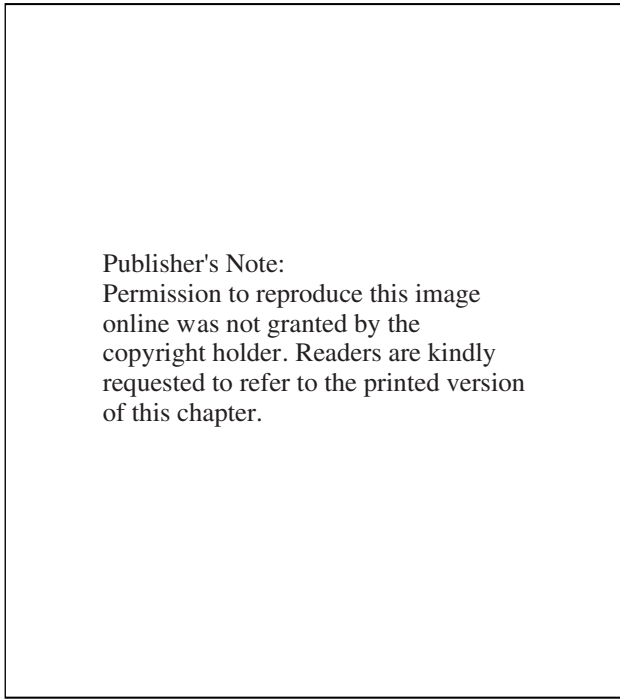


Fig. 3b Anna Morandi, *Portrait of Giovanni Manzolini*, mid-eighteenth century, wax, 90 × 82 × 68 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

of the ritualized gatherings that took place in the Bolognese anatomical theatre in the cold winter evenings in which anatomical lessons were carried out.

Indeed, at the time in which Longhi's canvases mirrored the creation of a female public that was responsive to the claims of natural knowledge, anatomical waxworks seemed to offer a particularly felicitous arena for women's participation in the world of natural inquiry. Along with Morandi, in France Marie Marguerite Bihéron (1719–1795), also known as Marie Catherine Bihéron, gained fame as an anatomical wax-modeller and demonstrator.¹⁷ As Morandi and Bihéron demonstrated their anatomical collections to viewers, the curiosity that accompanied the visit to their displays was likely to be enhanced by the sight of women demonstrating anatomy. One may argue that wax itself occupied a domain of representation that was charged with notions of gender, because the very act of wax-modelling resonated with long-term views of generation that regarded offspring as the result of the

¹⁷ On Bihéron, see Haviland and Parish, 'A Brief Account', esp. 60–62; Lemire, *Artistes et mortels*, 80–85; and G. Boulmier, 'Une femme anatomiste au siècle des Lumières: Marie Marguerite Bihéron (1719–1795)', *Histoire des Sciences médicales*, 35/4 (2001), 411–423.

impression of soft matter.¹⁸ Exploring some of the aspects that characterized this domain, this essay investigates how eighteenth-century anatomical models contributed to fashion wax as a marker of the natural world. Attention will be drawn to the role of material properties, such as softness and malleability, in granting the lifelikeness of wax-models of nature.

MAKING BODIES

In 1754, when the physician Giovanni Bianchi stopped in Bologna to visit his friend, the naturalist Ferdinando Bassi, he may have already known what he was going to do in the city where he had studied and still had many colleagues and friends. However, as he called at the *Casa del Seminario*, home to Anna Morandi, Giovanni Manzolini, their children and the anatomical cabinet the couple had realized together, reality may have exceeded expectations.¹⁹ As Morandi took him through the dry preparations of the parts of the human body that could be preserved and the models in wax of the parts that would deteriorate, he was confronted with an extraordinary sight. Proceeding 'in orderly manner', Morandi first showed him the human bones in the adult body and differently aged skeletons. She then made the demonstration of the anatomy of limbs whose models she had completed in wax over natural human bones, and finally turned to the preparation of the senses, the most celebrated part of her collection. Bianchi was impressed. As he published a glowing report of his visit in the *Novelle Letterarie*, he put Morandi side by side with the famous Laura Bassi, and praised her as a mother and modeller.

By 1754, Morandi had given birth to six children, though only two survived to adulthood.²⁰ In his article, Bianchi remarked that being still young, Morandi gave birth frequently, and as soon as she had given birth, she went back to the dissecting table. Thus alternating the production of new citizens with the dissection of dead ones, in Bianchi's view Morandi was especially well deserving in relation to both the synthetic and the analytic method.²¹ The remark was a success. Crossing the Alps, it was paraphrased in the French *Annonces, affiches, et avis divers* in 1755, where Morandi was praised

¹⁸ See K. Park, 'Impressed Images: Reproducing Wonders', in P. Galison and C. A. Jones (eds.), *Picturing Science/Producing Art* (New York-London, 1998), 254–271. On wax, imprinting and generation, see M. de Grazia, 'Imprints: Shakespeare, Gutenberg and Descartes', in T. Hawkes (ed.), *Alternative Shakespeares* (London and New York, 1996), Vol. 2, 63–94.

¹⁹ Archivio Generale Arcivescovile di Bologna (hereafter AAB), Archivio Parrocchiale di San Pietro, Box 71, Stati d'Anime dall'anno 1723 al 1779, Libro 8 dal 1737 al 1757, 'Descrizione degl'Abitanti sotto q.ta Parrocchia di S. Pietro nella Pasqua del 1754'.

²⁰ Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio di Bologna (hereafter BCAB), B. Carrati, *Battesimi* (1740–1750), MS B 876, fols. 38, 73, 117, and 223 and B. Carrati, *Battesimi-Donne* (1740–1749), MS B 890 fols. 77 and 91.

²¹ G. Bianchi, 'Lettera del Signor Dottor Giovanni Bianchi di Rimini scritta da Bologna ad un suo amico di Firenze', *Novelle letterarie pubblicate in Firenze*, Vol. 15 (1754), 708–712.

for joining the production of new citizens with 'her learning from the dead for the preservation of the living'.²²

By commending Morandi as a mother and a modeller, Bianchi provided one of the rhetorical devices that made it possible to describe her as a creditable medical practitioner and a praiseworthy public figure. Peculiar as it may look today, such an overlap between maternity and creativity was not new to the eighteenth century. While lauding the painter Sofonisba Anguissola, Giorgio Vasari linked Anguissola's skills in depicting human beings with women's capacity to generate.²³ Also, in eighteenth-century Bologna, an anonymous sonnet in the Bolognese dialect celebrated the wedding of Laura Bassi with the physician Giuseppe Veratti by relating Bassi's promises as a creator of natural knowledge with the anticipation of her generation of new babies.²⁴ Yet, what was peculiar to Morandi was that she participated in the world of anatomical knowledge precisely by replicating bodies, and this could be reflected back on the representation of her mothering body as a modelling body. In this sense, Bianchi's portrayal of Morandi as a mother and a modeller echoed long-standing views of the power of the maternal imagination to model the soft physical matter of the unborn child.

GENERATION AND IMAGINATION

In the medieval period, visionary experience could be associated with the predisposition of the female body to generate both holy and demonic material concretions.²⁵ Resonating with classical views of generation according to which progeny was the result of the impression of form on matter, such tenets enduringly mediated the image of the female body as a soft and malleable body, whose capacity to generate could be explained in terms of the impression of soft matter with particular forms and shapes.²⁶ A similar presupposition lay behind views of the power of maternal imagination, which provided explanation of anomalous births without necessarily pointing to causes beyond the natural realm. Accounts of maternal imagination postulated that particularly striking sights, disordered thoughts and passions, and

²² *Annones, affiches, et avis divers*, 11.

²³ See F. H. Jacobs, 'Woman's Capacity to Create: the Unusual Case of Sofonisba Anguissola', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 47/1 (1994), 74–101.

²⁴ BCAB, MS. B 3634, 105: 'Sonetto in occasione delle nozze della Sig.ra Dottoressa e Lettrice Publica Sig.ra Laura Bassi col Sig.re Dott.re Verati'. On the sonnet and its context, see Findlen, 'The Scientist's Body', 212–213.

²⁵ See Park, 'Impressed Images'; N. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: N.Y., 2003) and K. Park, *Secrets of Women: Gender Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissections* (New York, 2006).

²⁶ According to the Aristotelian model of generation, the male seed gave form to female bodily matter identified by Aristotle with menstrual blood. Maintaining that both parents provided seed in conception, Galen attributed a more active role to the maternal body, but considered the maternal seed weaker and less perfect than the paternal one. The understanding of parental roles in terms of impression of form on matter remained widely current throughout the medieval period. See J. F. Bestor, 'Ideas about Procreation and Their Influence on Ancient and Medieval Views of Kinship', in D. I., Kertzer and R. P. Saller (eds.), *The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present* (New Haven and London, 1991), 152–159; and Park, 'Impressed Images', 257–259.

unfulfilled cravings experienced by mothers at the time of conception and during pregnancy affected the shape of the unborn child.²⁷ Much as they attributed special powers to imagination, they also characterized the body of the child as soft and malleable. In the mid sixteenth century, the French physician Ambroise Paré remarked that the soft matter of the unborn child was like wax, and therefore ready to receive forms and shapes from the imagination of the mother.²⁸ Throughout the early modern period, the malleability of wax continued to be associated with views of generation that drew on the language of impression.²⁹

By the mid eighteenth century, generation had become a major subject of controversy.³⁰ Supporters of epigenesis who conceptualized generation as a process were set against preformationists who maintained that the preformed child was provided by one parent. This latter camp was in turn divided into ovists and animalculists, depending on whether the preformed child was deemed to originate from the mother or the father. Controversies over the nature of generation contributed to modify long-term assumptions concerning the relationship between the body of the mother and that of the unborn child.³¹ Some preformationists, for instance, raised doubts as to the likelihood that maternal imagination may affect a body whose shape was already determined. Yet, accounts of the influence of maternal imagination maintained wide currency; and many naturalists and medical practitioners continued to endorse it, even when they declared themselves unable to account for it. In his *Istoria della generazione dell'uomo e degli animali* of 1721, the naturalist Antonio Vallisneri (1661–1730), who was professor of medicine at the University of Padua and a defender of ovist preformism, supported views of the maternal imagination though he was unclear about its workings.³² In the following

²⁷ See H. W. Roodenburg, 'The Maternal Imagination. The Fears of Pregnant Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland', *Journal of Social History*, 21/4 (1988), 701–716; M. H. Huet, *Monstrous Imagination* (Cambridge: Mass., 1993); M. Angelini, 'Il potere plastico dell'immaginazione nelle gestanti tra XVI e XVIII secolo. La fortuna di un'idea', *Intersezioni*, 14/1 (1994), 53–69; C. Pancino, *Voglie materne: Storia di una credenza* (Bologna, 1996); V. Finucci, 'Maternal Imagination and Monstrous Birth: Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*', in V. Finucci and K. Brownlee (eds.), *Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity to Early Modern Europe* (Durham and London, 2001), 41–77; S. De Renzi, 'Resemblance, Paternity and Imagination in Early Modern Courts', in S. Mueller-Wille and H. J. Rheinberger (eds.), *Heredity Produced: At the Crossroads of Biology, Politics and Culture, 1500–1870* (Cambridge: Mass, 2007), 61–83, forthcoming; and M. Terrall 'Material Impressions: Force, Conception and the Maternal Imagination', forthcoming. See also M. E. Fissell, 'Hairy Women and Naked Truths: Gender and the Politics of Knowledge in Aristotle's *Masterpiece*, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 60/1 (2003), 43–74; and idem, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2004), esp. 207ff.

²⁸ A. Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*, trans. J. L. Pallister (London and Chicago, 1983), 54.

²⁹ De Grazia, 'Imprints: Shakespeare, Gutenberg and Descartes'.

³⁰ See E. B. Gasking, *Investigations into Generation, 1651–1828* (London, 1967); W. Bernardi, *Le metafisiche dell'embrione. Scienza della vita e filosofia da Malpighi a Spallanzani (1672–1793)* (Florence, 1986); and C. Pinto-Correia, *The Ovary of Eve: Egg and Sperm and Preformation* (Chicago, 1997).

³¹ See P. K. Wilson, '"Out of Sight, Out of Mind?": The Daniel Turner-James Blondel Dispute Over the Power of the Maternal Imagination', *Annals of Science*, 49 (1992), 63–85.

³² A. Vallisneri, *Istoria della generazione dell'uomo, e degli animali, se sia da' vermicelli spermatici, o dalle uova* (Venice, 1721), 59–60.

years, many, including the anatomist Giambattista Morgagni, were not quite sure what to think.³³ In his influential work on the power of imagination, *Della forza della fantasia umana* (1745), the antiquarian and savant Ludovico Antonio Muratori similarly expressed perplexity. Nevertheless, he allowed that if animal spirits imprinted the brain with the ideas of figures, smells, odours, and tastes, nothing in principle prevented them from imprinting the 'very soft' bodies of unborn children with particular marks and shapes.³⁴

Much has been written on the role played by maternal imagination in early modern accounts of monstrous births. But precisely because accounts of the influence of maternal imagination were centred on the relationship between seeing, craving and imagining, a whole visual apparatus of images, portraits, paintings and sculptures also accompanied the Renaissance and early modern domains of conception and pregnancy with the purpose of enhancing the generation of beautiful progeny. From the fifteenth century, nuptial dolls made in wax, sugar and plaster circulated among pregnant women in order to propitiate the making of beautiful children.³⁵ Leon Battista Alberti famously suggested decorating the places of conception with 'portraits of men of dignity, and handsome appearance' because they could influence 'the fertility of the mother and the appearance of future offspring'.³⁶ In the mid sixteenth century, Giovan Battista della Porta similarly observed that women who wanted to generate beautiful children ought to decorate the bedroom with beautiful figures, in either sculpture or painting.³⁷ Throughout the early modern period, the art of generating beautiful children elaborated and reflected artistic ideals of beauty. In his popular poem *Callipaedia, seu de pulchrae proles habendae ratione* (1655), the seventeenth-century physician Claude Quillet encouraged mothers who wanted to generate handsome sons to look at images of the Apollo, and those wishing to give birth to beautiful daughters to gaze upon pictures of the 'Paphian Goddess' (Aphrodites/Venus) such as the one painted by Titian.³⁸ These are just few examples in the multitude of verbal and visual narratives that informed the world of maternal imagination. Many more continued to appear and reappear in medical, philosophical and vernacular texts into the eighteenth century. Quillet's own text went through numerous editions and was translated into different languages. Building on this rich tradition, in the early eighteenth century Vallisneri observed that

³³ Pancino, *Voglie materne*.

³⁴ L. A. Muratori, *Della forza della fantasia umana* (Florence, 1995), 112–116.

³⁵ See C. Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. by L. G. Cochrane (Chicago, 1987), 317–318.

³⁶ L. B. Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books* [1452], trans. J. Rykwert et al. (Cambridge: Mass, 1988), 299. See also Park, 'Impressed Images'; Finucci, 'Maternal Imagination and Monstrous Birth', 54 and 59; and G. A. Johnson, 'Beautiful Brides and Model Mothers: The Devotional and Talismanic Functions of Early Modern Marian Reliefs', in A. L. McClanan and K. Rosoff Encarnación (eds.), *The Material Culture of Sex, Procreation and Marriage in Premodern Europe* (New York, 2002), 135–161.

³⁷ G. B. Della Porta, *De i miracoli et marauigliosi effetti dalla natura prodotti, Libri IIII* (Venice, 1560), 91–92.

³⁸ C. Quillet, *Callipaedia: or, the Art of getting Beautiful Children*, trans. N. Rowe (London, 1733), 74.

portraits of the ancestors played a part in perpetuating family resemblance, because they affected the imagination of the mother and thus contributed to the child having some of the physical characteristics of its forbears.³⁹

Being a supporter of ovist preformism, Vallisneri attributed a central role to the maternal body in the generation of offspring. As the head of the Paduan *Accademia dei Ricoverati*, in 1723 he came out in support of noble and talented women in the debate that was aimed at appraising the legitimacy of women's access to education and the study of the sciences and the liberal arts.⁴⁰ Vallisneri's defence of women's learning may perhaps be read against his views of the centrality of the maternal body in generation. Notably, the debate on the place of women in the arenas of knowledge, which he initiated at the Paduan Academy, was followed by a season during which women like Bassi and Morandi participated in the realm of natural inquiry. In this period, many continued to endorse the view that maternal imagination had the capacity to affect the body of the unborn child, in spite of the growing sense of uncertainty about its workings.

Views of maternal imagination were still current in the medical environment in which Morandi operated as an anatomist and a wax-modeller.⁴¹ In 1751, the Bolognese physicians Matteo Bazzani and Gaetano Tacconi endorsed the presuppositions of maternal imagination in a dissertation on the fractures of a skull, in which they presented the case of a pregnant woman who craved a sausage and generated a malformed child with a protuberance in the head.⁴² In 1764, the surgeon Giovan Antonio Galli resumed the argument of maternal imagination in a speech on the origins of monsters that he delivered at the Institute of the Sciences.⁴³ Galli had himself contributed to give expression to the visual world of maternity and generation by assembling for his midwifery school a collection of models realized by artificers including Giovanni Manzolini, Anna Morandi and Giovanni Battista Sandri.⁴⁴ Having been appreciated from the outset for their utility and admired by foreign viewers, the models were purchased in 1757 by Pope Benedict XIV and were donated to the Institute of the Sciences.⁴⁵ Galli was then nominated professor

³⁹ Vallisneri, *Istoria della generazione*, 240–241. On resemblance and maternal imagination in early modern Italy, see De Renzi, 'Resemblance, Paternity and Imagination'.

⁴⁰ See *Discorsi accademici di varj autori viventi intorno agli studj delle donne; la maggior parte recitati nell' 'Accademia de' Ricoverati di Padova* (Padua, 1729). See also R. Messbarger and P. Findlen (eds.), *The Contest for Knowledge: Debates over Women's Learning in Eighteenth-Century Italy* (Chicago and London, 2005), 67–101.

⁴¹ A. Corradi, *Dell'ostetricia in Italia dalla metà della scorso secolo fino al presente* (Bologna, 1874), 354–355.

⁴² See Pancino, *Voglie materne*, 141.

⁴³ See V. P. Babini, 'Anatomica, Medica, Chirurgica', in W. Tega (ed.), *Anatomie Accademiche* (Bologna, 1987), Vol. II, 71 and n. 20; and M. Bortolotti and V. Lanzarini (eds.), *Ars Obstetricia Bononiensis. Catalogo ed inventario del Museo Ostetrico Giovan Antonio Galli* (Bologna, 1988), 100.

⁴⁴ See F. M. Zanotti, 'De re obstetricia', *De Bononiensi Scientiarum et Artium Instituto atque Academia Commentarii*, 3, 1755, 87–89.

⁴⁵ See Archivio di Stato di Bologna (hereafter ASB), Ufficio del Registro, *Libro delle Copie* n. 674, fols. 191–195; ASB, Assunteria d'Istituto, Diversorum, b. 11. 10; and ASB, Assunteria d'Istituto, Lettere dell'Istituto, n. 4, 1756–1765, Letter of the Institute to the Ambassador, 19 November 1757.

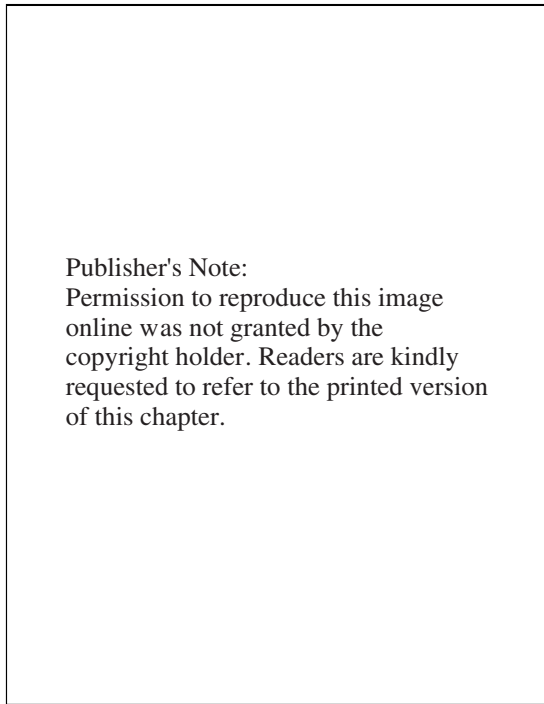


Fig. 4 Model of malformed child, eighteenth century, wax on wood, 18 × 22 × 30 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

of obstetrics at the Institute, where he taught both midwives and surgeons.⁴⁶ Galli's collection included wax models presenting anatomical details of body parts, a large number of models in clay of unborn children in a variety of different situations, and several midwifery 'machines' simulating the delivery, such as the model of a pregnant womb in wood and glass, on which students practised blindfolded with the help of a flexible doll.⁴⁷ Along with clay and wax models of handsomely formed babies, the obstetrical rooms also displayed models of monstrous births, and in this way presented viewers with the whole range of consequences associated with maternal imagination: specimens of anomalous generation (Fig. 4) as well as the well-formed and cute *putti* and

⁴⁶ ASB, Assunteria d'Istituto, Diversorum, b. 15. 34.

⁴⁷ See M. Bortolotti, 'Insegnamento, ricerca e professione nel museo ostetrico di Giovanni Antonio Galli', in *I materiali dell'Istituto delle Scienze*, (Bologna, 1979), 239–247; Bortolotti and Lanzarini (eds.), *Ars Obstetricia Bononiensis*; A. Murard 'La collection du médecin-chirurgien Giovan Antonio Galli à Bologne' (Mémoire de maîtrise en Langue et Civilisation italiennes, Université de Paris III, 1997); A. Murard, 'La rappresentazione del corpo femminile nell'ostetricia settecentesca', in C. Pancino (ed.), *Corpi. Storia, metafore, rappresentazioni fra Medioevo ed Età contemporanea* (Venice, 2000), 41–54; and C. Pancino, 'Questioni di genere nell'anatomia plastica del Settecento bolognese', forthcoming.

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Fig. 5 Model of womb with twins, mid-eighteenth century, clay, 40 × 28 × 17 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

cupids that populated the art of making beautiful children (Fig. 5). However, maternal imagination was not the only factor plotting against the beauty of children. Precisely because the bodies of unborn children were particularly soft and malleable, they ran the risk of being disfigured during the delivery.⁴⁸ Early modern midwives were invited to take particular care in order not to compromise their appearance. Quillet, for instance, urged midwives 'not to spoil the Figure of the coming Boy/Nor with distorted Limbs the beautiful Work destroy' for in fact the 'little Joints' were 'pliant to command/Tender, and waxen to the moulding Hand'.⁴⁹ The presentation, in Galli's collection, of handsomely formed unborn children in anomalous positions may have been aimed, among other things, at emphasizing the need of using particular caution in the delivery (Fig. 6).

⁴⁸ The softness of the body of unborn children was among the features that eighteenth-century anatomical displays were supposed to visualize. For instance, in his project for an anatomy room at the Institute of the Sciences, Ercole Lelli remarked that 'the skeleton of a foetus' was aimed at showing that 'the bones of foetuses are for the most part cartilaginous and membranous', see ASB, Assunteria d'Istituto, Diversorum, b. 10.2.

⁴⁹ Quillet, *Callipædia*, 87.

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Fig. 6 Model of womb with child in anomalous position, mid-eighteenth century, clay, 36 × 22 × 14 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

The visual world of maternity that was inscribed in Galli's obstetrical museum provided one of the settings against which Morandi's own authority as an anatomical modeller was formulated in terms of her capacity to generate, model and replicate the human body (Fig. 7). In his famous *Voyage d'un François en Italie*, the astronomer Jérôme de La Lande called Galli's collection 'one of the most singular things in Europe for the study of anatomy', and mentioned Morandi for completing part of the models in 1750 and 1758.⁵⁰ A few years later, upon his visit to the Institute's midwifery rooms, the eminent music historian Charles Burney remarked that Morandi made preparations that were meant 'to show in what manner the foetus receives nourishment in the womb'.⁵¹ In this setting, Morandi created bodily replicas in wax, and as a material that was soft, impressionable, and palpable, wax seemed to bear itself the features and the texture of life.

⁵⁰ J. de La Lande, *Voyage d'un François en Italie, fait dans les années 1765 & 1766* (Venice and Paris, 1769), Tome II, 34.

⁵¹ Beinecke Library, Yale University, Osborn MS c. 194, Charles Burney: 'Travel Diary', 9.

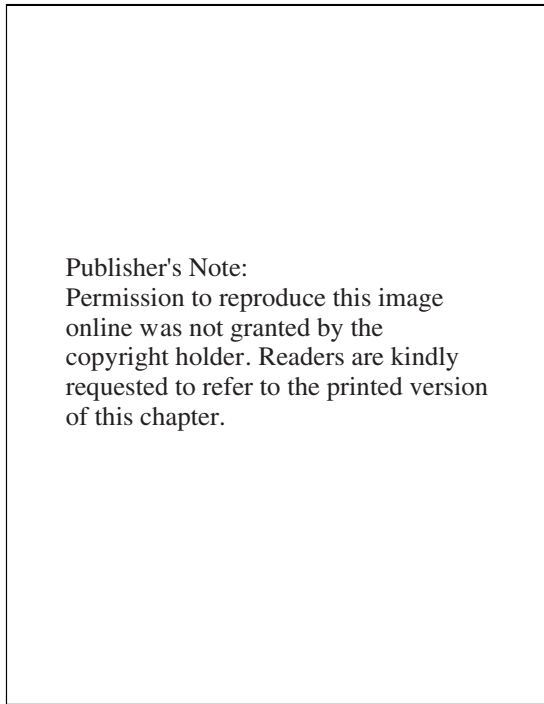


Fig. 7 Giovanni Manzolini and Anna Morandi, *Child with Placenta*, mid-eighteenth century, wax on table, 55 × 40 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

THE WAX OF LIFE

In the early modern period, the material properties of softness, malleability and palpability provided a particularly felicitous domain for the representation of the living. Gianna Pomata's contribution to this collection sheds light on the role that tenderness of the flesh played in the evaluation of the state of incorruptibility of Caterina Vigri's body during her canonization proceedings.⁵² Prospero Lambertini, who became Pope Benedict XIV in 1740, took part in the process that eventually led to Vigri's canonization in 1712; and when devotees inquired about the long delay of her canonization, he drew attention to the relevance that ascertaining the 'palpable' character of her body had taken in the trials.⁵³ Nor was the special character of holy bodies the only setting in which softness and palpability were taken to be particularly appropriate to the expression of life. As Jessica Riskin has suggested, the midwifery models in soft tissue that Angélique Marguerite Le Boursier du Coudray carried around France in order to instruct midwives offer just another

⁵² See Gianna Pomata's contribution in this collection.

⁵³ P. Lambertini, *Trattato sopra gli atti d'alcuni Santi de' quali si fa l'Offizio in Bologna* (Padova, 1748), 2nd ed., 67–77.

example of the assumption that 'an artificial model of a living creature should be soft, flexible, sometimes also wet and messy, and in these ways should resemble its organic subject'.⁵⁴ Being soft, malleable and moist-looking, wax was itself taken to be a particularly appropriate material for representing the living. In his proposal to create a French copy of the collection of anatomical waxworks he had seen at the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History in Florence, the military surgeon René-Nicolas Desgenettes observed in 1793 that wax was especially suitable for portraying the human body because of 'that greasy and moist appearance that perfectly imitates the state of life'.⁵⁵ Several years later, Giovanni Tumiatì, who was professor of anatomy and obstetrics in Ferrara, similarly characterized wax as a material that was particular apt to express lifelikeness due to its softness.⁵⁶

Empowering wax with the capacity to replicate life was not new to the eighteenth century. Yet, in the early modern period the malleability of wax lay at the intersection between proper and improper creations, the suspicion of possession and the uncertainties of claims of divine inspiration.⁵⁷ Famously, wax figures and wax dolls were employed in spells and charms. In his *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, Tommaso Garzoni (1549–1589) referred to sorcerers who used wax figures to induce 'crazy love and disordered hatred'.⁵⁸ In mid seventeenth-century Bologna, love spells that involved the preparation of wax statues fell under the scrutiny of the Inquisition.⁵⁹ A certain climate of suspicion continued to mark the domain of wax into the eighteenth century. A series of witchcraft trials held in early eighteenth-century Turin focused on the uncontrolled production of small figures and wax dolls portraying members of the royal House of Savoy; and when the prisoner Antonio Boccalaro was accused of plotting to make a wax figure of King Vittorio Amedeo II and then melting it in order to kill him, things ended up badly.⁶⁰ After a doll was found in his cell, Boccalaro was sentenced to death to serve as an example to others.⁶¹

⁵⁴ J. Riskin, 'Eighteenth-Century Wetware', *Representations*, 83 (2003), 9–125. See also N. R. Gelbart, *The King's Midwife: A History and Mystery of Madame du Coudray* (Berkeley, 1998), 60 ff.

⁵⁵ R.-N. Desgenettes, 'Sur l'utilité de l'Anatomie artificielle, & en particulier sur la collection de Florence, & la nécessité d'en former de semblables en France', *Observations sur la physique, sur l'histoire naturelle et sur les arts*, 1793, Tome 43, 81–94 (quotation p. 84). See also Mazzolini, 'Plastic Anatomies and Artificial Dissections in Models', 47.

⁵⁶ G. Tumiatì, *Elementi d'anatomia* (Ferrara, 1800), Vol. II, 192 ff. Quoted in M. Bresadola, 'Modellare il corpo. Giovanni Tumiatì e lo studio dell'anatomia alla fine del Settecento', in M. Bresadola, S. Cardinali and P. Zanardi (eds.), *La casa delle scienze. Palazzo Paradiso e i luoghi del sapere nella Ferrara del Settecento* (Padua, 2006), 169.

⁵⁷ See J. von Schlosser, *Histoire du portrait en cire*, trans. É. Pommier (Paris, 1997).

⁵⁸ T. Garzoni, 'De' maghi incantatori, o venefici, o malefici, o negromanti largamente presi, et prestigiatori, e superstitiosi, e stric', in *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, (ed.) G. B. Bronzini (Florence, 1996), Vol. I, 515.

⁵⁹ A. Fioni, 'L'Inquisizione a Bologna. Sortilegi e superstizioni popolari nei secoli XVII–XVIII', *Il Carrobbio. Rivista di Studi Culturali*, 18 (1992), 142.

⁶⁰ S. Loriga, 'A Secret to Kill the King: Magic and Protection in Piedmont in the Eighteenth Century', in E. Muir and G. Ruggiero (eds.), *History from Crime*, trans. C. Biazio Curry et al. (Baltimore, 1994), 88–109. I am grateful to Sandra Cavallo for bringing Loriga's work to my attention.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

One of the assumptions underpinning the power of wax figures was that such images were not only representations; they also acted as replicas that partook of the power and the life of the original.⁶² At a time of discussions on the boundaries between the 'natural', the 'preternatural' and the 'supernatural', the very material properties of wax, its power to melt, solidify and change shape, made it a particularly suited material for crossing the borders of the natural.⁶³ In some cases, the capacity of modellers to work wax into a perfect likeness was itself taken to be the outcome of divine inspiration. In mid eighteenth-century Bologna, Laura Chiarini, a nun of the monastery of San Pietro Martire, instantiated one such case. Chiarini made devotional figures in wax, such as cribs and images of saints. She also contributed to the tradition of baby dolls of Jesus and the Virgin Mary made in wax (or other materials able to evoke the soft character of infant flesh), which dominated a devotional trend that addressed female devotees by drawing on the imagery of maternity and childhood.⁶⁴ Although she had apparently received no training, Chiarini was so quick, so good and so much at ease in modelling waxworks that she surprised both artificers and professors. In fact, while modelling, Chiarini seemed to be following an invisible divine hand instantiating in front of her the very thing she was about to do. Chiarini's hagiographers saw this as a measure of her divine inspiration, something that could be equalled to her other remarkable performances, such as her apparent levitation when going down the stairs.⁶⁵

When Chiarini died in an 'odour of sanctity' in 1762, the wax modeller Filippo Scandellari was asked to take a death mask, and made her wax-portrait. Eight days after Chiarini was buried, her cadaver was exhumed and found not only incorrupt and fragrant but also 'palpable as if she were alive'.⁶⁶ Winning over the stiffness of death and acquiring some of the very features of lifelikeness that characterized her waxworks, Chiarini's own body became the evidence of the authenticity of her inspiration. Yet, miraculous as Laura Chiarini's performances in life and after death may have looked, this was not necessarily good news for the Bolognese archbishop and future pope Prospero Lambertini, who spent much of his ecclesiastical career trying to promote new forms of controlled devotion in response to the proliferation of claims of divine inspiration.⁶⁷

⁶² See von Schlosser, *Histoire du portrait en cire*; and R. Panzanelli, 'Compelling Presence: Wax Effigies in Renaissance Florence', forthcoming.

⁶³ On the 'natural', the 'preternatural' and the 'supernatural', see S. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Italy* (Oxford, 1997); and L. Daston, 'The Nature of Nature in Early Modern Europe', *Configurations*, 6/2 (1998), 149–172.

⁶⁴ See O. Niccoli, *La vita religiosa nell'Italia moderna. Secoli XV–XVIII* (Rome, 1998), 178.

⁶⁵ ASB, Demaniale, Domenicane di San Pietro Martire: 45-2019, 'Scritture concernenti la vita, e la morte di Suor Maddalena Laura Catterina Chiarini', 24–26. Thanks to Domenico Medori for drawing my attention to this source.

⁶⁶ BCAB, M. Oretti, *Notizie de' Professori del Disegno cioè Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti Bolognesi e de' Forestieri di sua scuola raccolte*, MS B 133, 304–305.

⁶⁷ See A. Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza. Inquisitori, confessori, missionari* (Turin, 1996), 455 ff; and M. Rosa, *Settecento religioso. Politica della Ragione e religione del cuore* (Venice, 1999), 47–57.

Lambertini served for a long time as a Promoter of Faith for the Congregation of Rites, the ecclesiastical tribunal deliberating in matters of canonization. While advocates of a candidate to sanctity provided arguments and proofs in support of the cause, the Promoter of Faith contributed to the evaluation of claims of sanctity by raising formal objections and difficulties about the soundness of the case under examination. Building on his experience as a Promoter of Faith, in the 1730s Lambertini's *De servorum Dei beatificatione et canonizatione beatorum* (1734–1738), a *summa* of the procedures governing the complex process of canonization, represented the highlight of his career as an appraiser of sanctity. As the risk of mistaking disorderly imagination for divine inspiration was of concern in the evaluation of the signs of sanctity, Lambertini devoted part of this work to the study of the nature and powers of imagination.⁶⁸

Drawing on contemporary medical and philosophical accounts of the imagination, Lambertini maintained that images were first impressed on the senses and, thanks to the animal spirits, they were carried along the nerves to the brain where they were impressed and stored in the fantasy and the memory. Discussing the effects of imagination, he endorsed the view that the imagination of the mother could affect the appearance of the unborn child and had the power to cause and cure diseases, but could not act on distant bodies. Wary of the power and excesses of the imagination, and fearing that false sanctity may escape the scrutiny of the Church, Lambertini called for a close examination of visions and apparitions, and emphasized the dangers of failing to distinguish between divinely inspired visions and a disorderly imagination.⁶⁹ He maintained that women were particularly prone to 'vehement thoughts and affections', and therefore more inclined to see 'what they wish to see'. Consequently, their claims of divine inspiration had to be examined with particular care.⁷⁰

Lambertini's recommendations in matters of canonization may be easily read against his deeds. As a Promoter of Faith for the Congregation of Rites, in 1727 Lambertini contributed to the decision to turn down the case of Marie Marguerite Alacoque, a nun in the monastery of *La Visitation* at Paray-le-Monial in France, whose revelations had triggered the cult of the sacred heart of Jesus.⁷¹ After becoming pope, in the mid 1740s Lambertini was faced again with the case of a mystic nun, Crescence, from the monastery of

⁶⁸ See E. Brambilla, 'La medicina del Settecento', in F. Della Peruta, *Storia d'Italia. Annali 7: Malattia e medicina* (Turin, 1984), 88–92; Rosa, *Settecento religioso*, Chapter 2; and F. Vidal, 'Extraordinary Bodies and the Physicotheological Imagination', in Daston and Pomata (eds.), *The Faces of Nature*, esp. 77–78.

⁶⁹ P. Lambertini, *De servorum Dei beatificatione et canonizatione beatorum* (Venice, 1766), 3rd ed., Book III, Chapter 51 and Book IV, Chapter 33. On Lambertini's uses of medical knowledge, see D. Gorce, *L'œuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini (Pape Benoît XIV)* (Bordeaux, 1915).

⁷⁰ Lambertini, *De servorum Dei beatificatione*, Book III, 366–367.

⁷¹ See Rosa, *Settecento religioso*, 17–30.

Kaufbeuren in the dioceses of Augsburg, whose visions of the holy spirits appearing in the guise of a boy with his head surrounded by tongues of fire had generated a large following. As the news of Crescence's visions and cult reached Rome, an episcopal committee was set up to assess the matter. In 1745, the papal brief *Sollicitudini Nostrae* dismissed the case. Crescence was acquitted from the accusation of simulating sanctity, but a clear condemnation was issued against the use of the devotional images and objects including oils, crowns and amulets that had proliferated as part of her cult.⁷²

Lambertini's activities as a Promoter of Faith provide a significant example of a moment in which the concerns of the Roman Catholic Church for the authentication of sanctity were closely related to calls for the control of the world of devotion, especially its visual manifestations.⁷³ Wax traditionally played a prominent role in this world. Important liturgical celebrations were accompanied by conspicuous consumption of wax candles. As we have seen, a long-standing tradition of anatomical votives in wax acknowledged or invoked divine intervention by recalling the circumstances of accidents and illnesses and presenting wax replicas of the anatomies of the affected bodily parts.⁷⁴ As in the case of Laura Chiarini, wax figures and death masks in wax also lay at the centre of the cult and commemoration of individuals who died in an 'odour of sanctity'. Other religious domains in which wax was charged with special powers and properties included that of the *Agnus Dei*, a small cake made out of the wax of Easter candles, which was impressed with the figure of Jesus as the lamb and blessed by the pope. From the ninth century, the *Agnus Dei* was employed in religious practices that were meant to avert evil, and in exorcisms.⁷⁵ In the mid seventeenth century, the use of wax objects in devotional practices had become so popular that a papal decree aimed at regulating the cult of the *Agnus Dei*.⁷⁶ Yet, *Agnus Dei* continued to be used in a variety of situations. In *La comare levatrice* (1721), for instance, the surgeon Sebastiano Melli recommended that women giving birth should carry a devotional object like the *Agnus Dei*.⁷⁷ When, in the mid eighteenth century, Ludovico Antonio Muratori reproached the excessive consumption of wax in devotional rituals, he included the *Agnus Dei* among the many objects, such as images of saints, medals, crowns, and relics, and 'similar other instances of devotion', which ran the risk of making religion look 'overly dressed'.⁷⁸

⁷² See F. Boespflug, *Dieu dans l'art: Sollicitudini Nostrae de Benoît XIV (1745) et l'affaire Crescence de Kaufbeuren* (Paris, 1984); and Rosa, *Settecento religioso*, 58–60. On 'simulated' sanctity, see G. Zarri (ed.), *Finzione e santità Era medioevo ed età moderna* (Turin, 1991).

⁷³ Rosa, *Settecento religioso*, Chapter 2.

⁷⁴ See for instance F. Bisogni, 'Ex voto e la Scultura in cera nel Tardo Medioevo', in A. Ladis and S. E. Zuraw (eds.), *Visions of Holiness: Art and Devotion in Renaissance Italy* (Athens: Georgia, 2001), 67–91.

⁷⁵ On the *Agnus Dei*, see F. Vincentio Bonardo, *Discorso intorno all'origine, antichità et virtù degli Agnus Dei di cera Benedetti* (Rome, 1586). On the use of *Agnus Dei* in exorcisms, see Wellcome Library, MS 4250, 15.

⁷⁶ Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Arm. Misc. IV–V, n. 5, 'Editto per li Agnus Dei e Reliquie'.

⁷⁷ S. Melli, *La comare levatrice istruita nel suo ufizio secondo le regole più certe e gli ammaestramenti più moderni* (Venice, 1721), 228.

⁷⁸ L. A. Muratori, *Della regolata devozione dei cristiani* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milano, 1990), 213.

In the same period in which Muratori was advocating a regulated use of wax, Lambertini became the patron of anatomical wax modelling. The two men met in Bologna after Lambertini had returned to his native city in 1731 as the local archbishop, and in 1740 Muratori welcomed Lambertini's election to the papacy. In 1742, two years into his pontificate, Lambertini resumed the project of an anatomy room at the Institute of the Sciences, which he had initially promoted shortly after returning to Bologna. The artist anatomist Ercole Lelli was then charged with the task of completing an anatomical collection including models of the bones, muscles and 'all the parts that is most necessary to know' in a 'soft and durable matter'.⁷⁹ The event marked the beginning of a new period of anatomical fame in the city that had become renowned for its medical school. Among the several artists who collaborated with Lelli, Giovanni Manzolini participated for several years in the works of the anatomy room. As the two artificers fell out, apparently because of issues of rivalry and attribution, Anna Morandi's career as an anatomical modeller was about to start. Manzolini left Lelli's workshop and continued to model anatomical waxworks together with Anna Morandi in their residence. The couple had married in 1740, after Morandi had managed to gather her dowry, thanks to the help of the Bolognese aristocratic family of the Malvasia, which participated in the system of charity designed to support the needy women of Bologna.⁸⁰ In the late 1740s, Lelli was afraid that the news that a skilled woman in Bologna was making anatomical statues that equalled his own, had reached Pope Benedict XIV, and tried to downplay it as gossip and an imposture.⁸¹ In fact, Lelli's attempt to discredit was not of much consequence. The couple of the wax-modellers became increasingly renowned and Morandi was to receive the patronage of the pope.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century biographers agree in depicting Giovanni as 'melancholic and hypochondriac' and Anna as the loving, industrious and devoted spouse whose dedication went as far as to learn and practice anatomy.⁸² In these accounts, Giovanni's demise, which occurred in 1755, is poignantly remembered as the story of a skilful artificer whose lack of recognition

⁷⁹ G. G. Bolletti, *Dell'origine e de' progressi dell'Istituto delle Scienze di Bologna* [1751] (Bologna, 1767), 72. On the initial project of an anatomy room at the Institute of the Sciences, see ASB, Assunteria d'Istituto, Diversorum, b. 10.1.

⁸⁰ AAB, Par. S.Nicola degli Albani, *Liber Matrimoniorum*, 1730–1779. f. 15 (24 November 1740). For Anna Morandi's dowry, see ASB, Ufficio del Registro, Libro delle copie 351, fols. 603r–604r. On the system of charity dispensing dowries to the needy women of Bologna, see I. Chabot and M. Fornasari, *L'economia della carità. Le doti del Monte di Pietà di Bologna (secoli XVI–XX)*, (Bologna, 1997); and M. Carboni, *Le doti della «povertà». Famiglia, risparmio, previdenza: il Monte del Matrimonio di Bologna (1583–1796)* (Bologna, 1999).

⁸¹ Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna, MS 3882, Caps LVIII, A 5, Letter from Rome of Marco Antonio Laurenti to Ercole Lelli, 9 and 28 October, 1748.

⁸² See, for instance, L. Crespi, *Felsina Pittrice. Vite de' Pittori Bolognesi* (Roma, 1769), Vol. III, 303 and 309–310; G. Giordani, *Articolo di Biografia a lode dell'Anna Morandi Manzolini, celebre anatomica* (Bologna, 1835), 7–8; and M. Medici, 'Elogio di Giovanni, e di Anna Morandi coniugi Manzolini', in *Memorie della Accademia delle Scienze dell'Istituto di Bologna*, 8 (1857), 3–26, esp. 15.

brought him to ill-health and death, so that his spouse was charged with the task of preserving and pursuing the vocation and the memory of the deceased husband. In the years preceding Giovanni's death, Anna and Giovanni worked together on their anatomical collection and shared claims of anatomical expertise. After Manzolini died without having secured 'any suitable remuneration', Morandi had to face the hardship of widowhood.⁸³ On 16 November 1755, her eldest son Giuseppe was admitted to the hospital of San Bartolomeo that offered accommodation and instruction to orphaned children.⁸⁴ In the same period, Morandi addressed a plea of help to Pope Benedict XIV. Presenting herself as a needy anatomical demonstrator and mentioning that she had received offers to work abroad, but would rather stay in her native town, she prayed to the pontiff to grant her benevolence.⁸⁵ After Benedict XIV recommended the Bolognese cardinal legate and the *Assunti di Studio e Gabella* to look for a way of helping the supplicant, Morandi's plea was read at a meeting of the *Assunteria di Buon Governo e Studio* (the Bolognese governing body dealing with civic and academic matters) on 15 December 1755.⁸⁶ Morandi's abilities as an anatomical dissector, wax modeller and demonstrator were then verified, and it was established that the pope's recommendation was well worth pursuing. It was acknowledged that, although her art was appreciated by all, there was not enough demand to allow her to make a living. Accordingly, Morandi was assigned an annual salary of 300 *lire* under the condition that she would not leave the city and would make anatomical demonstration 'for the public utility' whenever the *Assunti* asked her to do so.⁸⁷ On 27 February 1756, the Senate's offer was finalized.⁸⁸ In the following weeks, Morandi was granted access to the cadavers of the Hospital of *Santa Maria della Morte*.⁸⁹

Even before the intercession of the pontiff, Morandi had become well known in Bologna for her anatomical demonstrations.⁹⁰ When in 1755 Francesco Maria Zanotti, secretary of the Academy of the Sciences, praised her in an article that appeared in the *Commentarii*, people were already flocking to her house to attend her demonstrations.⁹¹ One of the earliest reports to praise Morandi in print was that of Giovanni Bianchi, published in 1754 in the *Novelle letterarie*, after his visit to her collection.⁹² Many more were to follow. After Morandi's name started to appear in ever more gazettes and travellers'

⁸³ ASB, Governo Misto, Senato, Filza 81, fols. 712r-v.

⁸⁴ ASB, Orfanotrofio di San Bartolomeo, Filze e Congregazioni (9), Libri degli Atti dei Governatori, 3: 1720-1761, f. 85r-v; and ASB, Orfanotrofio di San Bartolomeo, Statuti-Ammissioni (2), Campione dei Putti (1646-1810), f. 26v. See also J. Richard, *Description historique et critique de l'Italie* (Paris, 1769), Tome II, 142-144.

⁸⁵ ASB, Governo Misto, Senato, Filza 81, fols. 709r-715v.

⁸⁶ ASB, Gabella Grossa, *Atti delle Congregazioni* (1753-1759), I/42, fols. 112r-v.

⁸⁷ ASB, Senato, Filza 81, fols. 709r-715v.

⁸⁸ ASB, Senato, Partiti, 39, f. 2v-3r.

⁸⁹ BCAB, Fondo Mondini, Cart.VIII, n. 3.

⁹⁰ See Berti Logan, 'Women and the Practice', 513.

⁹¹ Zanotti, 'De re obstetricia', 88-89.

⁹² Bianchi, 'Lettera del Signor Dottor Giovanni Bianchi'.

diaries, those who 'were curious to judge her talents for themselves' only increased in numbers.⁹³ As she obtained the patronage of the pope, received the tributes of several academies and consolidated her role as a living monument of the Grand Tour, her children were likely to benefit from her new standing.⁹⁴ Indeed, perhaps thanks to her achievements, in February 1758 Morandi's son Giuseppe was included in the group of orphans of San Bartolomeo, who had 'parents of good life and reputation' and participated in the lottery to assign the inheritance and the title of the nobleman Flaminio Solimei, who had died without male descendants.⁹⁵ Giuseppe Manzolini won the lottery, became overnight noble and famous, and moved to the residence of the Solimei family.⁹⁶ For her part, Morandi continued to pursue a modest lifestyle and upon his visit to Bologna in the 1760s, the Abbé Jérôme Richard found her living in a state of *grande médiocrité*. Upon the acquisition of Morandi's collection, in 1769 the Bolognese Senator Girolamo Ranuzzi offered her lodgings in his patrician palace. As Gabriella Berti Logan has suggested, the proposal may have been motivated by the need to provide the famous modeller with a proper venue for her demonstrations.⁹⁷ Indeed, a few days after the completion of the sale contract, Morandi received a visit of the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II in her new residence, an event that was to be evoked in local chronicles and Grand Tour diaries for years to come, and was recalled in 1777 by Luigi Galvani as the ultimate evidence of Morandi's merits.⁹⁸

This was the setting in which Morandi became famous for her anatomical waxworks. Operating in Bologna in the same period, Laura Chiarini also became a well-known wax modeller. Yet, her aspiration to sanctity remained unfulfilled, whereas Morandi's special talents as an anatomical modeller allowed her to obtain the patronage of the pope. Morandi realized devotional as well as anatomical waxes, also completing wax portraits of individuals who died in an 'odour of sanctity' such as Ercole Isolani and Laura Pepoli Malvezzi.⁹⁹ However, her fame was largely associated with her anatomical collection. As mother, anatomist, wax modeller, and anatomical demonstrator she contributed to enrich the material properties of wax objects with new meanings and accordingly redefine the domain of representation associated with wax's capacity to replicate life.

⁹³ Richard, *Description historique et critique de l'Italie*, Tome II, 118.

⁹⁴ On the tributes conferred to Morandi, see for instance Crespi, *Felsina Pittrice*, 311; G. Fantuzzi, 'Morandi Manzolini Anna', in *Notizie degli scrittori bolognesi* (Bologna, 1788), Tomo VI, 115; and Giordani, *Articolo di Biografia*, 10.

⁹⁵ On patriline in early modern Italy, see for instance G. Pomata, 'Family and Gender', in J. A. Marino (ed.), *Early Modern Italy: 1550–1796* (Oxford, 2002), 69–86.

⁹⁶ ASB, Orfanotrofio di San Bartolomeo, Filze e Congregazioni, (9), Libri degli Atti dei Governatori, 3, 1720–1761, fols. 113v–114r. See also Crespi, *Felsina Pittrice*, 311 and Richard, *Description*, 142–145.

⁹⁷ Berti Logan, 'Women and the Practice', 515 (n. 22).

⁹⁸ Luigi Galvani, 'De Manzoliniana Supellectili', 53.

⁹⁹ Crespi, *Felsina Pittrice*, 312 and C. Isolani, *Donne di virtù nella baraonda bolognese del Settecento* (Bologna, 1915), 156–157. See also Bianchi, 'Femminea natura', 40–41.

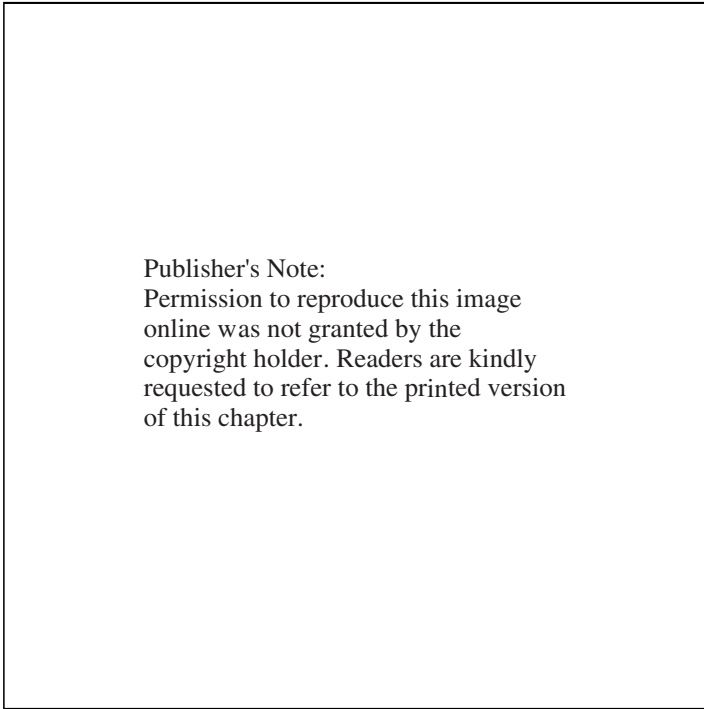


Fig. 8 Anna Morandi, *External Muscles of the Eye*, mid-eighteenth century, wax on octagonal table, 35 × 35 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

VIEWING AND VISUALIZING

Unlike Chiarini, whose extraordinary abilities as a wax-modeller were associated with her inspired visions, Morandi followed many contemporary practitioners who claimed to get all their knowledge from observation. Emphasizing her experience as an accomplished anatomist, she revealed to one visitor that she had dissected approximately a thousand corpses, and told Jérôme Richard that the study of the anatomy of the eye, which was presented in her tables, had necessitated the dissection of thirty heads (Fig. 8).¹⁰⁰ Writing to Giovanni Bianchi in 1755, Morandi and Manzolini claimed expertise in the anatomy of human bones.¹⁰¹ Such claims were meant to enhance the credibility of the

¹⁰⁰ C. Terlinden (ed.), 'Journal de voyage d'un médecin bruxellois de Munich à Rome en 1755', *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome*, 23 (1944–1946), 135 and J. Richard, *Description historique et critique de l'Italie* (Paris, 1769), 119.

¹⁰¹ Biblioteca Civica Gambalunga di Rimini, Fondo Gambetti, *Lettere autografe al Dott. Giovanni Bianchi*, folder Manzolini (Anna Morandi e Giovanni), Letters from Bologna of 15 April and 24 May, 1755. On Morandi's claims of anatomical discovery, see also Messbarger, 'Waxing Poetic', 78–9.

modellers as trustworthy witnesses of the inner body. The presence of two microscopes among Morandi and Manzolini's tools may be read against these claims.¹⁰² The wax-portraits in which Morandi presented herself and her husband in the act of dissecting, rather than modelling, similarly lay emphasis on the couple's anatomical persona, and in doing so contributed to corroborate their identity as meticulous observers of the human body (Figs. 3a and 3b).

Of course, observing nature was not a straightforward affair. Scrutinizing the inner body in the messy setting of a dissection was a proverbially complicated matter. In recent years, historians have drawn attention to the complex layering of meanings, idiosyncratic notions of experience and diversified sets of presuppositions underpinning eighteenth-century invocations of knowledge based on observation. When considered together with her microscopes, her portraits and her anatomical library, Morandi's own anatomical waxworks shed light on a complex set of relations between the dissection and inspection of body parts, anatomical printed images and artefacts. Some of Morandi's own models drew on the illustrations that appeared in her anatomical library. This latter included works by anatomists such as Caspar Bauhin, William Cowper, Guido Guidi, Marcello Malpighi, Jean-Jacques Manget, François Mauriceau, Giambattista Morgagni, Antonio Maria Valsalva, Juan Valverde, Andreas Vesalius, and Johann Vesling.¹⁰³ By the mid eighteenth century, such works had come to provide an authoritative visual repertoire defining how the inner body should be viewed and represented.¹⁰⁴ In some cases, these plates offered the backdrop against which modellers' own claims of anatomical discovery were advanced. In a dissertation on the anatomy of the ear read at the Academy of the Sciences in 1750, Manzolini drew on his observations to point to the inaccuracies that appeared in some of the tables of Antonio Maria Valsalva's acclaimed *De aure humana tractatus* (1704).¹⁰⁵ In other cases, the illustrations that appeared in Morandi and Manzolini's anatomical library informed the way in which the Bolognese modellers chose to present body parts through their models.

Variously elaborating on the anatomical representations of the eyes, ears, mouths, hands and noses that were available to them, Morandi and Manzolini's models of the senses were a great success. In 1758, Anna Morandi completed

¹⁰² ASB, Archivio Ranuzzi, Scritture diverse spettanti alla Nobil casa Ranuzzi, 1769–1773, CXXIV, n. 21, 6 April 1771, 'Compra del Sig. Co. Sen. Girolamo Ranuzzi dalla Sig. Anna Manzolini di Libri e Ferri inservienti allo Studio Anatomico della Stessa'.

¹⁰³ On Morandi's library, see R. A. Bernabeo, 'La suppellettile Anatomica dell'Accademia delle Scienze', in Armaroli (ed.), *Le cere anatomiche*, 36–38; Messbarger, 'Waxing Poetic', 72; and Berti Logan, 'Women and the Practice', 512.

¹⁰⁴ See Mazzolini, 'Plastic Anatomies', 48.

¹⁰⁵ 'Dissertazione del Sig. Manzolini, letta nell'Accademia dell'Istituto li 16 Aprile 1750', in R. Bernabeo and I. Romanelli, 'Considerazioni di Giovanni Manzolini (1700–1755) sull'anatomia dell'orecchio in condizioni normali e patologiche', in *Atti del XXVII Congresso Nazionale di Storia della medicina, Estratto, Caserta-Capua-Salerno, Settembre, 1975* (Capua, 1977). See also M. Armaroli, 'Le cere anatomiche bolognesi del Settecento', in Armaroli (ed.), *Le cere anatomiche*, 55; Messbarger, 'Waxing Poetic', 72; and Berti Logan, 'Women and the Practice', 513 (n. 15).

a copy of the series of the senses that had been commissioned by the King of Sardinia for the Royal University in Turin.¹⁰⁶ Other commissions were to follow. In the early 1770s, having admired the tables of the senses in Turin, the Polish princess Anna Jablonowska contacted Morandi to commission a copy for herself. However, Morandi died before she could finish the assignment and Girolamo Ranuzzi initially refused to let the noblewoman have the models completed by someone else on the grounds that this would lessen their value as unique things in Europe.¹⁰⁷

The reasons underpinning the long-lasting success of Morandi's series of the senses are probably manifold. As it is well known, many among Morandi's contemporaries shared the tenet that the senses had a central role in the formation of ideas and worried about their reliability.¹⁰⁸ At a time of intense discussion about the nature of the senses and widespread concerns about their unstable and illusory character, visualizing the anatomy of the senses talked to the topic of the day. One may add that by the time Morandi modelled the senses in wax, the theme of the five senses had also come to define an established representational trope mediating moral warnings about the transient character of sensual life and calling for a proper use of the senses. Depicting the senses in the acts of listening to music, gazing at mirrors, tasting food and drink, sniffing and touching things, paintings, drawings, statuettes and satires taught viewers how to use their senses correctly and manage them in an appropriate way.¹⁰⁹ In some cases, portrayals of the five senses had a part to play in the visual world that was meant to keep the imagination – including maternal imagination – in check. In the late seventeenth century, the Dutch physician Steven Blankaart reported the case of a mother who looked at paintings of the five senses hanging in her room during her pregnancy, and gave birth to a beautiful daughter who looked like one of subjects thereby portrayed.¹¹⁰

At another level, part of the success of Morandi's models of the senses may well have lain in her much praised anatomical demonstrations. In the early 1770s, the anatomist Germano Azzoguidi noted that Anna Morandi and Laura Bassi not only generated the greatest respect and admiration in everybody who met them, they also managed to persuade all those who entered into a dispute with them to change their mind.¹¹¹ During her demonstrations,

¹⁰⁶ Archivio Storico dell'Università, Turin, Spese, XII, c. 3, 'Registro mandati, Tomo VIII', fols. 17–18.

¹⁰⁷ ASB, Archivio Ranuzzi, Carte di Famiglia, Lettere di Casa, 1770, Letter of 20 June 1770; and ASB, Archivio Ranuzzi, Scritture diverse spettanti alla Nobil Casa Ranuzzi, CXXV, 1774–1778, 'Pro-memoria al Monsig. Illmo e Rmo Ranuzzi' and 'Risposta alla pro-memoria indirizzata a Mon. Ranuzzi, da Monsig. Lascaris'.

¹⁰⁸ On the cultural setting in which the importance of the senses was discussed in eighteenth-century Italy, see for instance V. Ferrone, *Scienza, natura, società. Mondo newtoniano e cultura italiana nel primo Settecento* (Napoli, 1982).

¹⁰⁹ See S. Ferrino-Pagden (ed.), *I cinque sensi nell'arte. Immagini del sentire* (Milano, 1996).

¹¹⁰ See Roodenburg, 'The Maternal Imagination', 709.

¹¹¹ G. Azzoguidi, *Lettres de Madame Cunégonde*, in P. Mengal (ed.), *Giacomo Casanova, Lana Caprina: Une controverse médicale sur l'Utérus pensant à l'Université de Bologne en 1771–1772* (Paris, 1999), 122. On the context of Azzoguidi's remark, see M. Cavazza, 'Women's Dialectics or the Thinking Uterus: An Eighteenth-Century Controversy on Gender and Education', in Daston and Pomata (eds.), *The Faces of Nature*, 237–257.

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Fig. 9 Anna Morandi, *Hands*, mid-eighteenth century, wax, fabric and wood, 31 × 43 cm (reproduced by courtesy of the Museo di Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy)

Morandi apparently referred to the actual experience of the senses as well as to their anatomical form. In doing so, she mapped an experience that viewers would have recognized as their own, on to given anatomical visualizations. As Maurizio Armaroli and Rebecca Messbarger have observed, in the manuscript catalogue transcribing her anatomical notes, Morandi described the anatomy of the hands by pointing to their sensations as well as to their anatomical configuration (Fig. 9).¹¹² In a sonnet praising her demonstrations, the Bolognese artist Giampietro Zanotti emphasized Morandi's extraordinary skills in replicating 'the minute fibers, by which one could see and hear' in a lifelike manner and explaining their workings. The sight of Morandi standing close to her models, pointing to bodily parts with her 'learned and beautiful hand', and engaging in eloquent, clear, erudite and pleasant conversation and 'beautiful modes of reasoning', as Zanotti and many others witnessed, offers a remarkable example of the encounter between eighteenth-century women and the things of natural knowledge advocated by Algarotti in his

¹¹² Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna, MS 2193, 'Preparazione Anatomica della Mano', fols. 50r–51v. See Armaroli, 'Le cere anatomiche bolognesi del Settecento', 59; and Messbarger, 'Waxing Poetic', 90–92.

call for a 'century of things'.¹¹³ In line with Algarotti's call, such encounter promised not only to bring about useful and pleasurable knowledge but also free women from the fancies of poignant poetry, and the wanderings of the imagination that were associated with them. Depicting the wax-modeller in the act of dissecting a brain and surrounded by the models of the collection, including the models of the senses, Morandi's own self-portrait presented viewers with an exemplary instance of control of the imagination.

THE NATURE OF WAX

According to Algarotti the 'century of things' promised to introduce women to the world of natural knowledge and change society as a whole. Yet, as the foregoing discussion shows, the encounter between women and natural objects equally changed the meaning of 'things'. Considering Chiarini's and Morandi's different practices of wax modelling, this essay has examined the shift in meaning of wax figures at a time of changing approaches to nature and increasing discussions on the place of women in the realm of natural inquiry. While Chiarini's performances as a wax modeller represented a consolidated model of inspiration that the church was seeking to control, Morandi's activities as a natural inquirer and a trustworthy modeller of the human body provided an example of female accomplishment that won the approval of the pope. To be sure, Morandi's anatomical waxworks drew on the visual world of devotion as well as on her experience of anatomical dissections and the repertoire of anatomical images that was available to her. Her own self-portrait is largely reminiscent of the tradition of wax portraits of individuals who died in an 'odour of sanctity' to which Morandi contributed.¹¹⁴

But much as anatomical models enriched the practice of wax modelling with new meanings, they also affected the consideration of wax's material properties. Precisely because of its malleability, its capacity to melt and take on different forms, wax had traditionally been regarded as an appropriate material for crossing borders between the physical and non-physical. However, its employment in the production of anatomical models contributed to the redefinition of the meaning of wax by turning it into a medium particularly suited for representing the natural realm. Insofar as waxworks visually and materially instantiated the order of the anatomical body, they also offered the opportunity to refashion the material features of wax, such as softness and flexibility, and their capacity to evoke and replicate the realm of generation and life. Indeed, thanks to the properties of wax, its malleability, reliable colouring, imperishable character and capacity to attain proper bulk and

¹¹³ Quoted in Crespi, *Felsina Pittrice*, 308.

¹¹⁴ See Bianchi, 'Femminea natura', 35–41.

credible shape, anatomical waxworks were taken to be particularly accurate and truthful; in fact, as Galvani put it, even more truthful than the natural body itself.¹¹⁵ In that sense, the history of eighteenth-century anatomical waxworks is also a story about the role of the properties of specific material domains in substantiating claims about the nature of the human body. At a time of increasing interest in the material cultures of science and medicine, this is an aspect of medical artefacts that calls for further historical consideration.

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¹¹⁵ Galvani, 'De Manzoliniana Supellectili', 48–50.

Medical competence, anatomy and the polity in seventeenth-century Rome

SILVIA DE RENZI

In April 1624, while walking in the Vatican gardens, Pope Urban VIII was entertained by a small group discussing the latest startling natural phenomenon, a two-headed calf. With the pontiff were his secretary, his theologian and two physicians, Johannes Faber and Giulio Mancini. A few days before, Faber had received the calf from the Cardinal Nephew and, having dissected it in front of students at his home, now presented his drawings to the pope.¹ Five months later, by papal order, Mancini called Faber to attend the autopsy of Marco Antonio De Dominis. One of the tragic figures of the Counter-Reformation, De Dominis had died in jail after controversially recanting his heretical views. Rumours of poisoning soon circulated and an autopsy was ordered, but the doctors judged it a natural death.²

These episodes tend to appear in unrelated historical accounts. De Dominis' demise, including the subsequent burning of his corpse, has been explored by religious historians discussing ill-fated instances of reform in the Catholic Church.³ Historian of science Paula Findlen has analysed the conversation on the two-headed calf as an example of how, by becoming courtly displays, natural investigations gained unprecedented importance in the early modern period.⁴ In neither account has the presence of physicians been remarked. Much more generally, physicians are conspicuous by their

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¹ J. Faber, 'Aliorum Novae Hispaniae Animalium Nardi Antonii Recchi Imagines et Nomina Ioannis Fabri Lyncei Bambergensis Philosophi, Medici, publici Professoris Romani et Summo Pontifici ab herbarijs studiis Expositione', in *Rerum Medicarum Novae Hispaniae Thesaurus* (Romae, 1651), 460–839, 599; Faber to Federico Cesi, in G. Gabrieli (ed.), *Il carteggio linceo*, (Rome, 1996), 869–70.

² For a brief account of the autopsy, see Faber to Galilei, in G. Galilei, *Le Opere* (Florence, 1966), Vol. XIII, 207; S. Cavazza, 'Marcantonio De Dominis', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 33 (Rome, 1987), 642–50.

³ D. Cantimori, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento e altri scritti* (Turin, 1992), 473–81.

⁴ P. Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, 1994), 213–14.

absence from the history of early modern Rome, although a reasonable estimate put their number in 1656 as high as 140 out of roughly 120,000 inhabitants.⁵ Medicine's concern with the body made it one of the disciplines most directly intersecting with the cultural and religious project of the Counter-Reformation, which was centred on Rome, but the Eternal City has for long been neglected also by specialist historians of medicine. This is now changing; in addition to more specific studies,⁶ two preliminary attempts at assessing physicians in early modern Rome are now available. On the one hand, focusing on papal physicians, Richard Palmer concluded that they tended to be socially and intellectually weak. Building on this and also contrasting Rome with Padua, a leading centre in Renaissance medicine, Daniel Brownstein argued that medical practice rather than teaching attracted physicians to wealthy and cosmopolitan Rome, but that this prevented them from pursuing research-oriented activities, such as anatomy. On the other hand, Nancy Siraisi has engaged head-on with the erudite dimension of the works of late Renaissance Roman physicians, and shown how this interplayed with their wider activities.⁷ These are suggestive interpretations, but, in different ways, they look at physicians in isolation.

By reconstructing the careers of Mancini and Faber, I make physicians' multifaceted interactions with the society of Counter-Reformation Rome the focus of my attention. Neither represents the rank and file of Roman doctors. The former became papal physician, though he is better known to art historians for a work on painting; the latter was a member of the Academy of the Lincei, Galileo's supporters in Rome, and he is prominent in studies on the astronomer.⁸ As a consequence, their medical activities have been overlooked, but precisely because in different ways they were well-connected actors in the social and cultural milieu of the city, they can offer valuable insights into how physicians built their identity and perceived competence and success at the heart of the Catholic world.

In my investigations I draw on burgeoning research on early modern physicians, spanning from quantitative investigations to in-depth case studies,

⁵ C. Cipolla, *Public Health and the Medical Profession in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1976), 82; the proportion of physicians in Rome was almost three times that in Amsterdam fifteen years earlier.

⁶ See, for example, A. L. Bonella, 'La professione medica a Roma tra Sei e Settecento', *Roma Moderna e Contemporanea*, 6 (1998), 349–366; M. Conforti, 'La medicina nel *Giornale de' Letterati* di Roma (1668–1681)', *Medicina nei Secoli*, 13/1 (2000), 59–91; 'La sanità a Roma', special issue of *Roma Moderna e Contemporanea*, 13 (2005).

⁷ R. Palmer, 'Medicine at the Papal Court in the Sixteenth Century', in V. Nutton (ed.), *Medicine at the Courts of Europe. 1500–1837* (London, 1990), 49–78; D. A. Brownstein, *Cultures of Anatomy in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, PhD thesis, University of California Berkeley, 1996; N. G. Siraisi, 'Historiae, Natural History, Roman Antiquity, and Some Roman Physicians', in G. Pomata and N. G. Siraisi (eds.), *Historia. Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 2005), 325–354.

⁸ Mancini's *Considerazioni sulla Pittura*, first published in 1956, is a valuable testimony to the unique features of collecting in early modern Rome; see L. Spezzaferro, 'Problemi del collezionismo a Roma nel XVII secolo', in O. Bonfait, M. Hochmann, L. Spezzaferro and B. Toscano (eds.), *Geografia del collezionismo. Italia e Francia tra il XVI e il XVIII secolo* (Rome, 2002), 1–24. On the Lincei, G. Olmi, *L'inventario del mondo. Catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna* (Bologna, 1992); D. Freedberg, *The Eye of the Lynx. Galileo, His Friends, and the Beginnings of Modern Natural History* (Chicago, 2002).

and from exploration of the institutions which shaped their social identity – colleges and universities – to analysis of physicians' contribution to broader intellectual trends, including the rise of empirical knowledge and the fortunes of antiquarianism.⁹ There is general consensus that between the late Middle Ages and the mid-seventeenth century, Italian physicians provided an influential model across Europe. However, the way they built their careers and fashioned themselves changed as the social and cultural context of the Italian states was transformed over the central decades of the sixteenth century, including the rise of ecclesiastical as opposed to lay careers, the centripetal forces of courts, and new patterns of consumption and devotion. To make sense of such changes we have to look more broadly than has been usually the case at the arenas where physicians moved, the skills they mobilized and the range of practices they were involved in.

Mancini and Faber were both foreigners and arrived in Rome in the last decade of the sixteenth century. In the first section, I reconstruct how medical education equipped them to start in the profession, including their expectations in choosing the Eternal City. In the second and third sections I follow their trajectories and this means to enter institutions as different as noble households, tribunals, hospitals, the papal court, national churches, and academies. The blossoming art production of Rome, including its impact on consumption patterns, and the political network that linked the Eternal City to the world are also important to making sense of their identity. While cultivating the intellectual and professional skills they had acquired at university, Faber and Mancini also gained others; both became art connoisseurs and, though in different ways, engaged with politics. Faber, who had a taste for antiquarianism, specialized in *materia medica* and took up anatomical investigations in earnest; but he also acted throughout his life as a political broker between Bavaria and Rome. Mancini, a shrewd economic operator, practised the art of writing advice, including on how to make a career at court and on gentlemen's education; while engaging in the centuries-old but still topical debate on the status of medicine, he forcefully argued for its pre-eminence and political role.

Taking into account all the arenas in which these physicians were active also allows us to look afresh at one of the most intensively studied aspects of

⁹ Just to consider two different countries such as Italy and Britain, see Cipolla, *Public Health and the Medical Profession*; K. Park, *Doctors and Medicine in Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, 1985); W. Birken, 'The social problem of the English physician in the early seventeenth century', *Medical History*, 31 (1987), 201–216; H. J. Cook, *Trials of an Ordinary Doctor: Joannes Groenevelt in Seventeenth-Century London* (Baltimore, 1994); N. G. Siraisi, *The Clock and the Mirror: Girolamo Cardano and Renaissance Medicine* (Princeton, 1997); B. Nance, *Turquet de Mayerne as Baroque Physician: The Art of Medical Portraiture* (Amsterdam, 2001); N. G. Siraisi, 'History, antiquarianism, and medicine: the case of Girolamo Mercuriale', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 64 (2003), 231–251; M. Pelling with F. White, *Medical Conflicts in Early Modern London. Patronage, Physicians, and Irregular Practitioners, 1550–1640* (Oxford, 2003); A. Pastore, *Le regole dei corpi. Medicina e disciplina nell'Italia moderna* (Bologna, 2006); on physicians and empirical knowledge, H. J. Cook, 'Physicians and Natural History', in N. Jardine, J. Secord and E. C. Spary (eds.), *Cultures of Natural History* (Cambridge, 1996), 91–105; Pomata and Siraisi (eds.), *Historia. Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*.

early modern medicine, anatomical investigations. At the heart of those two meetings in 1624 was the act of dissecting bodies, but the first was an anatomical demonstration of a monstrous animal, the second an autopsy. While anatomical investigations are a time-honoured topic of research, historians have only recently started to appreciate the role of post-mortems. Built on different routines, they provided different knowledge; in Rome they both were widespread, but although they could intersect, they seem to have contributed differently to a physician's profile.¹⁰ Faber and Mancini were active practitioners, too. In addition to recovering the social and political significance of their relations with patients, I also argue for a broader definition of practice, which went beyond the bedside and included writing *consilia* as an expert witness.

Early modern Roman physicians have rarely been explored and often presented as uninspiring specimens of a discipline that elsewhere was undergoing fundamental changes. Yet, taking seriously how physicians interacted with Rome's distinctive culture, society and politics might expand our view of how medical competence was defined, here and elsewhere.

'THE POPE IS VERY WELL DISPOSED TOWARDS PHYSICIANS'

Like no other city, early modern Rome had multiple functions; it was the capital of a powerful state, the hub for daring and lucrative business ventures, the site of numerous magnificent courts, and the headquarters of the Catholic drive to regain religious and intellectual control in Europe. Patronage relationships dominated the social landscape, but contemporaries regarded Rome as a place where fortunes could be made much more easily than anywhere else, especially thanks to the unique political arrangement of the papacy. Here a new patronage system was established every time a pope was elected. This dynamism was social as well as geographical.¹¹ At the numerous courts of cardinals and noble families, people of the middle rank could climb the social ladder, and foreigners could relatively simply become Roman citizens.¹² Physicians, like everyone else, took advantage. From within the church state, from other Italian

¹⁰ K. Park, 'The criminal and the saintly body: autopsy and dissection in Renaissance Italy', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 47 (1994), 1–33, and 'The life of the corpse: division and dissection in late medieval Europe', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 50 (1995), 111–132 are seminal; see also her *Secrets of Women: Gender, Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissection* (New York, 2006); N. G. Siraisi, 'Segni evidenti, teoria e testimonianza nelle narrazioni di autopsie del Rinascimento', *Quaderni storici*, 108 (2001), 719–744.

¹¹ R. Ago, *Carriere e clientele nella Roma barocca* (Rome, 1990); L. Nussdorfer, *Civic Politics in the Rome of Urban VIII* (Princeton, 1992); M. A. Visceglia, 'Burocrazia, mobilità sociale e patronage alla corte di Roma tra '500 e '600. Alcuni aspetti del recente dibattito storiografico e prospettive di ricerca', *Roma Moderna e Contemporanea*, 3 (1995), 11–55; M. A. Visceglia, 'Figure e luoghi della corte romana', in G. Ciucci (ed.), *Roma moderna* (Rome, 2002), 39–78. On the extraordinarily varied world of artisans working for this centre of early modern consumption, see R. Ago, *Economia barocca. Mercato e istituzioni nella Roma del Seicento* (Rome, 1998).

¹² E. Mori, '"Tot reges in urbe Roma quot cives". Cittadinanza e nobiltà a Roma tra Cinque e Seicento', *Roma Moderna e Contemporanea*, 4 (1996), 379–401.

states and from across the Alps, they flocked to Rome. Convents, monasteries, and large aristocratic households all demanded attending physicians, and especially in the bigger hospitals – financial hubs as well as places for assistance and medical care – physicians could combine a salary with useful networking.¹³

Hospitals loom large at the outset of both Mancini's and Faber's professional lives. Born into the well-connected family of a Siena physician, Mancini was appointed at the Santo Spirito in October 1592, five years after obtaining his degree.¹⁴ At the time he had a *condotta* in Viterbo, but did not like the job. During the last year of his medical education in Padua, he had been approached with an offer to become assistant to the physician of the King of Poland. Nothing came of it, but this stirred his ambition and Rome quickly appeared as an appropriate alternative, especially since the family had connections there.¹⁵ The job at the hospital seemed a wonderful opportunity, though Mancini was required not to practise privately and had to live in the hospital, rather disappointing conditions for a young and confident physician.¹⁶ Within a few months he was complaining that hospital life was bad for his health, but to leave might annoy the pope – Clement VIII – who was 'very well disposed towards physicians'.¹⁷ Only in 1623, when he was appointed physician of Pope Urban VIII, does his name disappear from the hospital's payroll.¹⁸

At the University of Padua, renowned in Europe for the emphasis on practical teaching and its professors' scholarship, Mancini had enjoyed the full medical curriculum.¹⁹ In addition to attending the lectures, he followed the learned Girolamo Mercuriale in his daily practice and became a favourite student, probably due to the remarkable breadth of his interests; for example, following the example of wealthier friends in Siena, he had developed

¹³ S. De Renzi, '“A Fountain for the Thirsty” and a Bank for the Pope: Charity, Conflicts and Medical Careers at the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Seventeenth-Century Rome', in A. Cunningham, P. O. Grell and J. Arrizabalaga (eds.), *Health Care and Poor Relief in Counter-Reformation Europe* (London, 1999), 102–131; on hospitals in Rome, among others, A. Cavaterra, 'L'ospedalità a Roma nell'età moderna: il caso del San Giacomo (1585–1605)', *Sanità Scienza e Storia*, (1986), 87–123; L. Cardilli (ed.), *L'antico ospedale di Santo Spirito. Dall'istituzione papale alla sanità del terzo millennio. Convegno Internazionale di Studi Roma 15–17 maggio 2001*, (Rome, 2001–2002).

¹⁴ For a well-informed biographical account of Mancini see M. Maccherini, 'Caravaggio nel carteggio familiare di Giulio Mancini', *Prospettiva*, 86 (1997), 71–92; M. Maccherini, 'Ritratto di Giulio Mancini', in O. Bonfait and A. Coliva (eds.), *Bernini dai Borghese ai Barberini. La cultura a Roma intorno agli anni Venti* (Rome, 2004), 47–57; see further S. De Renzi and D. Sparti, 'Giulio Mancini', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, in press). The main source for Mancini's biography is his correspondence, now held in Siena, Archivio della Società di Esecutori di Pie Disposizioni, Famiglia Mancini (hereafter ASEPD).

¹⁵ Giulio to his brother Deifebo, November 1584, ASEPD, C XIX, 166, ff. 133–134. On Rome as an alternative, see *ibid.*, f. 208.

¹⁶ Deifebo to a cousin, 21 September and 27 November 1592, ASEPD, C XIX, 166, ff. 719 and 736.

¹⁷ Deifebo to Ippolito Agostini, 29 July 1593, cited in R. Bartolini, 'Siena medicea: l'accademia di Ippolito Agostini', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, 25 (1995), 1475–1530, 1522.

¹⁸ P. Savio, 'Ricerche sui medici e chirurghi dell'ospedale di Santo Spirito in Sassia. Sec. XVI–XVII', *Archivio della Società romana di Storia Patria*, 25 (1971), 145–168.

¹⁹ J. J. Bylebyl, 'The School of Padua: Humanistic Medicine in the Sixteenth Century', in C. Webster (ed.), *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1979), 335–370.

a passion for painting, though, like them, he did not paint.²⁰ Padua is also commonly associated with thriving anatomical teaching, but like his German fellow students, Mancini was disappointed by the unpredictable schedule of anatomical demonstrations. Only towards the end of his stay could he report an 'anatomia perfettissima', very likely performed by the renowned but erratic Fabrici.²¹ On his return to Siena in 1586 he was appointed to the chair of anatomy and surgery; the intriguing reference in a letter from Mercuriale to 'models of the eye' which Mancini had prepared for teaching is evidence of resourceful commitment.²²

Padua had transformed a well-educated young man with a passion for painting into an ambitious physician with a clear view of how his profession could win him money and status. Thanks to his remarkable networking skills, he could now count on the recommendations of illustrious senior colleagues and leading *virtuosi*. However, Padua had also taught him that the status of medicine was controversial. Physicians had to respond to natural philosophers' challenge that medicine was epistemologically weak,²³ and Mancini would draw on these discussions when in Rome the attack came not from philosophers, but jurists. Reluctantly back in Siena, Mancini taught and practised for almost five years. Then, after the brief spell in Viterbo, he was off to the Santo Spirito.

Like other Roman hospitals, the Santo Spirito trained would-be surgeons and young physicians, and it was as an assistant physician that Faber walked its wards around 1600. Born to Protestant parents in Bamberg (Bavaria), he had been raised as a Catholic.²⁴ He received a medical degree at the University of Würzburg, a city still split into two religious camps, but which the fervently Catholic Prince-Bishop Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn was trying to bring to uniformity, including by re-establishing a university. The 1587 statutes of the medical faculty testify to an effort to provide up-to-date teaching. Students often chose anatomical topics for their dissertations, while practical training included attendance at senior physicians' consultations, study of plants, minerals and animals, and visits to apothecaries' shops.²⁵

²⁰ A nineteenth-century inventory of manuscripts very likely belonging to Mancini includes lectures of various professors in Padua: see ASEPD, C XIX, 167, ff. 160–7. For attendance at Mercuriale's practice, see Giulio to Deifebo, November 1584, ASEPD, C XIX, 166, f. 133. In 1585, Mancini supervised the publication of Mercuriale's *De decoratione*, a work on cosmetic medicine. On Mancini's early interest in painting, see Maccherini, 'Ritratto di Giulio Mancini'.

²¹ Giulio to Deifebo, 2 February 1584, ASEPD, C XIX 166, f. 107. For students' complaints about Fabrici, see A. Favaro, *Atti della nazione germanica artista nello studio di Padova* (Venice, 1911), 170.

²² Mercuriale to Mancini, 30 January 1588, ASEPD, C XIX, 166, f. 422. For the chair, see G. Cascio Pratilli, *L'università e il Principe. Gli studi di Siena e di Pisa tra Rinascimento e Controriforma* (Florence, 1975), 74.

²³ H. Mikkeli, *An Aristotelian Response to Renaissance Humanism. Jacopo Zabarella on the Nature of the Arts and Sciences* (Helsinki, 1992); N. Jardine, 'Keeping Order in the School of Padua: Jacopo Zabarella and Francesco Piccolomini on the Offices of Philosophy', in D. Di Liscia, E. Kessler and C. Methuen (eds.), *Method and Order in Renaissance Philosophy of Nature: The Aristotelian Commentary Tradition* (Aldershot, 1997), 183–209.

²⁴ Faber's biography is outlined in G. Belloni Speciale, 'Giovanni Faber', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 43 (Rome, 1993), 686–9.

²⁵ F. Von Wegele, *Geschichte der Universität Würzburg* (Würzburg, 1882), Vol. 2, 191–9. On anatomical dissertations, see P. H. Bosmans, 'Adrien Romain', in *Biographie Nationale de Belgique* 19, (Brussels, 1902), 848–89.

Students in Würzburg were probably encouraged to complete their medical training abroad. A year after his degree, Faber crossed the Alps, but it was Rome, not Padua, that attracted him. Mancini had been fascinated by the job opportunity offered by the Eternal City; for the young German coming from a divided land, Rome had a clearer political and religious meaning as the centre of the Catholic world. It was common for converts to become zealous fighters for their new religion, and soon Faber's religious and political commitment became apparent. His mentor was Kaspar Schoppe, another Bavarian convert and controversial philologist; at the beginning it was erudition, including *materia medica*, that opened the doors of intellectual circles to Faber. Schoppe involved him in two typical humanist enterprises, a commentary on the portraits of illustrious men collected by the erudite Fulvio Orsini and an attack on the poor botanical knowledge of the erudite Joseph Scaliger. Just two years after Faber's arrival, he was appointed keeper of the Vatican Gardens and lecturer in *materia medica* at the university, jobs for which strong papal support was essential.

National communities helped foreigners find their way in Rome. It comes as no surprise then to find Faber as an active member of the German church, though he went beyond the usual call of duty. Soon after his arrival, he started to act as the representative in Rome of powerful German patrons and obtained on their behalf licences to read forbidden books and dispensations to marry. He also cared for weaker members of the German community in Rome and throughout his life remained pivotal in connecting Bavaria, a major but politically troubled Catholic ally, and the pope.²⁶ Contemporary Protestant accounts describe him as one of the spies who, under the pretence of erudite companionship, would try to convert Protestant travellers. This may have been propaganda, but in a letter of 1626 asking for a pension, Faber did boast of his 'reconciling the German Protestant Princes and keeping them in devotion towards this Holy See'.²⁷ Political wheeling and dealing was his bread and butter.

Unlike Mancini, Faber was fascinated by activities in the hospital, especially post-mortems. Outside, they were both involved in the growing art market. Complementing learned physicians' traditional philological and antiquarian pursuits with an interest in works of art, they were following the latest fashion in this major centre of art production. Although collecting paintings was becoming affordable by people across a wide social spectrum, it still remained one of the best ways to enter more exclusive circles. For Mancini, who traded in art with impressive determination, the search for patients coincided with

²⁶ On Faber's political activities, see S. De Renzi, 'Courts and conversions: intellectual battles and natural knowledge in Counter-Reformation Rome', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, 27 (1996), 429–449; I. Baldriga, *L'occhio della lince. I primi lincei tra arte, scienza e collezionismo (1603–1630)* (Rome, 2002); I. Fosi, 'Johannes Faber: prudente mediatore o "estremo persecutore dei Protestanti"?' in *I primi Lincei e il Sant'Uffizio: questioni di scienza e di fede. Atti del Convegno, Roma 12–13 giugno 2003* (Rome, 2005), 189–206.

²⁷ Gabrieli (ed.), *Il carteggio linceo*, 1095.

his search for paintings. For example, he regularly attended the household of Cardinal Francesco Del Monte, one of the most active art patrons, who would introduce him to painters and collectors, soon to become his patients.²⁸ Medicine, art – he sold his collection in 1620 – and shrewd investments, made Mancini a very wealthy man. Though on a completely different scale, Faber also collected paintings and, at ease in the community of German and Dutch painters, where he found patients, he also served as an art agent for his German patrons.²⁹

As attending physicians Mancini and Faber competed, but the bedside was just one aspect of their medical expertise, which they came to define in different terms. In his account of the double-headed calf, Faber praised Mancini as a remarkable anatomist (*anatomicus insignis*).³⁰ But it is not clear whether he referred to anything more specific than his Paduan training, for in Rome Mancini's interest in anatomy *per se* seems to have waned; none of his extant manuscripts is on this topic. Other aspects of the profession seemed more suited to promoting the discipline and raising his own status.

MEDICINE AND POLITICS

As his correspondence shows, Mancini was mingling with, and attending, powerful clients, including some of the most influential cardinals. The enviable reputation he acquired was based on what many perceived as extraordinary semiotic skills, though his briskness at the bedside was also commented upon; and he rebutted firmly accusations that he was less than assiduous at the hospital.³¹ At the end of his life he was extremely well off, but before becoming papal physician he was happy to combine various sources of income; in 1616 he was working as physician of one of the jails for which he received a meagre 9 scudi every three months.³² His connections with the world of the law went beyond this job, and his manuscripts include reports written in his capacity as expert witness to the numerous tribunals of the city. For example, in 1609 he wrote a lengthy report as one of many physicians giving evidence in an alleged poisoning, a *cause célèbre* of the time.³³ In 1612, he was asked to assess if a woman's miscarriage could have caused her death;³⁴ in 1615 he was again involved in a poisoning case and a year later gave his opinion in a dispute over the effects

²⁸ Z. Wazbinski, *Il Cardinale Francesco Maria Del Monte 1549–1626* (Florence, 1994).

²⁹ Baldriga, *L'occhio della lince*.

³⁰ Faber, 'Aliorum Novae Hispaniae Animalium Nardi Antonii Recchi Imagines et Nomina', 599.

³¹ On all this, see the entry on Mancini in J. N. Erythreus, *Pinacotheca Altera Imaginum Illustrium, Doctrinae vel Ingenii Laude, Virorum* (Coloniae Ubiorum, 1645), 79–82, a source to be used with caution, but which archival documents have corroborated in various instances. Evidence of Mancini's interest in bedside medicine is in a collection of miscellaneous writings on medical practice, *Vectigal medicinae practicae Julii Mancini*, British Library, Sloane 3133. Mancini's semiotic skills are discussed in C. Ginzburg, *Miti, emblemi, spie. Morfologia e storia* (Turin, 1986), 172–9.

³² J. A. F. Orbaan, *Documenti sul barocco in Roma* (Rome, 1920), 317.

³³ The dossier is in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (hereafter BAV), Barberiniani Latini 4316, ff. 245–90.

³⁴ BAV, Barberiniani Latini 4317, ff. 38v–39.

of the construction of a building on air quality at the nearby Jesuit College.³⁵ His advice was also sought in a case of alleged witchcraft,³⁶ and he intervened – it is unclear in what capacity – in the discussions over Filippo Neri's canonization, challenging the official account of his palpitations.³⁷ In these reports, doctrine and observation could be combined in various degrees; assessing the evidence of autopsies was an important skill, but it did not necessarily mean attending them.³⁸ Early modern physicians' interactions with the law has recently been studied in relation to their task as judges in cases of alleged malpractice. Giving testimony as expert witnesses in an increasingly wide range of legal cases, civil as well as criminal, was probably a more frequent routine.³⁹

More generally, drawing on, and expanding on, the role of adviser that physicians had always enjoyed, in the seventeenth century medicine intersected with politics in at least two areas.⁴⁰ A significant number of those writing on 'reason of state', one of the most controversial notions of contemporary political thought, were physicians, and this gives a new meaning to the old medical metaphors frequently occurring in such literature.⁴¹ But physicians were not only writing about the political body; they were also custodians of the prince's. Privy to the circumstances of his health, their knowledge and practice had dramatic political consequences. The exceptional position of the pope's or the prince's physician was recognized even by jurists who had for centuries attacked medicine in the so-called 'dispute of the arts'.⁴² Here the status of the legal and medical professions was assessed with regard to their subject and the good that each could deliver to the community.

In Rome the traditional competition had acquired a specific social meaning: literary skills, which had determined the success of previous generations, were being replaced by professional competence, but legal expertise was much the most in demand and a degree in law the best key to the hundreds

³⁵ BAV, Barberiniani Latini 4316, ff. 215–243v; the dossier on the quality of air at ff. 375–443.

³⁶ BAV, Barberiniani Latini 4337, ff. 24–31v.

³⁷ Archivio della Congregazione dell'Oratorio di Roma, A. III. 2. 1. On medical evidence at Filippo's canonization trial, see N. G. Siraisi, 'La comunicazione del sapere anatomico ai confini tra diritto e agiografia: due casi del secolo XVI', in P. Galluzzi, G. Micheli and M. T. Monti (eds.), *Le forme della comunicazione scientifica* (Milan, 1998), 419–438.

³⁸ T. P. Olson, 'Caravaggio's coroner: forensic medicine in Giulio Mancini's art criticism', *Oxford Art Journal*, 28 (2005), 83–98, but see also S. De Renzi, 'Witnesses of the body. Medico-legal cases in seventeenth-century Rome', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, 33A (2002), 219–242.

³⁹ G. Pomata, *Contracting a Cure. Patients, Healers, and the Law in Early Modern Bologna* (Baltimore, 1998); on legal medicine, C. Crawford, 'Legalizing Medicine: Early Modern Legal Systems and the Growth of Medico-Legal Knowledge', in M. Clark and C. Crawford (eds.), *Legal Medicine in History* (Cambridge, 1994), 89–116; A. Pastore, *Il medico in tribunale. La perizia medica nella procedura penale di antico regime. Secoli XVI–XVII* (Bellinzona, 1998).

⁴⁰ On humanist physicians as counsellors, C. Crisciani, 'Histories, Stories, Exempla, and Anecdotes: Michele Savonarola from Latin to Vernacular', in Pomata and Siraisi (eds.), *Historia. Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*, 297–324; for the later period, J. Soll, 'Healing the body politic: French royal doctors, history and the birth of a nation 1560–1634', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 55 (2002), 1259–1286.

⁴¹ P. Burke, 'Tacitism, Scepticism, and the Reason of State', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450–1700* (Cambridge, 1991), 479–98.

⁴² G. Di Renzo Villata, 'Il dibattito sul primato tra scienze della natura e scienze giuridiche. Giuristi e medici a confronto tra Medioevo e Rinascimento', in *Girolamo Cardano nel suo tempo* (Pavia, 2003), 221–61, 239.

of offices in the papal bureaucracy and noble households. Physicians were feeling the heat. Giving his view in a conflict over precedence – one of many that characterized Roman urban life – in or before 1614, Mancini wrote a passionate essay on the status of medicine and its place in the life of a community.⁴³

While rehearsing some of the better-known arguments of the long-standing dispute, Mancini added new reflections on physicians' relations with political power. Despite having the same subject – the human being – medicine and the law are built in very different ways, he argued. Medical knowledge is based on natural philosophy and through the use of logic it gains certainty; by contrast, jurists lack both and rather possess a *cognitio historica*, knowledge of the laws that have accumulated, often disorderly, over the centuries. Medicine and the law also share a similar subdivision, including *iudiciaria* (that which relates to judging cases in courts), *consultativa* (that which relates to giving advice in individual cases) and *catthedrale* (that which relates to teaching). But revealingly focusing on *iudiciaria*, Mancini claimed that a physician's task is far more important than a jurist's on account of the quantity of people affected by the matters on which he exercises his judgement. While assessing the spread of plague, the virginity of a woman, or the madness of a defendant, a physician is dealing with issues to which everyone, including the prince, is subject; by contrast, laws, which are the dominion of jurists, do not apply universally as the prince is above them.

Yet, Mancini could not but accept that the noblest task in society is to give the law, which, following Aristotle's *Politics*, he regarded as the product of wisdom and prudence. However, contrary to what could be assumed, continued Mancini, law-giving is best achieved not by jurists, about whose education and achievements he was bitterly sarcastic, but by physicians. An imaginary example, but one that could actually occur, helped bring home the pre-eminence of physicians. With an implicit reference to the utopian political literature popular at the time, Mancini asked his reader to imagine a people who has landed on an unknown territory and should start living as a community. If both a jurist and a physician are with them, it is easy to see that the latter not the former would be of greater help in their task. Not only would his knowledge of the first principles such as how man's will and intellect interact be extremely useful. His competence as to the geographical and material circumstances of the country and the people, including air, water, winds and astrological conditions, would also be valuable with regard to how and where to build, as well as to establishing laws. Laws should always depend on consideration of the specific place and time of a country, which include both its natural settings and its astrological and even occult circumstances. These are known to a physician and not to a jurist. 'The physician with his

⁴³ 'Della precedenza del dottore in legge e medicina e a chi convenga darla', BAV, Barberiniani Latini 4315, ff. 271–88.

intelligence and prudence will be able to establish and make the law . . . therefore he will get close to the law-giving prince'.⁴⁴

Mancini is no forerunner of Johann Peter Frank, the eighteenth-century advocate of medical police. Mancini's language was shaped by Aristotelian politics and ethics, read through the lens of contemporary political literature.⁴⁵ His prince was not an enlightened ruler, but the prince above the law of theories on 'reason of state'; his aim was to argue for physicians' higher rank as their competence could actually prove vital to law-giving, the fundamental act of the prince. Medical knowledge meant a combination of Aristotelian natural and moral philosophy with the Hippocratic understanding that the environment has a major impact on individuals and their communities. The materialist approach to human nature, which had traditionally characterized medicine, could be valuable in political action.

Evoking the establishment of utopian communities should not mislead us; Mancini's intended audience was papal circles. However above the law, the prince/pope was subject to the vagaries of his body and the role of his physician was thus all the more important. In a society in which status and authority were measured in terms of proximity to the source of political power, the way to enhance a physician's rank was to become attending doctor of the prince, which Mancini accomplished in 1623 when he was appointed by Urban VIII. However, just a few years later he discovered to have competitors; since 1628, the pope developed a close relationship with the philosopher and astrologer Tommaso Campanella, and Mancini might have become uncomfortable.⁴⁶ Meanwhile Faber's career was following a different path.

DISSECTIONS AND PHYSICIANS' IDENTITY

In 1611, Faber became a member of the Academy of the Lincei, whose commitment to natural investigations made it unique among contemporary academies. Different strands coexisted in the Lincei; in Faber the rhetoric and practice of observation, rooted in his early anatomical education, was combined with the innovative natural philosophy of Bernardino Telesio's followers, whom he had encountered on a trip to Naples in 1608. The constant supply of information about nature that reached Rome, the centre of missionary networks, also enriched his views. Faber's connections with Germany became instrumental in promoting Galileo across the Alps and he successfully acted on behalf of the founder of the Lincei, Prince Federico

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, ff. 282–282v.

⁴⁵ Other political manuscripts by Mancini are discussed in A. Menniti Ippolito, "Nella Corte di Roma, o per dir meglio /nel pubblico spedale della speranza". Note per una lettura dall'interno della curia romana seicentesca", *Annali di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea*, 4 (1998), 221–43.

⁴⁶ He played a rather cynical role when, as astrological prognostications about Urban VIII's imminent death were cunningly used by the pope's political opponents, he contributed to the rumours by saying that the pope lacked 'natural heat'; see L. Amabile, *Fra Tommaso Campanella ne' castelli di Napoli*, in *Roma e in Parigi* (Naples, 1881), Vol. 2, 149. Mancini himself was keen on astrological medicine.

Cesi.⁴⁷ Yet, to some of the wealthier members of the Academy, he often appeared more a client than a fellow academic.

Partly, this was the result of the multifaceted relations of the Academy with medicine. The Lincei's investigations on the variety and morphology of plants, animals and minerals included their medicinal virtues.⁴⁸ Yet in Prince Cesi's austere view, natural investigations conflicted with courtly life as much as with the professions. Medicine and the law were the obvious choice of those more interested in status and money than scholarship, and physicians hunting for *condotte* (public positions) and private clients were as removed from the ideal Linceo as courtiers entertaining their patrons.⁴⁹ The irony was that, precisely because Faber was involved in the profession, he had much easier access to the community of those pursuing research – physicians, apothecaries and surgeons – than any other Linceo.

Faber struggled throughout his life to improve his position and earn more. The chair of *materia medica* had come with one of the lowest salaries in the university, and did not become the first step in a glittering career. Already in 1612 he was begging Paul V to give him a position either among the senior physicians of the Santo Spirito, or in the pope's household.⁵⁰ In 1624, his hopes were raised when university chairs and salaries were to be rearranged. Faber pulled all his strings to win the patronage of the Cardinal Nephew, Francesco Barberini, but to his bitter disappointment, the outcome of months of scheming was a pitiful increase in his salary.⁵¹ He thought that the new chair would allow him to make his anatomical observations available for the public benefit (*benefizio pubblico*), but this did not mean much to the court.⁵²

Being a German created its own problems. Faber cultivated his German identity in political as well as medical terms and his links with Bavaria included correspondence with physicians who would keep him abreast of new chemical and alchemical investigations. As a result he was, behind the scenes, the fundamental actor in a bitter controversy over the use of chemical drugs that divided the community of physicians in Rome between the 1610s and 1620s. He enthusiastically involved German physicians in the dispute, but in a vitriolic attack addressed to the by now powerful Mancini, the Roman physician Pietro Castelli accused Faber of forgetting that, although a

⁴⁷ S. Brevaglieri, *L'Accademia dei Lincei e il libro: editoria e cultura a Roma all'inizio del Seicento*, Tesi di Dottorato, Università degli Studi di Firenze, 2005.

⁴⁸ A. Clericuzio and S. De Renzi, 'Medicine, Alchemy and Natural Philosophy in the Early Accademia dei Lincei', in D. S. Chambers and F. Quiviger (eds.), *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1995), 175–194; Freedberg, *The Eye of the Lynx*.

⁴⁹ F. Cesi, 'Del natural desiderio di sapere et institutione de' Lincei per adempimento di esso', in M. L. Altieri Biagi and B. Basile (eds.), *Scienziati del Seicento* (Milan, 1980 [1616]), 39–70, 49.

⁵⁰ Gabrieli (ed.), *Il carteggio linceo*, 476–7.

⁵¹ The nerve-wracking negotiations can be followed in *ibid.*, 842–955.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 846.

German, it was in Rome that he was making his living.⁵³ Rivalry over possession of chemical knowledge – either a German or an Italian tradition – meant that even in cosmopolitan Rome national loyalty could become an issue.

Faber was at the centre of various networks, yet at times it was hard to integrate the different components of his identity, and he remained a physician among the Lincei, a Linceo at the Sapienza, and a German living in Italy. So where could he feel more at ease? It was with physicians and surgeons working in hospitals, as well as with apothecaries, that Faber collaborated most intensely. Since his own training at the Santo Spirito, he had regarded hospitals as key sites for the production and transmission of knowledge. Although boundaries between surgeons and physicians were contentious, there is evidence that their training at hospitals could partly overlap. A certificate of attendance issued to a young Swiss doctor in 1614 shows Faber mentoring physicians while practising surgery at the hospitals of San Giovanni and Santa Maria della Consolazione, and the training also included attendance at his private practice.⁵⁴

Since the mid sixteenth century, when Bartolomeo Eustachi taught in Rome, hospitals had been the site of anatomical investigations. The abundance of corpses attracted anatomists, though it is not clear how dissections of patients related to the yearly demonstration on the corpse of an executed criminal. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, dissections were routinely carried out for teaching and research purposes, including on the causes of death; surgeons, who were often members of hospital-based dynasties, were main actors in the practice.⁵⁵ In 1608, the surgeon and physician Prospero Cecchini dissected an eight-month foetus at the Consolazione and, in 1611, at the S. Giovanni, a man who had died of hydrophobia; on both occasions Faber was present and took notes.⁵⁶ Hospitals were also places for therapeutic innovations. Drugs based on minerals such as vitriol, the substance at the centre of the controversy mentioned earlier, were routinely employed; and dissections of patients to observe the side effects of powerful

⁵³ The main text from which to reconstruct the dispute is P. Castelli, *Epistolae medicinales* (Rome, 1626); Castelli's accusation is in the dedication to Mancini, pages not numbered. On the controversy, see O. Trabucco, "Delle cagioni delle febbri maligne" di G. A. Borelli. Una lettura contestuale', *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, 79 (2000), 236–280; S. De Renzi, 'Un Linceo alla Sapienza. La natura del fuoco e dei metalli in un'orazione di Johannes Faber', in A. Battistini, G. De Angelis and G. Olmi (eds.), *Alle origini della scienza moderna: Federico Cesi e l'Accademia dei Lincei* (Bologna, in press).

⁵⁴ Fondo Faber, Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Lincei e Corsiniana, Rome, Vol. 420, ff. 471–3.

⁵⁵ On surgeons, F. Garofalo, 'Contributo storico allo studio dell'insegnamento dell'anatomia nella Sapienza. Documenti d'archivio', *Humana Studia*, (1950), 1–25; F. Garofalo, *Memorie inedite di Andrea Belli per la storia dell'Arcispedale della Consolazione* (Rome, 1950). On anatomy in Rome, see A. Carlino, *La fabbrica del corpo. Libri e dissezione nel Rinascimento* (Turin, 1994), who suggests that the use of hospitals for 'public demonstrations' only started in the late seventeenth century. For a different picture, see M. Conforti and S. De Renzi, 'Sapere anatomico negli ospedali romani: formazione dei chirurghi e pratiche sperimentali' in A. Romano (ed.), *La culture scientifique à Rome à l'époque moderne* (Rome, forthcoming). The overlap between anatomical demonstrations and post-mortems in hospitals is discussed in M. Azzolini, 'Leonardo da Vinci's Anatomical Studies in Milan: A Re-Examination of Sites and Sources', in J. A. Givens, K. M. Reeds and A. Touwaide (eds.), *Visualising Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200–1550* (Aldershot, 2006), 147–176.

⁵⁶ Faber, 'Aliorum Novae Hispaniae Animalium Nardi Antonii Recchi Imagines et Nomina', 614 and 494.

drugs, such as mercury, were also carried out.⁵⁷ In 1622, Faber boasted having dissected hundreds of human corpses: exaggeration apart, it is clear that post-mortems were thriving in Rome and that Faber was an avid practitioner.⁵⁸

In his main published work, Faber recalls post-mortems he attended, but gives fuller accounts of dissections of animals, the aim of which was not to discover the causes of death or the effects of drugs, but rather to clarify the structure of the body. Faber never went to Padua, but seems fully to have embraced Fabrici's 'Aristotle project'.⁵⁹ To make sense of the function of organs and how physiological operations such as respiration, the development of the foetus and digestion are carried out, he dissected animals as different as calves, dogs and sea turtles and in doing so was happy to challenge the authority of leading anatomists. An outcome of this activity was his collection of skeletons, which were immortalized in the engravings of Filippo Liagno, a Neapolitan painter and friend.⁶⁰ While this reveals an important aspect in Faber's interest in art, there is no evidence that he enjoyed a sustained co-operation with draughtsmen during his anatomical investigations. Although Prince Cesi famously employed a range of artists to illustrate his botanical research, these were not made available to Faber's enterprise and he claimed to have produced the drawings of the two-headed calf (Fig. 1).

Anatomical dissections of animals were obviously a very different activity from autopsies, and yet, as is evident now, but not at the time, they could be part of the same endeavour. During the dissection of the two-headed calf, one of the findings that most surprised Faber's students was that inflating the lungs through bellows did not cause any movement of the heart. No passage of air between the lungs and the heart could be detected. Faber commented that this happened not only in the lungs of other bigger and smaller animals, but also in those of human corpses when they were similarly inflated through bellows, 'as will be clear to him who makes the experience' (*experienti patebit*).⁶¹ The quotation suggests repeated observations undertaken with investigative as well as pedagogical intent. To do this, human cadavers were necessary and once again they were found in hospitals, where dead patients, as we have seen, were routinely opened for a range of different purposes.

However productive their relations with autopsies, anatomical investigations *à la* Fabrici interacted in a problematic way with courtly culture. Although the dissection of the monster had been carried out at the Cardinal Nephew's behest, the failure of Faber's negotiations for a better chair at the university in 1624 made painfully clear to him that showing patrons the marvellous

⁵⁷ Castelli, *Epistolae medicinales*, 168–9; P. Castelli, *Chalcanthinum Dodechaporion sive duodecim dubitationes in usu olei vitrioli. Et defensio antiquorum in arsenici atque sandarachae potu ad Raymundum Mindererum* (Rome, 1619), 7.

⁵⁸ J. Faber, *Oratio qua ignis & metallorum exemplo, quam parum sciamus demonstratur*, Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, VIII. D. 13, ff. Kk–v.

⁵⁹ A. Cunningham, 'Fabricius and the "Aristotle Project" in Anatomical Teaching and Research at Padua', in A. Wear, R. French and I. Lonie (eds.), *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1985), 195–222.

⁶⁰ Baldriga, *L'occhio della lince*, 52–99.

⁶¹ Faber, 'Aliorum Novae Hispaniae Animalium Nardi Antonii Recchi Imagines et Nomina', 601.

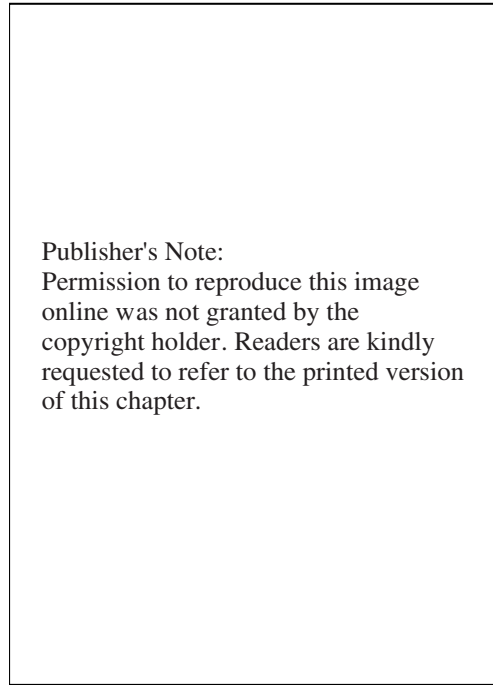


Fig. 1 Woodcut of the double-headed calf as dissected by Johannes Faber, in his *Aliorum Novae Hispaniae Animalium Nardi Antonii Recchi Imagines et Nomina*, 1651, p. 626 (courtesy of the Whipple Library, University of Cambridge)

structure of bodies was not the way to gain their support. In the biographical sketch included in the 1622 lecture I mentioned earlier, Faber downplayed the value of anatomical investigations *per se* but emphasized their value as a means to better medicine: 'I have dissected hundreds of human corpses, not so much to learn further the very ingenious structure of members, as to explore the much hidden causes of diseases'.⁶² Whatever Faber really thought, in the 1620s to investigate the causes of death through autopsy was one of a physician's expected skills; to research the structure and function of organs was not. This was not a specifically Roman problem: the uneasy relation between anatomical research and medical practice would become the basis for clashes in the decades to come, including in Bologna.⁶³

Throughout his life Faber remained a busy medical practitioner, but from his correspondence it is clear that patients were also one of the many distractions from his research. Yet it was his professional expertise at the bedside that better

⁶² Idem, *Oratio*, ff. Kkr.–v.

⁶³ On Bologna, see M. Cavazza, 'The Uselessness of Anatomy: Mini and Sbaraglia versus Malpighi', in D. Bertoloni Meli (ed.), *Marcello Malpighi Anatomist and Physician* (Florence, 1997), 129–145.

fit into his diplomatic and political profile. In May 1624, he successfully treated the Protestant Landgrave Georg von Hessen, who had fallen ill during a visit to Rome. There had been hopes that he would convert, and when the illustrious patient left the city in good health, Faber openly admitted to relief, since his death would have had international consequences.⁶⁴ Protestant princes travelling to the centre of Catholicism obviously caused a lot of anxiety on both sides of the Alps and this episode gives us yet another insight into the political significance of medical practice in the suspicion-laden climate of Rome.

CONCLUSIONS

This article has argued for an approach to the history of early modern physicians that combines a tight geographical focus with a broad scope in the analysis of where and how they built their identity. The distinctive, but very influential, social landscape of seventeenth-century Rome, which was characterized by a polycentric political configuration, a unique social dynamism, and a highly competitive environment, magnified issues of career-building and self-fashioning, making them more visible to us. Physicians abounded, but here I have focused on two. Their partly overlapping, though divergent, trajectories have made it possible to recapture the wide range of political, economic and intellectual arenas in which physicians moved. By recognizing that different ways of defining and practising medical competence were available, a richer account of physicians' place in society has also emerged.

Although often socially insecure, physicians enjoyed a significant degree of mobility, and here I have shown how bedside practice allowed Mancini and Faber to interact with various segments of society, from hospital patients to cardinals. It also gave them access to the complex political stage of Rome. The former determinedly pursued a career as a practitioner and by reaching the top position, as papal physician, came to embody the model of the physician-adviser, whose knowledge, as he boasted, could become a useful tool for a prince. For Faber, Rome was the diplomatic and scholarly capital of the Catholic world. In this politically charged environment, everything, including a physician's success or failure at the bedside, had far-reaching consequences, as Faber, the broker between countries and faiths, soon discovered: sick, healthy and dead bodies were political as much as medical objects. Physicians had always been privy to sensitive information, but as the politics of early modern Europe became more challenging, so did their role.

Political engagement also came in the form of physicians' expert witnessing, which complemented bedside practice, and, due to the numerous civil, criminal and religious tribunals of the city, was widespread. By taking part in one of the fundamental acts of power – administering justice – physicians could add a new component in the construction of their authority. I have

⁶⁴ Gabrieli (ed.), *Il carteggio linneo*, 858, 882, 885.

shown that it was partly on the basis of this practice that Mancini reached his conclusions about the pre-eminence of medicine; and it is not by chance that the main treatise of early modern legal medicine – Paolo Zacchia's *Quaestiones Medico-legales* – was a product of seventeenth-century Rome.

As I have demonstrated, physicians could take advantage of the city's resources in another respect. They seem to have been well equipped to share in the cultural fashion of the day, from antiquarianism to the art trade, at a time when new patterns of consumption intersected with the emergence of specific expertise. The humanist skills which were traditionally part of the medical education, including philology, allowed Faber to settle in quickly and gain academic positions; on the other hand, the passion for painting Mancini had shared with the urban elite in Siena and Padua allowed him to become an astute economic agent, cleverly combining connoisseurship and professional competence. Unlike the pedantic figure of widespread caricatures, in their case the learned physician was able to share his patients' diversity of interests.

Together, these elements made a physician's success or failure. Compared to Mancini, the talented courtier with a bold vision for medical competence, Faber's complaints about his stagnant career sound justified. However, this is where their story has also allowed me to look at early modern anatomy from a new perspective. Anatomy had been important in the education of both, but, confirming Brownstein, Mancini quickly understood that in Rome his chances of success lay in practice, not anatomical investigations. Indeed, in the complicated politics governing posts, mastering *materia medica* and the ability to display natural spectacles did not necessarily secure success; it is quite likely that Faber's dense and technical prose about respiration, foetal membranes and digestion would have bored Urban VIII, who rather enjoyed poetry and Galileo's dialogues.

Yet, I have shown that anatomy was far from being neglected in Rome. Anatomy bridged Faber's identity as a Linceo and as a teacher, and empowered him to speak with an authoritative voice and to gain recognition, even from his condescending fellow Lincei. Anatomies of animals in courtly settings have recently attracted historians' attention, but his accounts allow us to see a busy community of surgeons and physicians dissecting cadavers in hospitals. Boasted as the triumph of a renewed Catholic devotion, well before the 'birth of the clinic' these were also a fundamental site for medical teaching and research, including on new drugs, and boundaries between surgeons and physicians seem to have blurred here. Through Faber, I have shown that the model of the Renaissance anatomist comprehensively investigating the animal body and its functions was still flourishing in early seventeenth-century Rome. However, the pervasiveness of hospitals meant that the focus gradually shifted from research into the normal body to investigations into the causes of death and diseases, a line of inquiry that would become very fruitful. In Rome, it also had more immediate medical, social and political applications, as the autopsy of De Dominis clearly demonstrated.

Malpighi and the holy body: medical experts and miraculous evidence in seventeenth-century Italy

GIANNA POMATA

The body in question is that of Caterina Vigri, better known as Saint Catherine of Bologna. A fifteenth-century nun, founder of the Corpus Domini, a local convent of Poor Clares, Caterina had become by the end of the seventeenth century the most prominent among the Bolognese saints. She was, in fact, the only local candidate to sanctity whose canonization proceedings were successfully concluded in this period. After a protracted effort started in the 1580s, she was proclaimed Saint Catherine of Bologna in 1712, thanks to the sponsoring of the city's ruling class.¹ In Caterina's canonization, a crucial role was played by her allegedly 'incorrupt' body, which was kept at the time, as it is still kept today – apparently untouched by the centuries – sitting on a chair in a little chapel inside her convent's church. The promoters of Caterina's cult considered her body's 'incorruption' as the first miracle on her list,² and detailed evidence was collected from a series of witnesses in order to establish whether the body was truly undecayed. Some of these witnesses were medical doctors: on the morning of 14 May 1671, eight Bolognese physicians – Marcello Malpighi among them³ – were sent to the monastery of Corpus Domini for an ocular and manual inspection of Caterina's body. They made individual reports to the ecclesiastical judges in the afternoon, under pledge of secrecy.⁴

¹ Serena Spanò Martinelli, 'La canonizzazione di Caterina Vigri: un problema cittadino nella Bologna del Seicento', in Sofia Boesch Gajano and Lucia Sebastiani (eds.), *Culto dei santi, istituzioni e classi sociali in età preindustriale* (L'Aquila-Rome, 1984), 719–33. On Caterina Vigri see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1979), Vol. XXII, 381–83, s.v., and Serena Spanò Martinelli, 'Per uno studio su Caterina da Bologna', in *Studi medievali*, third series, 12 (1971), 713–759.

² *Congregatione Sacrorum Rituum . . . Bononien. Canonizationis B. Catharinae a Bononia . . . Positio super dubio an, et de quibus miraculis constat in casu* (Rome, 1680), (hereafter *Positio*), 51–104.

³ This episode is not mentioned in what remains the most thorough reconstruction of Malpighi's life: Howard B. Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi and the Evolution of Embryology* (Ithaca, New York, 1966), 4 vols. For an update, see Domenico Bertoloni Meli (ed.), *Marcello Malpighi: Anatomist and Physician* (Florence, 1998).

⁴ Archivio Arcivescovile di Bologna, Miscellanee vecchie: Atti e Processi per Beatificazione e Santificazione (hereafter AAB, Beat.) b. 738 (cf. *Positio*, pp. 65–70). The records of Caterina's canonization process have been published recently as *Il processo di canonizzazione di Caterina Vigri (1586–1712)*, (ed.) Serena Spanò Martinelli (Florence, 2003) (hereafter *Processo*). My research on the records was completed before this volume came out. Hereafter I will quote my transcription from the archival source, followed by page numbers in Spanò Martinelli's edition.

I will use this episode, and the records of Caterina's canonization proceedings, to examine a wider problem: what was the relationship between religious belief and medical knowledge in seventeenth-century canonizations? How was miraculous evidence constructed, sifted and evaluated, and what was the role of physicians in this process? Because of Bologna's prominence as a centre of medical learning – as indicated by Malpighi's presence among the witnesses – Caterina's records allow us to examine the attitude to supposedly supernatural phenomena among doctors who were at the forefront of Italian anatomical research.

Canonization proceedings had been a key area of contact between religion and medicine since the Middle Ages – a contact involving co-operation but also some tension.⁵ While in medieval times the official approval of healing miracles by the Holy See had not formally required medical testimony, the role of medical witnesses in canonization proceedings grew steadily since the end of the sixteenth century.⁶ By contributing to draw the boundaries between natural and supernatural bodily phenomena, medical expertise played a decisive role in the process that turned miracles from objects of faith into objects of knowledge. No longer established simply through the ecclesiastical screening of the popular perception of sanctity, miracles became an object of specialized scholarly inquiry, an inquiry that took over a prominent role in the rational justification of religious belief.⁷ This process has been described recently for Protestant physico-theology,⁸ but it certainly took place also in Catholic countries, as shown by the massive effort to reform canonization proceedings in the first half of the seventeenth century. In the legal framework of the new procedures, introduced by Pope Urban VIII in 1623–44, the traditional battery of intellectual tools for the assessment of miracles – mainly drawn from theology – was greatly augmented by recourse to other disciplines.⁹ Miracles were screened through the judicious combining of theological, moral, historical, natural-philosophical, and medical notions of

⁵ Joseph Ziegler, 'Practitioners and Saints: Medical Men in Canonization Processes in the Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries', in *Social History of Medicine*, 12 (1999), 191–225; André Vauchez, *La Sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge* (Rome and Paris, 1981), 543–56.

⁶ Francesco Antonelli, O. F. M., *De inquisitione medico-legali super miraculis in causis beatificationis et canonizationis* (Rome, 1962), 28: healing miracles were established through the testimony of two concurring witnesses, whether '*in re medica periti*' or not. Joseph Ziegler ('Practitioners and Saints', quoted above n. 5) has uncovered much documentation from late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century canonization processes showing that medical practitioners were often involved as corroborating witnesses, but he also points out that 'the vast majority of healing miracles were accepted without apparent confirmation by a recognized medical authority' (p. 220). On the growing role of medical witnesses in the early modern period see Antonelli, 30–86, and David Gentilcore, 'Contesting Illness in Early Modern Naples: Miracoli, Physicians, and the Congregation of Rites' in *Past and Present*, 149 (1995), 117–148.

⁷ Lorraine Daston, 'Marvelous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe', *Critical Inquiry*, 18 (1991) 93–124.

⁸ Peter Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Science* (Cambridge, 1998). Physico-theology, or natural theology, is the demonstration of God's existence and attributes based on arguments drawn from natural knowledge. See also Fernando Vidal, 'Extraordinary Bodies and the Physicotheological Imagination' in Lorraine Daston and Gianna Pomata (eds.), *The Faces of Nature in Enlightenment Europe* (Berlin, 2003), 61–96.

⁹ Fernando Vidal, 'Miracles, Science and Testimony in Post-Tridentine Saint-Making', in *Science in Context*, forthcoming.

evidence. Thus *prima facie* prodigies were critically assessed through concepts that came from widely different disciplinary backgrounds and by standards that were often going in different directions.

After a false start at the end of the sixteenth century, the proceedings for Caterina's canonization were resumed in 1645.¹⁰ They were among the first to be conducted according to the new rules,¹¹ which gave much more emphasis to the censoring role of the *Promotor Fidei*, the 'devil's advocate', whose job it was to raise every possible doubt over the dossier of alleged miracles before it was conclusively examined by the Congregation of Rites. Even more significantly, for the first time in Caterina's case, a new norm was applied that strengthened the input of medical expertise in the sifting of miraculous evidence. In 1678, a decree of the Congregation of Rites established that the opinion of medical experts was required to support not only the evidence presented by the Postulators – that is the sponsors of the candidate to sainthood – but also the critical scrutiny of the same evidence by the *Promotor Fidei*.¹² This was an important innovation. Previously, medical opinion on miracles was routinely presented only by the Postulators, though since the early years of the seventeenth century the Roman Rota, in assembling the canonization dossier, had routinely asked for medical advice on controversial cases.¹³ What had been simply a legal custom became in 1678 an official norm – a norm that marks a turning point in the use of physicians' opinion in canonization, allowing a stronger role for medical scepticism on asserted miraculous evidence. This new rule was applied in the final stage of Caterina's process,¹⁴ with important consequences, as we shall see.

'SPIRITUAL CURIOSITY': THE CULT OF THE HOLY BODY

Of the seventeenth-century proceedings to legitimize the cult of Bolognese saints,¹⁵ the richest evidence of miraculous healing comes from Caterina's

¹⁰ The proceedings started in 1586 but were discontinued after 1605 to be resumed in 1623, though the official *iter* started actually in 1645 (see Spanò Martinelli, 'La canonizzazione', 724–25 and *Introduzione in Processo*, xvii–xxi). For a detailed chronology see 'Catharinae de Bononia. Puncta historica in causa beatificationis et canonizationis', in *Acta Ordinis Fratrum Minorum*, 36 (1917) 244–47.

¹¹ Miguel Gotor, 'I decreti di Urbano VIII e il culto di Caterina Vigri dalle carte del Sant'Uffizio di Roma' in Claudio Leonardi (ed.), *Caterina Vigri. La Santa e la città* (Florence, 2004), 155–58. On the new rules, Giuseppe Dalla Torre, 'Santità ed economia processuale. L'esperienza giuridica da Urbano VIII a Benedetto XIV', in Gabriella Zarri (ed.), *Finzione e santità tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Turin, 1991), 233–41.

¹² Sacra Rituum Congregatio, *Sanctissimus*, decr. gen. 15 oct. 1678, par. 1, XIV, in *Bullarium Romanum*, Vol. XIX, (Turin, 1870) 126; P. Gasparri and G. Seredi (eds.), *Codicis Iuris Canonici Fontes* (Rome, 1935), Vol. VII, n. 5626. Cf. Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, 74–76.

¹³ Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, 57–65.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹⁵ Four of these proceedings deal with men and two with women, Caterina Vigri and a Franciscan tertiary, Pudenziana Zagnoni: AAB, Beat., b. 745, k/498/21 (Niccolò Albergati); b. 745, k 498/7 (Cesare Bianchetti); b. 745, 498/5 (Ludovico Morbioli); b. 746/2, k/499/2 (Giorgio Giustiniani); bb. 737, 738, 739, 740 (Caterina Vigri); bb. 741, 742, 743, 744 (Pudenziana Zagnoni). On the prominence of women in religious healing see Gianna Pomata, 'Practicing Between Earth and Heaven: Women Healers in Early Modern Bologna' in *Dynamis*, 19 (1999), 119–143.

files. In popular testimony from the canonization records, she is chiefly described as a healer. As told by a witness in 1669: 'there is not one sick person in this city who doesn't appeal to the *Beata*: many votive offerings can be seen hanging in her chapel, and almost all the time clothes that have touched her body are sent to the sick by the nuns'.¹⁶ Caterina's thaumaturgic powers were crucially linked to her incorrupt body, whose story is vividly told in the beata's first *Vita*, written by her fellow-nun Illuminata Bembo.¹⁷ Illuminata, herself a witness to the events, describes how some weeks after Caterina's death in 1463 the nuns perceived miraculous signs around her burial place, and missing the physical presence of their beloved 'mother', they dug up the body in the convent's graveyard finding it – to their great joy – totally undecayed.¹⁸ A sixteenth-century chronicle of the Corpus Domini reports in great detail how the sisters debated how best to display the 'holy body' to the devotion of the Bolognese people, who flocked to the convent to venerate it, and how the body was finally arranged in sitting posture, to be shown upon request through a small window in the convent's church.¹⁹ The body abundantly displayed all the usual indicators of sanctity – fragrance, the oozing of blood and of a 'liquor' – and its cult quickly won official approval, as indicated by the fact that Caterina's *Officium*, or special liturgy, granted by the Holy See in 1524, mentions her body's incorruption, and that already in the early sixteenth century the image of her holy body sitting in majestic posture became the beata's primary representation.²⁰

The veneration for Caterina's body spread far beyond the convent walls. In the canonization interrogations of 1669–74 many witnesses said that they began 'visiting the body' as children or adolescents, taken by their parents.²¹ The priest Alfonso Arnoaldi said that Caterina competed with the most eminent male saint buried in Bologna: 'There is more concourse of people going to venerate her body than there is for that of Saint Dominic, or at least the same'.²² Several people related having not only seen but touched Caterina's body, with awe-struck devotion mixed with an inquisitiveness that they themselves called 'spiritual curiosity'. The same priest Arnoaldi, for instance,

¹⁶ AAB, Beat., b. 737, deposition of Antonio Francesco Giovagnoni, 'Vicario delle monache', 2 June 1669 (*Processo*, 334).

¹⁷ Illuminata Bembo, *Specchio d'Illuminazione*, (ed.) Silvia Mostaccio, (Florence, 2001).

¹⁸ Bembo, *Specchio*, 74–80.

¹⁹ AAB., Archivio della Beata Caterina, cart. 37: sr. Armelina, sr. Clemenza da Imola, 'Memoriale di cose più notabili e delle monache defonte nel Corpo de Christo di Bologna' (hereafter *Memoriale*).

²⁰ *Officium Beatae Catharinae Virginis de Bononia*, Bologna, Alessandro Benacci, 1533; Irene Graziani, 'L'iconografia di Caterina Vigri: dalla clausura alla città' in Vera Fortunati (ed.), *Vita artistica nel monastero femminile: Exempla* (Bologna, 2002), 222.

²¹ AAB, Beat., b. 737: deposition of Antonio Francesco Giovagnoni, Vicario delle monache, 2 June 1669; b. 738: Sister Giulia Anna Maria Giraldini, Mother Superior of Santa Marta, 2 November 1669; Alberto Carradori, physician, 13 April 1671; Gio. Batta Dolfi, nobleman, 28 April 1671; Anna Livia Sarti Carradori, wife of physician Carradori, 30 April 1671; b. 739, Giacomo Bovio, barber-surgeon, 27 June 1674 (*Processo*, 334, 693, 737, 776, 788).

²² AAB, Beat., b. 737, 6 June 1669 (*Processo*, 351).

recalled: 'I saw her without a veil on her head and her hair was long to her shoulders. This was about the year 1646. I tried to pull out one of her hair and it wouldn't come.'²³ Caterina's body was clearly one of Bologna's sights; intellectuals like Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino and Jean Bolland went to the Corpus Domini on purpose to see it.²⁴

Ever since its inception, the cult of Caterina's holy body had a public significance in Bologna. Fifteenth-century city chronicles record the body's *inventio* as a civic event.²⁵ In the seventeenth-century canonization proceedings, in particular, it is clear that the holy body was perceived as a civic asset, a precious resource belonging to the community.²⁶ Serena Spanò Martinelli, who has studied the political aspects of Caterina's canonization, has argued that the presence in Bologna of her holy body might have given Caterina, a woman, a decisive advantage over the other, male, candidate to sanctity sponsored by the city in this period, the fifteenth-century bishop Niccolò Albergati, who was buried away from the city.²⁷ Caterina was chosen over Albergati as a stronger candidate for sainthood because her holy body was perceived as a winning card, a key factor of success in canonization.

There are two sets of records that describe Caterina's miraculous healing through the direct testimony of eye-witnesses: a series of *fedi notarili* dating from the years 1591–1599 (the first stage of the canonization proceedings) in which the recipients of the miracle briefly told their story in front of a notary who wrote it down verbatim,²⁸ and the much more detailed interrogations of witnesses in the proceedings of 1669–1674. In both sets of records, the mode of Caterina's healing is usually through the application of objects related to the cult of her body, such as her cowl, called *Pazienza*, 'the Water of the Blessed Caterina, which is the water with which the nuns wash her holy body', as well as the washcloth or wadding used for the same purpose.²⁹ When going around the city to collect alms, the *converse* nuns from Corpus Domini carried these objects directly to the houses of the sick upon request.³⁰

²³ AAB, Beat., b. 737: deposition of Alfonso Arnoaldi, 6 June 1669 (*Processo*, 348). Arnoaldi speaks of the 'coriosità [sic] spirituale di godere della vista di detto corpo' (350).

²⁴ Positio, 83, 99, 101. Cf. Roberto Bellarmino, *Disputationes de controversiis christianae fidei adversus hujus temporis haereticos*, Venice, 1599, 4 vols., Vol 2: lib. 2, cap. 3, f. 789. For Jean Bolland see *Acta Sanctorum Martij a Ioanne Bollando feliciter coepta*, Antwerp, 1668, Vol 2, ad diem 9 Martij (9 March), f. 34: 'anno MDCLX illac transeuntes nostris ipsimet oculis venerabundi aspeximus'.

²⁵ *Corpus chronicorum bononiensium*, (ed.) Albano Sorbelli, (Bologna, 1924–40) (*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, t. XVIII), Vol 4, pt. 1, 309–10.

²⁶ Gianna Pomata, 'Medicina delle monache: pratiche terapeutiche nei monasteri femminili a Bologna in età moderna' in Gianna Pomata and Gabriella Zarri (eds.), *I monasteri femminili come centri di cultura fra Rinascimento e Barocco* (Rome, 2005), 351–53.

²⁷ Spanò Martinelli, 'La canonizzazione', 727. On the significance of the relics of local saints for civic identity in Counter-Reformation Italy see Simon Ditchfield, 'Martyrs on the Move: Relics as Vindicators of Local Diversity in the Tridentine Church' in Diana Wood (ed.), *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (London, 1993), 283–294.

²⁸ Notarized copies of the original *fedi notarili* from 1590–98 are in AAB, Beat., b. 738.

²⁹ For the word *pazienza* to indicate the nuns' cowl or scapular see *Vocabolario della Crusca* (Florence, 1733), s.v.

³⁰ AAB, Beat., b. 738: deposition of Anna Livia Sarti Carradori, 30 April 1671 (*Processo*, 790).

Four nuns of Corpus Domini, called 'custodians of the body', were routinely in charge of taking care of the holy body.³¹ They regularly sponged and washed its clothes; on feast days they would strip it and dress it in fresh garments 'as if she were alive'.³² Thanks to this constant, loving care of Caterina's body the nuns of Corpus Domini managed to have a practically inexhaustible supply of objects that offered vicarious contact with the holy body and that were perceived as such to be charged with its healing powers. It should be noted that the Corpus Domini had a thriving *spezieria* (apothecary shop), where the nuns produced remedies for the convent's internal use, as well as for sale to the public at considerable profit.³³ But the prodigious healing practices associated with the cult of their treasured 'holy body' were even more remunerative for the Corpus Domini than the preparation and sale of drugs. Throughout the seventeenth century the convent was a flourishing centre of religious healing.

DOCTORS AND HEALING MIRACLES

Of the hundred and seventy *admirabilia* 'before birth, in life and after death' listed in Caterina's dossier, eight 'miracles' were chosen and submitted for approval to the Congregation of Rites. The first two were the incorruption and the fragrance of her holy body, the rest were cases of miraculous healing.³⁴ They are listed in the *Positio*, the dossier presented to the Congregation, in chronological order.

In the final stage of the Bolognese proceedings (1669–74), unlike their late sixteenth-century phase, the officials in charge of collecting evidence for Caterina's sanctity relied much more heavily on medical testimony than on the *miracolati's* accounts. Among the witnesses in these later records, we find five physicians and two barber-surgeons called to testify over their patients' miraculous healing.³⁵ It is not the case, however, that the only healing miracles to be included in the *Positio* were those for which direct medical testimony was available. In the 1623 healing of a Corpus Domini nun, Sister Candida Fabbri (from a foot luxation treated unsuccessfully by several doctors) no such attestation was possible, since all the doctors, like the *miracolata* herself, had died long before the inquiry. Similarly, no medical statement was brought forth to corroborate the case of a Bolognese nobleman, Enea Bonfioli, who

³¹ *Positio*, 73–74: testimonies of sisters Eleonora Zani, Ottavia Caterina Conti, Dorotea Pini. The 'custodians of the body' were four in memory of the four nuns who had originally witnessed the body's *inventio* in 1463 (*Memoriale*, c. 54).

³² Antonio di Pietro Masini, *Bologna perlustrata*, Bologna, 1666, 546.

³³ AAB, Monache in città, b. 261: I/614/10p: 'Rimedi che usualmente si vendono nella nostra specieria del Corpus Domini'; Pomata, 'Medicina delle monache', 330–37.

³⁴ *Positio*, 128–220.

³⁵ They were the doctors Giulio Calcina, Francesco Saccenti, Carlo Riari, Alberto Carradori and Galeazzo Manzi, plus the barber-surgeons Giacinto Fabbri and Giacomo Bovio. Riari, Carradori and Manzi had all worked at some time as physician in ordinary for the Corpus Domini convent.

claimed to have escaped with only minor injuries from the attack of a masked gunman, thanks to the protection of Caterina, whose holy body he had just visited before the ambush. And yet both cases were included in the *Positio*. Throughout the seventeenth century, in fact, the Congregation of Rites did not formally require the testimony of the *miracolato's* curing physician. Such testimony was often collected in practice, but it was not legally indispensable.³⁶

It is clear, however, that once Caterina's *dossier* came to be examined in Rome, the only healing miracles that were taken in serious consideration were those for which first-hand testimony was available from the medical personnel that had treated the miracle recipient. The sequence of steps of the probatory process in Rome, as they are recorded in the *Positio*, was the following: first the *Promotor Fidei* wrote his *Animadversiones* (critical observations) on the dossier presented by the Postulators; then the *Patronus*, or Postulators' Advocate, who had put together the résumé of the case, wrote his rejoinder to the *Promotor Fidei's* debunking of the miracles. The *Patronus* was seconded by a Consistorial Advocate who replied to the *Promotor Fidei* from the legal viewpoint.³⁷ Finally, the opinions of the two medical expert witnesses were given, one on the side of the *Promotor Fidei*, as established by the new decree of the Congregation of Rites of 1678, and one on the side of the Postulators. The experts in Caterina's case were two Roman physicians, Angelo Modio for the *Promotor Fidei*, and Paolo Manfredi for the Postulators.³⁸

The *Promotor Fidei* in Caterina's case, Prospero Bottini,³⁹ easily dismissed three out of the six alleged healing miracles: in two cases because they lacked direct testimony from the curing physician (this was one of the most common censures moved by the *Promotor Fidei* in this period);⁴⁰ in the other one on the ground that there was only one witness of the cure, the *miracolato* himself – and at least two concurring testimonies were absolutely necessary. This stricture applied even though the *miracolato*, Alberto Carradori, was himself a physician.⁴¹

So the miracles taken in serious consideration were only three. Let us consider in some detail the position that the medical witnesses took on these cases. A healing miracle necessarily presupposes a doctor's failure: all these medical men had to admit the limits of their art. However, they did it with remarkable good grace, bowing to the superior force of the beata's healing

³⁶ Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, p. 41. C. F. De Matta (*Novissimus de Sanctorum canonizatione Tractatus* (Rome, 1678), 370) stated that the curing physician's testimony was useful but not absolutely necessary.

³⁷ *Positio*: Prospero Bottini, 'Animadversiones', 221–26; Frigidianus Castagnorius, 'Responsio ad Animadversiones Rev. D. Fidei Promotoris', 247–308; Alessandro Caprara, 'Responsio Juris ad Oppositiones Rev. Fidei Promotoris', 313–41.

³⁸ Angelo Modio, 'Ponderationes medico-physicae', in *Positio*, 343–72; Paolo Manfredi, 'Responsio medico-physica', *ibidem*, 373–422. Each of them gave his opinion on all the eight miracles.

³⁹ On him see *Hierarchia Catholica Medii et Recentioris Aevi*, (ed.) R. Ritzler and P. Sefrim, Vol V, (Padua, 1952), 278. A cardinal since 1675, Bottini died in 1712.

⁴⁰ Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, 43.

⁴¹ Bottini, 'Animadversiones', in *Positio*, 234–35.

power. In the case of Sister Giustina Calcina, for instance, who fell off a ladder and hurt her hand so badly that she could no longer move it, Dr. Carlo Riarii, physician in ordinary to the convent, openly stated that he had treated the nun unsuccessfully for over fourteen months, and that he actually lost patience when she finally remonstrated asking for a change of treatment. 'I lost my temper,' the doctor said, 'and rudely told her to get off my back because there was nothing I could do for her.'⁴² Giustina broke into tears and her fellow-sisters, to comfort her (and perhaps to spite the doctor) took her to Caterina's chapel and put her paralyzed hand over the holy body, whereupon she was suddenly able to move her hand again and 'went straight to the kitchen to wash the cups'.⁴³ Dr. Riari had no difficulty in admitting that when Giustina showed him her hand 'healed from paralysis and emaciation', he judged it to be an effect 'unreachable by medical art'.

Similarly, in the case of the healing of Maria Girolama Biasetti, a ward in the House of Santa Marta, from breast cancer: her physician, Dr. Saccenti, admitted that he ordered a purge, some draughts and bloodletting, but with little hope, since he had diagnosed 'a cancerous tumour', which he believed to be 'chronic and incurable'.⁴⁴ He visited the girl again after a few days, and was totally taken aback at finding the tumour 'turned tender and soft to the touch, pain, heat, fever all gone, and the patient in much better spirits'. Considerably disconcerted, he discussed the case with the Mother Superior, who admitted that a little religious healing had been going on between his visits. The nuns of Corpus Domini, she explained, had lately sent to Santa Marta, whose inmates specialized in fine needlework, a small carpet long kept under the feet of the Blessed Caterina, which they wanted renovated to match the Beata's dress. One of the sisters had the idea of using some of the carpet's threads to make a pad (*tasta*) to apply over the tumour, which she did, and the following morning she found the girl much better.⁴⁵ The doctor took it all with great aplomb: he declared that this was indeed a miracle because 'the immediate cause of the disease was removed instantaneously, which cause was the effervescent melancholic humour carried to the part'. Originally, he explained, the disease had derived from a scabies that had affected the girl for a long time. The scabies had been treated injudiciously, 'whereupon the infected blood, that had formerly found vent through the skin, had gone back to the veins, polluting the whole mass of blood', and finally settling in the breast. The recovery from the tumour had been complete, but soon thereafter a little scabies had come back, for which the girl had been newly treated. He definitely excluded that the recovery might have

⁴² AAB, Beat., b. 737: deposition of Carlo Riari, 6 August 1669 (*Processo*, 541).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, b. 737, deposition of Giulio Calcina, 3 July 1669 (*Processo*, 389–90).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 738, deposition of Francesco Saccenti, 15 November 1669 (*Processo*, 568–69).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 738, deposition of Sister Giulia Anna Maria Giraladini, Mother Superior of Santa Marta, 30 January 1670. On the Conservatorio di Santa Marta, a shelter for poor girls, see Giovanni Ricci, *Povertà, vergogna, superbia. I declassati tra medioevo ed età moderna*, Bologna, 1996, 77.

happened by natural means because there had been no 'crisis' with heavy discharge of morbid matter: 'only a little watery stuff had come out of the tumour's opening'.⁴⁶

We come to the final miracle, the sudden healing of a nun, Maria Geltrude Ghirardelli, from a condition described by her doctors as 'a lethargy that deprived her of sense and motion'. Her physician, Gian Galeazzo Manzi, declared that he was convinced in all conscience that the recovery was beyond nature's power because 'the ordinary way of nature in recovering from diseases caused by obstructions, suppression of the menses, effervescence of heat in a very fat body with very thin veins and arteries (all of which conditions were present in our patient) never occurs without some evacuation or discharge of the morbid matter in some tumour, either internal or external, or some crisis by urination or sweating – none of which was observed in our case'. 'Since there was no sign of nature performing a salutary crisis,' he concluded, 'we are forced to believe that this happened by supernatural virtue.'⁴⁷

These doctors declared Caterina's cures miraculous with obvious conviction.⁴⁸ In discerning natural from supernatural healing, they used clear guidelines that had been authoritatively established at the beginning of the seventeenth century by the papal archiater Paolo Zacchia. In order to determine whether a cure was miraculous, besides the obvious requirements that the recovery be instantaneous and complete, Zacchia had employed the medical concept of 'crisis'. A 'crisis' was an effort on nature's part to expel the morbid matter through some kind of discharge (bleeding, vomiting, sweating, for example). To argue for miraculous healing it was imperative to ascertain that no crisis had occurred.⁴⁹ This notion seems to have been deeply rooted in these doctors' mindset. Even Marcello Malpighi used it confidently. In 1682, when asked for his opinion about the sudden recovery of a nun in Ferrara, he answered that since in the case 'no perceptible excretion had occurred', the cure should be considered as passing the forces of nature.⁵⁰

Caterina's healing miracles received a decisive stamp of approval by these doctors' authority. The *Promotor Fidei* acknowledged the weight of their views, only raising a crucial doubt regarding the case of the breast tumour. The persistence of the scabies after the tumour's healing seemed to indicate that the recovery had not been total and perfect (as required for a miracle); to which stricture the medical expert on his side, Angelo Modio, added an even stronger objection. Scabies was one of those *morbi salutare*s through

⁴⁶ AAB, Beat., b. 738, deposition of Francesco Saccenti, 15 November 1669 (*Processo*, 569–70).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 739: deposition of Gian Galeazzo Manzi, 3 July 1674 (*Processo*, 849). His opinion was backed by other two doctors, Alberto Carradori and Giacomo Pasi.

⁴⁸ In other occasions doctors expressed scepticism by suggesting that a cure should be classified as a 'grace' rather than as a miracle (David Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy*, Manchester, 1998, 188–90) but they did not in this case. A 'grace' was a kind of low-grade miracle: it was an event possible by natural means but believed to have happened thanks to a saint's intercession.

⁴⁹ Paolo Zacchia, *Quaestiones Medico-legales*, Lyons, 1661, 2 vols.: Vol 1, lib. IV, tit.I, quaest. VIII:13, 278.

⁵⁰ Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi*, Vol 1, 459–62 (cit. on p. 461).

which nature provided an outlet for morbid humours. Treating these diseases was dangerous because the morbid matter, no longer discharged through the skin, might lead to a more serious internal illness. As the tumour had been caused precisely by such ill-considered treatment, the scabies relapse suggested that the tumour's original cause had not been removed. Consequently the cure could not be considered complete, nor indeed miraculous.⁵¹

What emerges strongly in these records is the existence of a shared consensus among medical doctors and canonization officials over the concept of 'crisis' as a reliable marker of the boundaries of natural healing. In canonization trials, physicians and churchmen met with the common goal of examining prodigious events and sorting them out in two separate classes – the preternatural (what nature could do in extraordinary circumstances) and the supernatural. (what she absolutely could not do). The medical concept of crisis was a tool admirably tuned to this purpose. A crisis was an extraordinary effort of nature's healing power, so it marked a recovery that, though exceptional (preternatural), was still within nature's reach. A crisis, however, was not evident to everybody's eyes, but only to the physician's expert observation. Thus specialized medical knowledge was a requisite of the inquest on healing miracles, especially in a period like the seventeenth century, when both medicine and natural philosophy had shown that the area of the preternatural was much wider than previously thought.⁵² This explains why the role of medical expert witnesses grew stronger in the canonization proceedings of this period. By removing all suspicion of preternatural healing, the physicians were the theologians' indispensable partners in the effort to distinguish true and false miracles that was at the core of the church's inquiry into sainthood. They could be viewed, in this light, as the best friends of miracles, and at least in Caterina's case, as we have seen, they seem to have fallen obligingly into this role.

BETWEEN MEDICINE AND ESCHATOLOGY: TWO BODIES IN ONE CADAVER

Things appear less straightforward, however, if we consider these doctors' attitude to Caterina's body. Interestingly, some of the same medical men who testified unhesitatingly in favour of Caterina's healing miracles, displayed a much more cautious attitude, even a barely veiled scepticism, when they inspected her cadaver.⁵³ As in the case of the healing miracles, medical opinion on this issue gained more weight over the long course of the canonization process. In 1586, the body had been examined by a group of ecclesiastics and

⁵¹ Bottini, 'Animadversiones', in *Positio*, 237–39; Modio, 'Ponderationes', *ibid.*, 364–66.

⁵² Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, New York, 1998, Ch. 4.

⁵³ The physicians who were called to testify on both the healing miracles and the incorruption were Gian Galeazzo Manzi, Carlo Riari and Alberto Carradori. Of these only Carradori expressed a firm conviction that the body was incorrupt. Manzi and especially Riari adopted a remarkably sceptical attitude.

lay men (all male). No physician or surgeon was present.⁵⁴ In 1646, in contrast, when the proceedings were revived in Bologna, two prominent doctors – a lecturer in the Studio, Giovan Battista Malisardi, and no less than the Dean of the Medical College, Onorio Beati – were sent to examine the body. ‘In those parts, which it was decent to touch,’ they reported, ‘we felt a certain tenderness (*mollities*), which clearly exceeded both nature and reason.’⁵⁵ Twenty-five years later, in 1671, when the canonization proceedings were in full swing, a new medical inspection was called for, and eight Bolognese physicians (Carlo Riari, Alberto Carradori, Alberto Fabbri, Carlo Mattesilani, Marcello Malpighi, Alessandro Guicciardini, Andrea Volpari, Gian Galeazzo Manzi) were admitted within the Corpus Domini cloister. The doctors examined Caterina’s body in the presence of witnesses, but they were allowed to see it only dressed, and could touch only the head, the neck and the arms (not the breasts), the feet and the legs only below the knee. ‘For decency’s sake’, examining the naked body was reserved to some noble matrons.⁵⁶ Accordingly, two days later, five Bolognese gentlewomen were sent to the Corpus Domini on that errand.

There are interesting discrepancies between the doctors’ and the matrons’ reports. But first let us hear what the doctors said. Each was asked to answer, among others, the following questions:

‘What do you think of the present incorruptibility of the body?’

‘Is the present state of said body natural or not?’

‘Does the body send forth a fragrance and is this fragrance natural or not?’⁵⁷

In the physicians’ response there was clearly a majority and a minority opinion. Two doctors, Alberto Carradori and Carlo Mattesilani, firmly stated their belief that the body was ‘truly incorrupt and that its preservation was due to non-human force’.⁵⁸ The other six doctors argued that the body could not be properly called ‘incorruptible’, because it lacked the main condition of incorruptibility, namely, the uniform preservation of the fleshy parts, which was indicated by their *mollities*, their suppleness and pliability to the touch. As Riari said: ‘I do not call this body incorruptible, because *est corpus quod potest subiacere corruptionis* (it is a body that can undergo corruption), and which at the moment cannot be said either *absolute incorruptum* or *absolute corruptum*. The reason is that there is no suppleness in the flesh because there is actually no flesh, only the skin, cuticle and fleshy membrane desiccated

⁵⁴ *Positio*, 75–76.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 79–80.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 65–66.

⁵⁸ AAB, Beat. b. 738, depositions of Alberto Carradori and Carlo Mattesilani, (*Processo*, 801–2, 803–4). Carradori had also been an enthusiastic witness of one of Caterina’s healing miracles, of which he had claimed to be the recipient.

by external causes.⁵⁹ A desiccated body could offer evidence of incorruptibility by supernatural virtue only if one could exclude 'other external or artificial causes', as stressed by Malpighi and Guicciardini.⁶⁰ Very cautiously and yet firmly these doctors were raising the very plausible possibility that the body's preservation might be due to embalming – not a far-fetched hypothesis in the case of a convent, such as the Corpus Domini, endowed with a well-stocked *spezieria* and related expertise.⁶¹ This is how Malpighi cautiously expressed his view: on the one side, he argued, 'many of the parts that form a body, when it is left by the soul, such as blood, fat, soft fleshy parts, are not found incorrupt in our case'; but on the other side the cadaver preserves 'the configuration of a human body and an adumbration (*adombra-mento*) of those parts. This seems to indicate some sign of causes superior to ordinary nature, provided that there had been no other external artificial cause.'⁶² As to the odour, they all agreed in considering it impossible by natural means, 'provided that there had been no shedding of balsam or some such thing', as said by Malpighi. However, some of them cautioned that it did not seem to come from the body, as it was strongest in entering the chapel and it grew fainter the closer one got to the Beata herself.⁶³

By suggesting clearly, though circumspectly, an alternative natural explanation of the state of Caterina's body, these doctors' opinion was in marked contrast with that of conservative Aristotelians, like Fortunio Liceti and Giovanni Imperiale, who had written about Caterina's incorruption in the previous decades, arguing confidently for a supernatural explanation.⁶⁴ This raises an interesting question: what prompted the selection of these doctors as expert witnesses in Caterina's canonization? Some of them (Carradori, Manzi and Riari) were picked simply because they were, or had been, physicians in ordinary to the convent, and had testified on the healing miracles. But the other five physicians seem to have been chosen with the goal of achieving a balanced mixture of conservative and 'modern' representatives of the local medical factions. Only two doctors, Guicciardini and Mattesilani, were members of the Medical College, at the time a stronghold of traditional

⁵⁹ AAB, Beat., b. 738, deposition of Carlo Riari, (*Processo*, 800). Similar doubts were voiced by Fabbri and Manzi.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, deposition of Marcello Malpighi, (*Processo*, 804–5); deposition of Alessandro Guicciardini (*Processo*, 805).

⁶¹ On the embalming of cadavers in this period see Antonio Santorelli, *Postpraxis medica, sive de medicando defuncto liber* (Naples, 1629); Giuseppe Lanzoni, *De balsamazione cadaverum* (Ferrara, 1693). See also P. Georges, 'Mourir c'est pourrir un peu... Techniques contre la corruption des cadavres à la fin du Moyen Age' in *Micrologus*, 7 (1999), 359–82 and Gino Fornaciari, 'Renaissance mummies in Italy', in *Medicina nei secoli*, 11:1 (1999), 85–105.

⁶² AAB, Beat., b. 738, deposition of Marcello Malpighi (*Processo*, 804–5).

⁶³ AAB, Beat., b. 738: depositions of Guicciardini and Volpari (*Processo*, 806–7).

⁶⁴ Liceti discussed Caterina's body in a letter to the Jesuit Silvestro Pietrasanta: *De secundo quaesitis per epistolas a claris viris, ardua, varia, pulchra et nobilia quaeque petentibus in medicina, philosophia, theologia, mathesi, et alia quavis eruditionum genera responsa*, Utini, 1646, cap. 39. He argued that one could exclude in Caterina's case all the causes that prevented a body's decay *praeter naturam* according to Aristotle, such as the coldness of the surrounding environment, freezing, embalming agents, etc. (Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorologica*, IV.1, 293–97 Loeb edition). The same was argued by Giovanni Imperiale, *Le notti beriche, ovvero De' quesiti, e discorsi fisici, medici, politici, storici, e sacri* (Venice, 1663), 327.

Galenist medicine.⁶⁵ In contrast, three of the other doctors (Fabbri, Volpari, Manzi) were part of Malpighi's circle of 'neoterics', strongly associated with the advancement of anatomical research. Malpighi himself, in 1671, was already enjoying an international reputation for his anatomical work. He had been made a Fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1669, though the Bolognese Medical College would make him an honorary member only much later, and reluctantly, in 1691.⁶⁶ Fabbri had been public anatomist in 1650–51, Volpari was appointed *ad anatomen* in 1670–71; Manzi was going to be the appointee a few years later, in 1674–75. Both Volpari and Manzi were often involved in anatomical discussions with Malpighi; Fabbri was associated with him in several medical consultations.⁶⁷ It seems clear that, by putting Malpighi and friends on their medical panel, the canonization officials were trying to include the opinion of innovators in medical matters on Caterina's case.⁶⁸ This is even more striking if we consider that at the informative stage of canonization proceedings, the choice of expert witnesses was made by the Postulators, and was therefore inherently skewed in favour of the candidate to sanctity.

But let us go back to the inspection. After the eight doctors, it was the turn of the five matrons, who had much more liberty in handling the body. The nuns undressed it in their presence so that the ladies could view and touch it freely. The matrons uniformly declared that they found the body 'pliable and soft to the touch especially in the area of the breasts and even more so in the thighs' (precisely those parts that the doctors had not been allowed to see or touch). They noticed no sign whatsoever that the body had ever been opened to be eviscerated and embalmed. All they could see were some tiny cracks in the skin, especially under the breasts, due presumably, they said, to the body's 'desiccation'.⁶⁹

The matrons' testimony seemed to solve in Caterina's favour several of the doubts raised by the doctors. First, whether the body had ever been embalmed: the matrons' inspection established that there was absolutely no sign of it.⁷⁰ Secondly, their assertion as to the *mollities* of breasts and thighs

⁶⁵ It is worth noting in this respect that Mattesilani's view of the body's incorruption was totally in line with the conventional Aristotelian approach. Mattesilani was a member of the College since 1651, Guicciardini since 1663 (Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Collegio di Medicina ed arti, bb. 341, 353 for records of their aggregation to the College).

⁶⁶ On the hostility of some members of the Medical College to Malpighi's anatomical research see Marta Cavazza, 'The uselessness of anatomy: Mini and Sbaraglia versus Malpighi', in Bertoloni Meli, *Marcello Malpighi*, 129–48.

⁶⁷ Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi*, Vol 1: 88 n. 2, 381–82, 387–89, 564 (on Manzi); 88 n. 2, 90, 364, 381–82, 387–89 (on Volpari); 59, 126, 430–32, 485, 531, 546 (on Fabbri).

⁶⁸ The inclusion of doctors external to the Medical College may have been due to the strong involvement of Bologna's Senate in Caterina's canonization. The Senate was often at odds with the College on several matters (on these conflicts see Gianna Pomata, *Contracting a Cure. Patients, Healers and the Law in Early Modern Bologna* (Baltimore, 1998), 10).

⁶⁹ Positio, 70–73: testimony of Vittoria Pepoli and Giuliana Manzoli.

⁷⁰ Caterina's body is listed among cases of natural mummification in a recent study by a paleopathologist: E. Fulcheri, 'Mummies of Saints: a particular category of Italian mummies', in K. Spindler et al., *Human Mummies. A Global Survey of Their Status and the Techniques of Conservation* (Vienna-New York, 1996), 220.

provided an important indicator of the body's incorruption. It countered the argument advanced by the doctors, who had pointed out that the exposed parts of Caterina's body could not be properly called incorrupt precisely because they lacked the requisite feature of *mollities*.

The contrasting evidence provided by doctors and matrons was hotly debated in the exchange between the *Promotor Fidei* and the Postulators' Advocate. In his strictures on Caterina's first miracle, the *Promotor Fidei* stressed that several of the medical witnesses had denied the *mollities* of the Beata's flesh. This lack of *mollities* indicated that the body was desiccated, and desiccation could occur in corpses by natural causes, as had been pointed out by several doctors (he especially quoted the sceptical views of Riari, Fabbri, and Manzi on this issue).⁷¹ He pointed out that even the matrons admitted that some parts of the body were desiccated. He compared Caterina's case with that of Saint Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, whose incorruption had been officially proclaimed in her canonization in 1668 (he knew the case very well because he had played the opposite role in it, being the beata's advocate). In contrast with Caterina's – he argued – Maria Maddalena's body was not desiccated, and possessed the requisite *mollities*.⁷²

His objections were answered by the Postulators' Advocate, who argued first of all that the circumstance of Caterina's body being partly desiccated did not mean that its condition was not miraculous: the miracle in this case lay in the fact that 'after such a long time the Beata's body is not dissolved into elements'. He stated that incorruption, like miracle, was a matter of degree: a perfect incorruptibility of all body parts could not be expected on this earth, but only 'after resurrection in the heavenly glory'.⁷³ A comparison between Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi and Caterina leaned actually in favour of the latter. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi had died in 1607 and her canonization had been proclaimed in 1668: she had been incorrupt only for 60 years, Caterina for over two hundred years. Maria Maddalena's body was kept in a glass case within a wooden coffin, whereas Caterina's was exposed to the air and the inclemency of the seasons. Moreover, Maria Maddalena's body showed some slight sign of decay in the nostrils and the lower lip, while Caterina's was perfectly whole.⁷⁴

What was at stake in this debate was a different understanding of the concept of incorruption. Both the *Promotor Fidei* and the Advocate drew on Zacchia's guidelines on this issue. According to Zacchia, one could speak of the incorruption of holy bodies in two ways: firstly, in a strict, rigorous sense, as excluding every change leading to corruption; secondly, in a broad sense, that is, when the changes leading to putrefaction were so slow to be almost imperceptible. A saint's cadaver should be considered miraculously incorrupt

⁷¹ Bottini, 'Animadversiones', in *Positio*, 224.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 228.

⁷³ Castagnorius, 'Responsio', in *Positio*, 262–64.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 260–65.

only when it presented incorruption in the first sense, namely when it was preserved 'not only in the more solid and dry parts but also in those parts that are more soft and humid, and more prone to decay'.⁷⁵ The *mollities* of the fleshy parts was therefore a strong indicator of 'rigorous', that is, miraculous, incorruption, since these parts were the first to decay in ordinary cadavers.

While the *Promotor Fidei* used the word incorruption in the first sense, Caterina's advocate insisted on using it in the second sense, arguing that for canonization purposes this broad acceptance of the term was admissible. His reasoning was based on assumptions drawn from the eschatological understanding of relics. Perfect and absolute incorruptibility was attainable only after resurrection, but already after death the bodies of the saints possessed, in varying degree, some measure of incorruptibility, expressive of their more or less exalted place in the heavenly hierarchy.⁷⁶ Degrees of incorruption corresponded to gradation of rank in paradise. This explains why the cult of relics encompassed bones and fragments as well as whole bodies. Even body fragments could foreshadow, in a humble way, the glory of resurrection; all the more powerfully could an entire body evoke the incorruptibility that the blessed would achieve in paradise. Appropriately Caterina's advocate concluded his harangue by quoting the verses that Gerolamo Savonarola had addressed to the beata: 'Il Corpo Sacro ben dimostra quanto/Esaltata t'ha Iddio nell'alto Cielo'.⁷⁷

This eschatological vision of the holy body, however, did not prevail in the conclusion of Caterina's process. In spite of tremendous effort by the Postulators, the miracle of incorruption was not officially approved by the Congregation of Rites. The two miracles approved for canonization were two healing miracles, the cases of Sister Giustina Calcina and Sister Maria Geltrude Ghirardelli.⁷⁸ The doubts advanced by several of the medical expert witnesses were crucial in determining this outcome. What mattered especially was the distinction they drew between incorruption and desiccation, and their opinion that Caterina's body should be called desiccated, rather than incorrupt. The strictures of the *Promotor Fidei* on this issue were valiantly supported by Angelo Modio, the medical expert on his side. Modio stressed that the term 'incorruption' was equivocal. In common parlance and broadly speaking (*vulgo accepta, et lato modo*), it covered also a desiccated cadaver like Caterina's. But the proper definition of miraculous incorruption was the

⁷⁵ Cf. Zacchia, *Quaestiones*, Vol. 1, lib. IV, tit. I, quaest. X:29, f. 289: 'ad maiorem miraculi evidentiam (. . .) cadaver ex miraculo incorruptum servatum, debere non solus secundum solidiores et siccorres partes tale conservari, sed etiam secundum molliores et humidiores, et secundum eas, quae magis sunt putrefactioni obnoxiae'.

⁷⁶ Castagnorius, 'Responsio', in *Positio*, 267. On the eschatological meaning of relics see Luigi Canetti, *Frammenti di eternità: corpi e reliquie tra antichità e medioevo* (Rome, 2002).

⁷⁷ 'Your Holy Body well shows what a high place God has given you in heaven'.

⁷⁸ The case of Maria Girolama Biasetti was ruled out because of the objections raised by the *Promotor Fidei* and his medical advisor, Angelo Modio (see above, 575–6).

rigorous one, which required the *mollities* of the flesh. This definition may have once applied to the Beata, but it no longer did.⁷⁹

On the opposite side, the representatives of the Postulators, including the medical expert Paolo Manfredi, strongly felt and said that Caterina's case was being unfairly examined in the light of a much stricter notion of incorruption than had ever been used in canonization matters. As Manfredi noted, incorruption strictly speaking (*rigorose*) was an imaginary category: 'By these standards no case of incorruption would ever have been approved by the Holy Apostolic See, while in fact many similar cases were approved, even with less pertinent circumstances'.⁸⁰ Over and over again, the Postulators stressed that the Holy See had already officially recognized Caterina's incorruption in her *Officium* (1524) and in her insertion in the Roman *Martyrologium* (1592), and that in neither document could one find mention of *incorruptio rigorosa*.⁸¹ Nor was the qualifying concept of *mollities* mentioned in the canonization bulls of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi and other saints whose incorruption had been recognized as miraculous.⁸² It was clearly felt by the Postulators that the notion of incorruption used in precedent cases was much less stringent than the one applied to Caterina.⁸³

We know what happened in the final discussion in the Congregation of Rites⁸⁴ thanks to an exceptional witness, Prospero Lambertini, later to become Archbishop of Bologna and Pope Benedict XIV, as well as author of *De servorum dei beatificatione* (1734–38), the treatise that gave a new and highly erudite synthesis of the criteria for evaluating miraculous evidence. In this text, Lambertini recalls that he was personally involved in the final stage of Caterina's process. 'Summoned by order of Clemens XI of holy memory, I myself – still in young age nor as yet a member of the College of Advocates of the Aula Concistorialis – undertook the sponsorship of the cause of my fellow citizen, Saint Catherine, and with writings as with words I left no stone unturned (*omnem lapidem movi*) to reach the goal of having her body's

⁷⁹ Modio, 'Ponderationes' in *Positio*, 349.

⁸⁰ Manfredi, 'Responsio' in *Positio*, 376.

⁸¹ Castagnorius noted that these documents, which had obviously the highest probatory value as *testimonium Sedis Apostolicae* (papal testimony), never mentioned the body's *mollities* ('Responsio' in *Positio*, 265; cfr. Manfredi, 'Responsio medico-physica', *ibid.*, 374, 387).

⁸² Extracts from the canonization bull of Maria Maddalena de Pazzi were included in the *Positio* as additions to the resumé of the evidence presented by the Postulators ('Summarium additioale' in *Positio*, 309–12). This point was emphasized also in the rejoinder to the Promotor Fidei written for the Postulators by the Consistorial Advocate Alessandro Caprara ('Responsio Juris' in *Positio*, 319).

⁸³ Castagnorius noted that the incorruption of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi had been attested only by two physicians, while in Caterina's case the inspection had involved eight medical experts ('Responsio' in *Positio*, 265; cf. Caprara 'Responsio Juris', *ibid.*, 319).

⁸⁴ The Congregation met several times to discuss the miracles between 1687 and 1701. The pope proclaimed the two miracles in 1703 (see 'Puncta historica', cited above n. 10, 246). Records of these proceedings were published in *Acta canonizationis sanctorum Pii V, Andreae Avellini, Felicis a Cantalicio et Catharinae de Bononia*, (ed.) G. Chiapponi, (Rome, 1720).

incorruption recognized among her miracles.’⁸⁵ Lambertini declares that in his pleading he insisted upon several arguments: the concurring opinion of many authors who had considered the state of Caterina’s body possible only by supernatural means, the reasons of a celebrated natural philosopher such as Fortunio Liceti, and the fact that the beata’s *Officium*, as well as the Roman *Martyrologium*, expressly mentioned her miraculous incorruption. But to no avail, because it was objected that the body may well have been incorrupt at the time of Fortunio Liceti, as it had been at the times of the *Officium* and *Martyrologium*, but it was no longer so – the miracle did not continue to the present time.

The *Factum concordatum* published in 1704 at the conclusion of the process stated that the two miracles of the body’s incorruption and fragrance were ‘no longer extant’ and Caterina’s canonization bull mentioned incorruption only as the ‘ancient state’ of her body.⁸⁶ The miracle of incorruption was not totally denied, but it was pushed back into the past – a no longer existing historical fact. This allowed the reconciliation of past papal pronouncements with the new, stricter requirements for the miracle of incorruption.

Thus, Caterina’s holy body turned out *not* to be her trump card, mainly because of the new weight that medical opinion had acquired in canonization proceedings. Lambertini’s discussion of holy bodies in his treatise indicates that, after his youthful disappointment over Caterina’s case, he came to learn a lot, in the course of his later experience as *Promotor Fidei*, from medical expert witnesses, whose opinions he quotes diligently. He noted that some amount of medical scepticism actually enhanced the physicians’ reliability as witnesses. He remarked for instance, still referring to Caterina’s case, that though the doubts of some doctors were detrimental to her cause in the issue of incorruption, the same doctors’ opinion on her healing miracles was very helpful. ‘Indeed I argued that their favourable view of the healing miracles should be relied on, not only because of their great professional skill, but also because, since they abstained from saying that [the beata’s] incorruption passed the forces of nature, they would have said the same of the healings, had they not deemed them truly miraculous.’⁸⁷

On the issue of holy bodies, Lambertini concluded that the Church should proceed with extreme caution. Not only should one categorically exclude artificial causes of incorruption, such as embalming;⁸⁸ more tellingly, he

⁸⁵ Prospero Lambertini, *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione* (Bologna, 1734–38), Vol. IV, 418–19. After graduating in law in 1694 at age 19, Lambertini trained under the Rota Auditor Alessandro Caprara. Caprara was officially involved in Caterina’s case as the author of the ‘Responsio Juris’ for the Postulators printed in the *Positio* (see n. 37 above). Lambertini became Consistorial Advocate in 1701 and was *Promotor Fidei* from 1708 to 1728 (*Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, s. v).

⁸⁶ Gaspar Carpineus, Cardinal Ponens, *Factum Concordatum* (Rome, 1704). Cf. Lambertini, *De servorum Dei*, 421.

⁸⁷ Lambertini, *De servorum Dei*, 419. He mentions specifically Fabbri, Manzi and Malpighi on account of their ‘high standing in the medical profession’.

⁸⁸ He notes that in 1727, in the cause of St. Margaret of Cortona, for which he was *Promotor Fidei*, he proved that the body had been embalmed and thus objected to the inclusion of the incorruption among the miracles (*De servorum Dei*, 414).

stated that one should carefully avoid mistaking desiccation for incorruption. Desiccation is actually a form of corruption, he wrote, so it cannot be claimed that a dried-up cadaver is incorrupt.⁸⁹ As we know, this was exactly the point that some medical witnesses, including Malpighi, had made in Caterina's case. Lambertini also objected to a dogmatic reading of papal pronouncements on this matter: the mention of incorruption in canonization decrees should be understood as meant 'non assertive, aut definiendo, sed enunciativa, et referendo', that is, as a simple statement of fact, not as an assertive definition.⁹⁰

It should be noted, moreover, that Lambertini never mentions in his discussion the eschatological meaning of the holy body as an emblem of the resurrection of the flesh. And yet, this meaning continued to be central in Caterina's popular cult. Though the miracle of incorruption had been declared 'no longer extant', the image of Caterina's 'prodigious cadaver' dominated the public celebrations of her canonization.⁹¹ Caterina's holy body appeared on the three processional banners commissioned by the Bolognese Senate to the painter Marcantonio Franceschini in 1708–10 for the pageants attending the official proclamation of her sainthood.⁹² On the front, one of these banners displayed Caterina carried to Heaven by the angels; on the back, her body sitting in majesty in the Corpus Domini chapel.⁹³ Front and back of the banner proclaimed visually the identity of the holy body with the heavenly body of resurrection.

Also for the medical doctors who were called to inspect it, examining the holy body must have involved some kind of double vision – a disconcerting mix of corporeal and spiritual seeing. The words chosen by a great observer like Marcello Malpighi seem revealing in this respects, when he said, as we saw above, that Caterina's body presented an 'adumbration' of something that was not perceivable in ordinary cadavers. 'Adumbration' was not a term of medical observational language, it was a theologians' word, referring to the shadowy image of a spiritual reality ultimately unattainable through corporeal eyes.⁹⁴ Even Malpighi then must have viewed Caterina's body with some amount of 'spiritual curiosity'; even for him her body may have represented something more than desiccated matter, something that suggested at

⁸⁹ He notes that corruption may take two forms – putrefaction and desiccation. The latter is also corruption, but it is erroneously taken for incorruption by vulgar opinion. 'Not all corruption is putrefaction, as it was well noted by Giacomo Sinibaldi, a physician of the Roman College and public reader, in his expert opinion offered in the canonization cause of Saint James of the Marches' (Lambertini had been *Promotor Fidei* in this case).

⁹⁰ *De servorum dei*, 420.

⁹¹ The celebrations included the solemn move of Caterina's body to a newly decorated chapel in Corpus Domini: see *Ragguaglio delle Divozioni, e Feste fatte in Bologna per la Traslazione del Miracoloso Corpo della B. Caterina, solennizzatasi nel Giorno di S. Chiara li 12 Agosto MDCLXXXVIII* (Bologna, 1688).

⁹² Graziani, 'L'iconografia', 235–36; Laura de Fanti, 'Il 'Pittore della Santa': Marcantonio Franceschini e la decorazione nella Chiesa del Corpus Domini in Bologna', in Fortunati, *Vita artistica*, 266 ff. (image on 286).

⁹³ Alessandro Maria Sabbatini, *Effetti della generosa pietà dell'eccelso senato di Bologna e de' suoi divoti cittadini, espressi nella gloriosa canonizzazione di S. Caterina ed umilmente consegnati a gli amplissimi senatori* (Bologna, 1713), 6.

⁹⁴ See *Vocabolario della Crusca*, s. v. 'adombramento', for the religious meaning of the word.

least the possibility of a supernatural presence. When looking at Caterina's cadaver, the people of seventeenth-century Bologna – including the medical men – saw a double object of knowledge. On the one hand, her body was a corpse, an emblem of man's mortality. It was, as the doctors insisted, desiccated matter, which however slowly, however imperceptibly, was going to turn into dust. But it was also an 'adumbration' of immortality: a 'beautiful and precious relic'⁹⁵ that offered a glimpse of the perfect incorruptibility that the bodies of the blessed would achieve in paradise. The final stages of Caterina Vigri's canonization process capture the belief in the holy bodies at a time of transition, when empirical observation could still go hand in hand with eschatological imagination, but when a deepening distance was growing between the medical and the religious view of the body, as would appear more clearly in later ages.

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⁹⁵ Words used in the notarized statement of one of Caterina's *miracolati*, Pietro Alessandri, tailor, 25 May 1595, in AAB, Beat., b. 738.

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